

Congressional races begin to take shape

The unknowns of '96 worry some Democrats

KOKOMO - Two years ago, Howard County Sheriff J.D. Beatty and several other 5th CD Democrats were putting together campaigns for 1994 and a challenge to U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer.

But this year, there is no such activity. "Everyone is kind of scared of 1996," acknowledge Howard County Democratic Chairman D.J. Bolinger. "'98 might be a different story."

To date, no Democrat has even expressed interest in challenging Buyer. After the summer of 1995, it will become increasingly difficult for a challenger to ignite a credible campaign.

"I wouldn't be surprised if he gets a pass this time," said Pat Hinton, press aide to Buyer.

Greencastle Mayor Michael Harmless is putting off a decision over whether to seek a rematch against U.S. Rep. John Myers until after the municipal elections.

"I want to focus on that," Harmless said of his role as an adviser to Indiana Democratic mayoral candidates. "I want to delay a decision on a run for Congress until after November."

Harmless's role with the mayoral campaigns is a legitimate reason for not proceeding with a rematch. But there is an undercurrent of caution about 1996.

Political analyst Charles E. Cook cites the "four questions" that national Democrats are focusing on:

1.) Will President Clinton run competitively for re-election? If he doesn't, he represents not only a drag on a ticket nationally, but an anvil around the neck of Hoosier Democrats;

2.) How many Democratic MCs will retire? U.S. Rep. Andy Jacobs is one such member tossing that possibility around. If Jacobs and a number of his colleagues retire - as they did in 1992 and '94 - the party will have a tougher time defending open seats, with Phil

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THE HOWEY POLITICAL REPORT



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"QUOTE" OF THE WEEK

"People like to hear the slant he provides. He's making a lot of inroads because of his seriousness..."

- Georgi Hippauf, assistant New Hampshire
GOP chairman, on Sen. Lugar

INSIDE FEATURES

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McVey ponders challenge to 'invulnerable' Dan

INDIANAPOLIS - Is Brose McVey wasting his time preparing to challenge U.S. Rep. Dan Burton?

That question has to be on the minds of most Hoosier Republicans after McVey confirmed for the *Indianapolis Star* that he was pondering a primary challenge.

At least one other potential Burton challenger had commissioned vulnerability research this year and found that while Burton consistently takes it on the chin in the media, 6th CD voters are solidly behind him.

McVey is no idiot, having man-

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aged U.S. Sen. Dan Coats' 1992 re-election bid, which has become a textbook example of how to run a campaign.

Said one GOP operative, "Brose needs to get a list of every Republican household and knock on every door. If he can do that and raise money at the same time, he's in the game."

Another strategy McVey might use against Burton is to look at it in a

four-year cycle, using 1996 to develop Burton's vulnerability and then try to pick him off in the following off-presidential-year election in 1998.

Indiana has two CDs dominated by one party. In 1984, Pete Visclosky upset U.S. Rep. Katie Hall in the 1st CD. But Hall was a political appointee of Gary Mayor Richard Hatcher following the death of Adam Benjamin in 1982, hadn't become entrenched, and had to deal with the subtle Region race card.

Burton is entrenched in an equally one-sided district, having served since 1982.

HUMOR

M I L L

Wendellisms by Wendell Trogdon Indianapolis News

"The Day the Earth Moved" is not a science-fiction movie. It's the real-life saga of giant moles in suburban lawns.

Devil's Dictionary by Ambrose Bierce

Philosophy, n. A route of many roads leading from nowhere to nothing.

Sauce, n. The one infallible sign of civilization and enlightenment. A people with no sauces has one thousand vices; a people with one sauce has only nine hundred and ninety-nine. For every sauce invented and accepted a vice is rebuffed and forgiven.

Talk, v.t. To commit an indiscretion without temptation, from an impulse without purpose.

GOP sees opportunity in 9th and 10th CDs

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Sharp's retirement in '94 a perfect example. The more open seats the Democrats will have to protect, the less money will be made available to challengers like Harmless or a Democrat in the 8th CD where U.S. Rep. John Hostettler is seen as potentially vulnerable.

3.) Can Democrats stabilize their poor position in the South? If they can't, prospects won't be good to retake the House, and that could have a bearing on retirements. It might also put the focus on Midwestern seats.

4.) Can the Democrats raise enough money? Most analysts see the trend that developed in September 1994 - a fund-raising edge to Republicans - continuing. Writes Cook, "A significant number of Democratic incumbents have been winning competitive races by outspending their GOP challengers by a difference of 2-to-1 and 3-to-1." At this point, Democratic committees don't see a downturn in their ability to raise money. But the dramatic edge is gone.

At this earliest of junctures in the Congressional campaign sequence, Indiana Republicans believe they can not only hold on to the two long-term seats they've held in the 7th and 10th districts, and the four seats they picked up in 1992 and 1994, but will also wage serious

challenges in the 3rd, 9th and 10th CDs.

The only Indiana Democrat who appears safe from an ardent challenge is U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky in the 1st CD where 1994 challenger John Larson is weighing a rematch.

Two long-time Democrats - Jacobs and U.S. Rep. Lee Hamilton in the 9th CD - occupy districts that have gradually become more Republican.

"The fact that Hamilton has held this southeast corner district since 1964 disguises the fact that it has developed into a seat not at all favorable to Democrats," Cook said. "He has managed to transcend its increasingly Republican and conservative tendencies."

State Sen. Jean Leising lost to Hamilton by 2 percent in 1994 and might have won had she had about \$60,000 to spend on Louisville TV in the final weekend.

Indiana Republican Chairman Mike McDaniel promises the party will be there for Leising this time out. "We'll try to make sure we max out for Jean Leising," McDaniel said. "Once she got that close, it will be easier for her to raise money."

A second rematch could be shaping up in the 10th between Jacobs and Republican Marvin Scott, who lost by 7,500 votes in 1994.

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Hoosier mayoral candidates vanishing before our very eyes

HORSE RACE

<u>CITY</u>	<u>STATUS</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
INDIANAPOLIS Goldsmith (R) v. Jimison (D)	Safe R	Goldsmith committed to this race. Mayor will be campaigning hard in Elkhart, New Albany, Vincennes and Whiting. If he does vanish, there won't be just any Roob picking up the mantle. Mutz appears to have a pedigree.
FORT WAYNE Helmke (R) v. Essex (D)	Leaning R	This was to be a race where Helmke was going to run scared. But Essex has been virtually invisible when he should have been working the earned media while scaring up cash.
TERRE HAUTE May (R) v. Jenkins (D)	Safe D	Perhaps it was Maggie May who won the GOP primary. But the Republican dropped out of the race, figuring a run against Jenkins would have been a lot harder than going against the aged Pete Chalos.
EVANSVILLE Frary (R) v. McDonald (D)	Leaning D	McDonald will find a visible and energetic opponent, but not with the resources Vaneta Becker had in '91, and look where they got her.

OUTLOOK: Horserace doesn't want to be overly cynical so early in the season, but the big city mayoral races are shaping up to be snoozers. On to Gimco City!

TICKER TAPE

Indiana Republican Chairman **Mike McDaniel**, concerned about a '96 Republican gubernatorial primary bloodbath leaving the party with a broke standard-bearer, is seeking to establish "The Governor's Fund." The goal would be to raise \$500,000 to \$750,000 to help jump start the winner. Look for former **Gov. Bob Orr** to head up the effort.

Mark S. Moore, Gov. Evan Bayh's special liaison for public finance, has announced he is leaving the staff to pursue another job.

INDOT **Commissioner Stan Smith** said on a Bloomington TV program that an I-69 extension from Indianapolis to Evansville will not come at the expense of maintaining other Hoosier highways. "A project like this would deplete the entire budget that we have for maintaining the entire highway system," Smith said on WTIU's "Editor's Desk" program last week.

Only one Hoosier congressman - **Pete Visclosky** - voted against the constitutional amendment to ban the desecration of the American flag. Visclosky said that he was "disgusted and offended" by flag burners but said that political speech needs more protection than Old Glory.

U.S. Rep. Mark Souder now has a web page on the Internet. He can be reached at:
<http://www.house.gov.souder>.
But, he told **Sylvia Smith** of the *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette*, "I have no

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TICKER T A P E

idea how to use the Internet. I'm not proud of it. I'm just saying it's an honest and true fact."

In providing a web page, Souder's constituents can now reach or hear him three ways electronically: a weekly call-in radio program, a cable access TV show, and the Internet.

U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer challenged the Federal Election Commission's ban on the use of campaign contributions to pay for the air fare of the candidate's children (Smith, *Journal Gazette*). Roemer called the ban "anti-family." The FEC then sided with Roemer and against its staff, declaring, "Travel by children accompanying their parents between the Washington DC area and the candidate's district would not constitute personal use of campaign funds."

U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar will be back in Indianapolis this weekend for a fund-raising foray. Lugar will also be raising money in Dayton. He will spend July 15-17 in New Hampshire and Maine.

Lugar finished third in a straw poll conducted by Virginia Republicans in mid-June. **Pat Buchanan** finished first with 59 percent followed by **Alan Keyes** with 11 percent. **Sen. Bob Dole** came in with only 7 percent. In Iowa last Friday night, Lugar finished third in a similar straw poll. Dole led with 20 percent followed by Gramm with 18 percent and Lugar at third with 8 percent.

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New Hampshire GOP leader says Lugar 'making inroads' with grassroot voters

Five Republican presidential contenders worked a Fourth of July picnic in Concord, N.H. A resulting photo in the *New York Times* showed Char Lugar shoulder-to-shoulder with Sens. Bob Dole and Phil Gramm.

U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar, however, had it was to himself, doing a six-day, 10-county bus tour that had campaign spokesman Terry Holt crowing about the "strength of the organization."

"We had the senator touring Iowa in an Iowa-built Winnebago," Holt said. "We basically controlled the message there when everyone else was in New Hampshire."

While in Iowa, Lugar said he would introduce legislation calling for \$500 million to be spent on agriculture research annually.

"It's long been my feeling that agricultural research has been declining in terms of both interest as well as appropriations," Lugar told the Associated Press.

While that message will likely play well in Iowa, the Lugar campaign was ecstatic about another Associated Press quote - this one from New Hampshire assistant Republican chairwoman Georgi Hippauf.

She predicted that Lugar would benefit from the "county fair" phase of the New Hampshire campaign where candidates can play to the grassroots.

"He's certainly a statesman-like gentleman. People like to hear the slant he provides," Hippauf said. "He's making a lot of inroads because of his seriousness."

Hippauf's observation is important because the Lugar campaign has tried to steer its emphasis away from the Republican "activists" and more toward the common voter.

■ Lugar notes: The campaign cracked the \$3 million mark in fund-raising after just three months. That's compared to \$3.4 million Gramm raised in the same quarter.

Lugar is also set to receive federal matching funds, as HPR reported last month. Iowa will be the 20th state needed to qualify. "Being able to qualify for federal matching funds in just over three months is a significant accomplishment for anybody," Holt told David L.

Haase of the *Indianapolis News*.

■ Here is a contrast of parade styles. In Amherst, N.H., volunteers of Dole had to use a car to block off a contingent of Gramm supporters who attempted to maneuver ahead of Dole in the Fourth of July parade. In West Des Moines, Iowa, California Gov. Pete Wilson rode in a car while Lugar walked the road surrounded by dozens of kids wearing Lugar T-shirts, who handed out campaign literature while riding on roller-blades.

■ The Lugar campaign was heartened by a recent article by Rich Lowry in the *National Review*. But *Bloomington Herald-Times* columnist Mike Leonard's take on the article was this: "It's not a positive development when a maga-

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zine largely identified with staid William F. Buckley, Jr. says you're a dweeb." Leonard continues, "The article

has a disturbing, contradictory tone when it comes to assessing Lugar's personality. In essence, the message is that substance is nothing without style."

■ Chicago's Navy Pier was the place and the entertainment Thursday night was Dr. Bop & the Headliners. The Lugar event was aimed at younger voters. Among the event's chairmen was Steve Skinner, son of former U.S. Transportation Secretary Sam Skinner (Hevrdejs & Conklin, *Chicago Tribune*).

■ The *Chicago Tribune* ran a front-page story on June 29 under the headline: "Is Clinton campaigning too early?" Washington bureau reporter William Neikirk's lead was: "Often labeled as the perpetual candidate, President Clinton has launched a bold but risky re-election strategy that includes thinly veiled campaign commercials, travel to key electoral states and a new effort to define himself with voters." He adds, "Many Democrats fear such an early campaign start will needlessly politicize the office and drag down its power and prestige."

COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

James Derk, *Evansville Courier* - This column isn't about astrophysics because I don't know enough about it to write intelligently. That's common sense, but that's eluded Indiana Sen. Dan Coats, who doesn't know anything about computer services but insisted on sponsoring legislation to regulate them. Using made-up statistics and falsehoods, Coats helped back an amendment to a Senate telecommunications bill designed to rid online services and the Internet of "indecent" material. The amendment is laudatory in its intent - protecting children from adult material - but its methodology is so flawed that if enforced, online services will cease to exist. If Coats knew anything about computers he would have either crafted the legislation more carefully or realized there are other ways to deal with the problem, including new, cheap software that blocks adult content.

Gerry Lanosga, *Indianapolis News* - It used to be that the big argument over big government was a simple question of whether or not to have one, Democrats being on the pro side, Republicans on the con. But these are confusing times. Even U.S. Sen. Dan Coats, generally considered a reliable Republican, seems to have undergone something of a pro-government, anti-free-market conversion. Deregulation Dan has attached his name to a measure calling for up to \$100,000 in fines and two years in prison for people who knowingly transmit indecent material over computer networks accessible to minors. He didn't mention the difficulty of enforcing his plan given the Internet's global nature. Nor did he mention the so-called "indecent" material represents a tiny - albeit sensationalized - fraction of the information available. I wonder which bureaucrat Coats would appoint as censor under his proposal. And if information is power, isn't the federal government's control over the Internet - the most popular form of information dissemination ever - the very essence of big government?

Ben Smith, *Fort Wayne Journal Gazette* - So I went to the movies the other day. I went not to

protest the trashing of Hollywood by Bob Dole, even if it was just a cynical ploy by a politician desperate to cozy up to the right wing of his party. And I went not to see if Dole might be right, either, if for all the wrong reasons. No, I went to the movies the other day because of my niece had the powers of persuasion far beyond the scope of most mortal humans. Which is to say, Uncle Ben never had a chance. "Pocahontas" here we came. Hollywood gives us what we buy, in other words. Always has. What's different now is not the culture but its pervasiveness, the blurring of the lines between screen violence and the real thing. In Pocahontas, three people get shot. It's all done very tastefully, very bloodlessly. And yet...on the way home the other day, that's all my niece would talk about. It was, I reflected, a decidedly '90s perspective from a decidedly '90s child.

Harrison Ullman, *Nuvo* - TV stations are hiring handsome men and pretty women to read us news they have not gathered and tell us stories they do not understand. Stations are dropping reporters who covered the news and hiring producers who package the news. The sets are now elegantly architected and full of illusion - fake skylines outside of fake windows, television monitors that monitor nothing at all. The sets are full of chatty people, laughing and joking and trying to be just like us - or just like we would be with big hair, bad clothes and six-figure incomes we knew we had not earned. Stations are paying more and buying less for their news shows. The news has become entertainment, given to us by entertainers. As the stations declined, the idiots who own the newspapers decided they should run their newspapers like television stations. They have hired editors and bought graphics, dropping reporters and cutting stories. The dailies are trying to do something they cannot do very well - entertain us - and they have stopped doing what they do very well - inform us about our lives and our own city. Too bad! We need the news, even if we don't want *The News* any more.

TICKER TAPE

No sooner than the rumors had quelled about Indianapolis Mayor **Stephen Goldsmith** bowing out of the city race to concentrate on 1996 than the name of his old boss - **John Mutz** - comes up as a possible successor. This is a neat, tidy solution. It saves Mutz the trouble of running for governor; Goldsmith has a credible successor and even John Sweezy would be pleased.

No, **Bob Garton**, you weren't dreaming when you opened up a recent *Bloomington Herald-Times* editorial page. Under an editorial headline "Garton candidacy strengthens GOP" was about 15 inches of political valentine. "Indiana Republicans may finally have found a heavyweight when state Senate President Pro Tem Bob Garton... unofficially confirmed last week he intends to run. Garton would be by far the strongest GOP candidate for governor since then-Lt. Gov. **John Mutz** ran in 1988."

We thought there already was a heavyweight in the GOP field. Did something happen to **Rex Earty**? No. He told the *Michigan City News-Dispatch* recently, "I am not going to run for U.S. Senate. I am not going to run for president. I don't have to pander to special-interest groups."

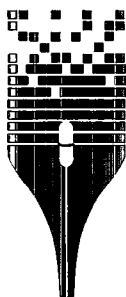
The Associated Press reported a number of Golden Rule Insurance executives and spouses have contributed at least \$5,000 to help U.S. Sen. **Robert Packwood** of Oregon fight allegations of sexual harassment and misconduct. Chairman Pat Rooney was not one of them, however.

Harmless won't evaluate 7th CD rematch until after 1995 municipal elections

HPR **Interview**

"Being a Democrat from Indiana is a lot different than being a Democrat from the East Coast...."

- Mike Harmless



GREENCASTLE - Mayor Michael Harmless was a most-promising Congressional contender two years ago.

But when the dust settled last November, he had taken a 65-35 percent drubbing from U.S. Rep. John Myers.

HPR talked with Harmless about whether he will consider a rematch in 1996, as well as his activities on behalf of Indiana Democratic mayoral candidates.

HPR: What are your thoughts about the 7th CD race at this time?

Harmless: We certainly want to evaluate that. But that evaluation will take place after the elections this November. I'm really focused on the Indiana Democratic Mayors Coordinated Campaign. Since having been a mayor and still sitting in a mayor's office, I know how important these races are to the future of the state. So I want to focus on that and delay a decision on a run for Congress until after November.

HPR: You don't think that's too late? Most congressional campaigns are beginning, to gear up 18 months out.

Harmless: Which is what I did last time. I think people know me. We've made the friendships, we've met the people, we're known in the 7th District of Indiana much better than we were last time. If we would choose to make that run, we would not be starting from a recognition level of what, 5 or 6 percent? We would be starting with 50 percent of the people knowing who I am.

HPR: Wouldn't you be losing critical time for fund-raising?

Harmless: Well, again, we were very successful last time in fund-raising. And if that would be our decision to run again, I know we would be able to raise the funds necessary to make the campaign. I really want to be focused on what is happening this year.

HPR: What is the climate for Democratic Congressional candidates going into 1996?

Harmless: I'm very positive about

Hoosier Democrats. Being a Democrat in Indiana is different than being a Democrat from the East Coast. We've always been very, very staunch in defending who we are. We're more conservative. When you talk about Hoosier Democrats, you talk about people who are very reasonable and who are good public servants. I think '96 will be a very good year for Democrats. I think in '94 the message I had, if you recall, was for dramatic change, balancing the budget and Congressional reforms. My opponent was supporting the status quo spending as usual. I think the people in the 7th District of Indiana were a little confused because the Democrats and myself were the ones who were pounding the very serious message of deficit reduction and balancing the budget. My opponent just talked about how it was important to elect a Republican. So 1996 will be a very, very different year because people will be very serious on listening to what the candidates have to say regarding the future of the country.

HPR: How do you think President Clinton will play here in Indiana next year? What kind of an impact will he have here?

Harmless: All that depends on who the Republican candidate is. If it is a candidate who is able to somehow capture the imagination of the American people, then Democrats will have a hard time getting re-elected. Within the current group I see, it doesn't seem to be happening. Of course, Sen. Lugar is not currently being considered as one of the frontrunners. So my comments are certainly related directly to who the current frontrunners are.

HPR: Will your decision to run come before the first of the year?

Harmless: Absolutely.

HPR: What is your point of emphasis in dealing with mayoral candidates?

Harmless: What we're trying to do is make sure we have a real positive discussion about the challenges of being mayor. Making sure they will operate their cities like a business.

Democrats sizing up Becker, Padfield will use militia ties in campaigns

FORT WAYNE - Two Indiana General Assembly races taking shape for 1996 appear to be headed for a showdown over sympathy for the militias and political extremism.

Both out-going Fort Wayne Councilman Mark GiaQuinta and Howard County Democratic Chairman D.J. Bolinger left little doubt that the militia issue would be used against State Reps. John Becker and Jon Padfield.

Bolinger confirmed that there is a consensus forming around Kokomo firefighter Ron Herrell to challenge Padfield. "We have been trying to find a candidate we can get behind," Bolinger said.

Herrell lost to State Sen. Steve Johnson with 43 percent of the vote in 1994. "Without the Republican landslide, which I figure added 5 percent against us, that would have been a pretty close race," Bolinger said.

He thinks Padfield's position has been weakened by his connections with the militia movement. "This whole militia thing will work against him," Bolinger said. "He even refused to say the pledge on the House floor because of the gold braid on the flag and the fact that it was admiralty law which threatened the nation's sovereignty."

Bolinger said Howard County Democrats have been keeping track of every "wacko, right-wing militia" element attracted to Padfield.

GiaQuinta had similar sentiments about his father, Ben GiaQuinta's potential rematch with Becker, who won the 1994 race by just seven votes on Election Night.

"We are going to take that seat back," Mark GiaQuinta explained. "That was a fluke."

Ben GiaQuinta has made his intentions clear he will try to regain the 81st District seat he held for two terms. There has been some talk on the state level of Democrats recruiting a younger candidate, such as 1992's unsuccessful Senate candidate Geoff Paddock.

"The one thing I would point out is that (Ben GiaQuinta) ran 40 votes ahead of the

ticket in every precinct," Mark GiaQuinta said. "It was the Republican tidal wave."

The councilman, asked whether the Democrats would seek to make an issue out of the February letter Becker, Padfield and seven other legislators sent to U.S. Sen. Orrin Hatch to investigate the Branch Davidian assault, responded, "Oh, absolutely."

"We're not at all convinced that Mr. Becker isn't with the militia," GiaQuinta said. "He'll have every opportunity to respond. The

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guy is a right-wing kook."

GiaQuinta acknowledged that his professional legal representation of

Chemical Waste Management and the Adams Center Landfill probably hurt his father's chances for re-election.

"When you lose by three votes, or whatever it was, every issue played a part," GiaQuinta said. "Was it his pro-choice stance? Were there 10 votes on that issue? My guess is, yes."

GiaQuinta said his involvement with Chemical Waste Management had no impact on his giving up the Fort Wayne Council seat. "If we're going to have a part-time council, I can't allow my political service dictate how I work within my chosen profession," he said.

GiaQuinta dismissed published reports in Fort Wayne that he might challenge U.S. Rep. Mark Souder in 1996. "I don't see my giving that any serious consideration next year."

As for a potential challenger to Souder from the Democratic side, GiaQuinta threw out two names: fellow Fort Wayne City Councilman Tom Henry and Brian Stier, the son of former Councilman Jimmy Stier.



TICKER T A P E

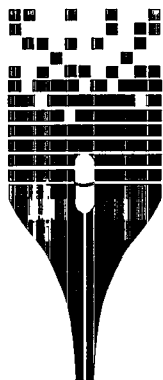
Mayor Harmless is predicting that Indiana Democrats will win at least 75 of the 117 mayoral races up for election this November. Currently the Democrats hold 64 seats. Two new cities will be electing mayors for the first time. "We have very strong candidates - small business people, bankers, folks who have served on the council and folks who have been mayor before," Harmless said.

Hosts of the Indiana Democratic Editorial Association are expecting a much bigger turnout for their convention at French Lick on Aug. 25-27.

Indiana Republicans will host their annual state dinner, featuring House **Speaker Newt Gingrich**, at the RCA Dome on July 24. "By utilizing the floor of the RCA Dome I believe that we will be able to maximize our space and sell a greater number of tickets," said GOP **Chairman Mike McDaniel**. Ticket prices are running from \$125 to \$250. Tickets can be ordered by calling 317-635-7561.

Bill Styring didn't mince words when the Indiana Supreme Court ruled on legislative "log rolling." Said Styring in a letter to the *Indianapolis News*, "Our state's Supreme Court has utterly blown it in the case of *Pence and the Indiana Policy Review vs. Indiana General Assembly*. As a result, the constitutionality of all Hoosiers are endangered."

Indiana Republicans have named **John Willey** as executive assistant to the chairman. **Kevin Ober** has joined the state GOP as special assistant to the chairman.



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- Charles E. Cook
Cook Political Report, Washington

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‘Roemer will have to watch himself....’

from page 2

However, sources tell HPR that State Sen. Virginia Blankenbaker is pondering a run. Like the 9th, the 10th has become much more Republican, and Jacobs has historically done well with Republican voters. “If he decides not to run, that race is very doable,” McDaniel said. “I think it will be very competitive.”

■ Republicans smell blood in the 3rd CD where U.S. Rep. Tim Roemer will be seeking a fourth term.

Roemer finds himself in a situation similar to that facing Jill Long in 1994. He represents a Republican district (Bush defeated Clinton by 4 percent in 1992), but Roemer has not had a credible challenger since he upset John Hiler in 1990.

“He owes his success to a moderate voting record and a willingness to distance himself from his party when necessary, certainly more often than Jontz or even Long,” Cook observed. “Roemer will have to watch himself here or he could meet the same fate if Democrats wind up facing another disastrous election.”

Roemer has benefitted from the fund-raising ties of his father-in-law, U.S. Sen. Bennett Johnston of Louisiana. But Johnston is retiring and some observers suspect that may cut a dent in Roemer’s fund-raising capabilities, although he should have enough tenure to mitigate that.

McDaniel sees three credible candidates gearing up to challenge Roemer. The front-runner would have to be State Sen. Joe Zakas, who apparently has patched up a rift he had with St. Joseph County Republican Chairman Carl Baxmeyer.

Zakas has successfully defended his Senate seat repeatedly in off-presidential years when Republicans fare worse in Democratic-oriented St. Joseph County.

Michigan City Chamber of Commerce President Brad Allamong and former Wall Street stockbroker Dan Holtz are also seen by the GOP hierarchy as potentially strong candidates.

South Bend lawyer Theodore Noell has indicated he will seek the Republican nomination and might bring serious fund-raising capabilities to the race. Other names in the mix

include 1994 nominee Rich Burkett and a couple of unknowns - Brian Haygood and Gary Bendix, both of Elkhart.

■ Democrats will have good candidates in the 2nd and 8th CDs. Phil Guyer, a former aide to Sharp, appears to be the likely nominee to face U.S. Rep. David McIntosh.

While McIntosh appears to be in a commanding position to win re-election at this early date, he has closely tied himself to House Speaker Newt Gingrich. That could be a boost, or it could backfire.

Cook notes that there are “numbers of significant cross-currents” shaping public attitudes. He points to polls that show a plurality of Americans believe Congressional Republicans are moving the country in the right direction. Yet, most Americans are unaware of the Contract with America.

And Cook writes: “There is a growing albeit not yet widespread concern that congressional Republicans may wind up going too far.”

“While this view has not yet caught on among the swing voters who determine the outcome of close elections, it could well be exacerbated by the upcoming debates on the budget and Medicare and should be watched carefully.”

No doubt Guyer and Harmless will be doing just that, as will the largest field in the state lining up against Hostettler in the 8th CD.

Former Congressman Frank McCloskey told HPR last month he would probably not seek the seat. The three most likely challenges to Hostettler appear to be former McCloskey aide and Evansville banker Jonathan Weinzapfel, who has angered McCloskey loyalists with remarks about the 1994 election; Vanderburgh County Commissioner Rick Borries; and State Rep. Rich McConnell.

Three other legislative names - House Minority Leader John Gregg, State Rep. Lindel Hume, and former State Sen. Maurice Doll are said to be weighing a run. Gregg would be an immediate front-runner if he wanted it. But with an excellent chance at becoming speaker of the Indiana House, that candidacy seems unlikely. McDaniel acknowledges that Hostettler is the “project” of the GOP contingent. “Believe me we will keep a close eye on that one,” he said.