



# Pence, Gregg delve into public policy

IU's gubernatorial forum brings 'conversation' after months of politicking

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – After 15 months of speculation, candidate announcements, fundraising, speeches, parades, press conferences and TV ads, Hoosier voters finally got their first palatable dose of concentrated policy Tuesday evening, when former Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard interviewed the candidates for governor, Republican Mike Pence, Democrat John Gregg, and Libertarian Rupert Boneham.

John L. Krauss of the Indiana University Public Policy Institute called it a "conversation" with the candidates after months of business, education, tax and energy leaders engaged in the pursuit of a constructive agenda. Shepard declared that "substance takes a back seat to attack ads" and said the forum was



Former Chief Justice Randall T. Shepard interviews Republican gubernatorial candidate Mike Pence Tuesday evening at IUPUI as former Gov. Joe Kernan and former Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis look on. (HPI Photo Brian A. Howey)

a quest for Indiana's "economic health to make the 21st Century in Indiana a happier place."

The ensuing 90-minute conversation was, as Shepard desired, "easy in tone." The event will be telecast

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# This convention matters

By **MARK SOUDER**

FORT WAYNE - Contrary to rumor, the Todd Akin fiasco in Missouri was not part of a Republican strategy to boost Tampa GOP Convention ratings. Defending the right of the most unwanted child to its life is not easy. Rape is when a woman is forced to have non-consensual sex by anyone. Implying that science suggests women who become pregnant do so because it is their fault, regardless of the words you choose around it, is terribly wrong.



Congressman Akin will not be invited to give a speech at the national



**"The two United States senators who were from the same state but from different parties but had the voting records most alike were Dick Lugar and myself."**

- Former Sen. Evan Bayh, campaigning with Joe Donnelly on Wednesday



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convention.

But you likely won't realize it from the national media coverage. The rumor is that MSNBC is going to devote all their Wednesday night coverage to just repeating "Akin, Akin, Akin" for three hours which will interrupt their wall-to-wall coverage of how Paul Ryan would destroy America. The question for the other members of national elite press corps is whether they will also highlight supposed positive signs of economic recovery to counter conservative attacks on the President's record (which they will largely ignore).

**They may add** some coverage of Republican congressmen who swim in the nude in the Sea of Galilee where Republicans "think Jesus walked on the water" (as Washington Post columnist Dana Millbank memorably phrased it this week).

The Republican message will be basic: Are you better off than you were four years ago? Combine this with: Have you seen even one idea or clue of how the current administration plans to turn the economy around and create jobs?

As the leftist media mock Republicans on social issues unfairly, they will send a secondary message that if you are a social conservative, you must be a Republican. Since the country is split 50-50 on abortion and gay marriage has never won approval in any state, ever, a social issue focus puts the Republican ticket at minimally 50%. Then Republicans can focus exclusively on economic issues which may pull some who are more socially liberal our direction. In other words, Republicans can drive the economic message and let the media alienate social conservatives by going overboard in smearing all Republicans for the comments of one man. Because of their bias, they ironically become part of the message delivery system.

Another convention message will be to showcase the increasing diversity of people delivering the core conservative messages. Republicans

will have Hispanics, Asian-Americans and African-Americans stating conservative ideals. Females will espouse the Republican doctrine in prime time. These will not be "token" minorities but governors, senators and former Cabinet officers. "The million white man march" (as comedian Chris Rock memorably called one Republican convention) will even have a diversity of white people as illustrated by keynote speaker New Jersey Governor Chris Christie, who is the type of white person the Democrats once attracted.

While the Republicans will be stating and re-stating the economic message all day long, the biggest events are likely to be Paul Ryan's speech on Wednesday night and Mitt Romney's acceptance speech to close the convention. It will be the single biggest opportunity Ryan will have to make his case that he is trying to save American retirement systems, not destroy them. Ryan will also strive to show that his budget actually helps all people, including the poorest among us, by avoiding a repetition of European bankruptcy disasters. I don't know if Ryan can sell the fundamental truths about economics, but if he can't, then no one can.

If Ryan electrifies the convention audience Wednesday night, how does Romney finish the convention on the highest note? It doesn't really work to have people feel that the vice president is the idea generator and the best salesman, while the president is going to be the implementation guy.

**In 1976 Ronald Reagan** totally eclipsed Gerald Ford, even though Ford gave an excellent speech and one that most people considered the best Ford ever gave. In 1988 George H.W. Bush had the unenviable task of succeeding Reagan. Bush had perhaps the most memorable lines delivered at a convention since Barry Goldwater's famous lines in 1964.

Bush in 1988 didn't just say "read my lips, no new taxes." He said, with passion, to a rising roar, this: "My



opponent won't rule out raising taxes. But I will. And the Congress will push me to raise taxes and I'll say no. And they'll push, and I'll say no, and they'll push again, and I'll say, to them, read my lips, no new taxes!" This is true conservative red meat, as the expression goes. So much for Mr. Wimp. So much for the guy who had once said that Reagan advocated "voodoo economics." We Reaganites thought that Bush was now a true believer.

**Bush won but then raised taxes.** He wasn't pressured multiple times, finally being forced to concede. It was more like a feather duster push and he said, "well, okay." You can give a great speech but if you don't actually believe what you are saying and then do the opposite of what you promised, your party gets destroyed for many years. Romney has to figure out how to deliver a great motivational speech but one he intends to actually imple-

ment if elected. That is far harder to do. And he's running against an incumbent who promised so much and delivered so little, so skepticism is even higher. Romney is capable of giving such a speech, but will he?

Most people, in this polarized electorate, have already decided how they will vote. The conventions are very late this year as well, so neither party is likely to get a huge "convention bounce" in the polls. But here is a yardstick: Romney needs to lead by 3-5 points in the weekend after polls because the Democrats will gain some back after their convention. The Republicans need to come out of both conventions no more than about two points down, and ideally tied, for the roughly 60 day sprint to the finish line.

This convention will matter. ❖

**Souder is a former Republican member of Congress.**

## Governor, from page 1

on Indiana PBS stations over the Labor Day weekend.

With former Gov. Joe Kernan and former Lt. Gov. Kathy Davis seated in the front row, Gregg told the 200 people in attendance, "This is the first event I've attended with Joe Kernan that I didn't have to buy a ticket."

Gregg noted that "jobs" will be the key topic, and said that "jobs have to be tied to education." That would include more emphasis on vocational programs and two-year degree programs that he helped administer as the two-year interim president of Vincennes University. He cited companies in Bloomington, Chrysler in Kokomo and Rolls Royce in Indianapolis as ones that need workers beyond the traditional four-year degree program.

"I see a lot of opportunity," Gregg said, adding that he wanted to work within the framework established by Govs. Frank O'Bannon, Kernan and Mitch Daniels. "We've done a good job of making college accessible." The next issue, he said, "is to make it affordable."

As for K-12 education, Gregg said that "it's important that they be either career ready or college ready." He added that kindergarten isn't even mandatory in Indiana, and said he would like to find ways to fund not only full-day kindergarten, but pre-kindergarten.

"As governor, my first, second and third priorities will be creating jobs and strengthening our economy. The group that put on this forum has done a great job of putting together a series of proposals aimed at encouraging economic development and growth throughout Indiana. As governor, I will work with groups like this and all Hoosiers

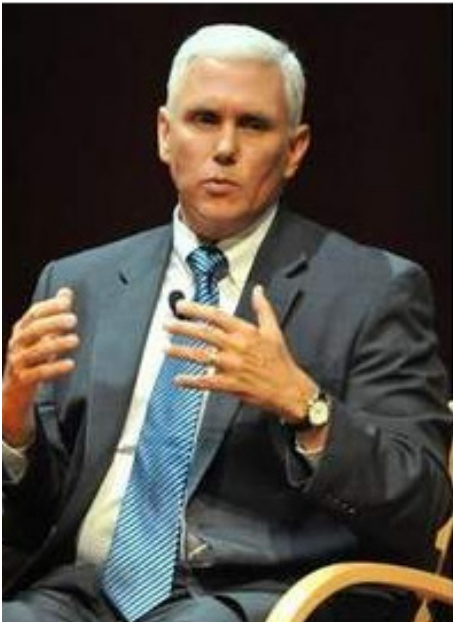
to find ways to bring good jobs back to Indiana. I have proposed tax reform that will eliminate the sales tax on gasoline and help ease some of the pain at the pump. I have also proposed corporate tax credits for companies

that headquarter here or pay good wages. This will spur job investment."

Gregg also promised to invest in education, saying, "When you talk about economic development, you need to focus on the next generation, not just the next election. Studies have shown that every dollar spent on early childhood education earns \$7 in savings down the road. That is why I will fund full-day kindergarten and start a pre-kindergarten pilot program. We need to make sure our children have the tools they need to compete in our global economy."

Gregg expressed caution when it comes to the automatic tax refunds. He questioned the \$2 billion surplus,





wanting to make sure it is really there – a veiled reference to the several instances of funds that were rediscovered by the Daniels administration – and said he would “not be in a rush to give it all away.” He talked of cuts to the Department of Child Services and education and the need to increase budgets there.

He called for continued infrastructure expansion, noting his Knox County farm is only six miles from the new I-69. “Sadly, we’re going to run out of money between Crane and Bloomington,” he said. Gregg called for a reassessment of gasoline taxes, noting that cars will soon be getting 35 mpg and by 2025, 54 mpg, which will impact tax revenues from gas. “We need to have that discussion,” he said.

Gregg also called for the completion of the western Indiana railroad line from the coal fields to Burns Harbor on Lake Michigan. He wondered why “85% of the components” for the windmills popping up across western Indiana are being made in Western Europe, instead of steel from Gary and wire from Fort Wayne’s Essex Wire.

When Shepard referenced the Kernan-Shepard reforms, Gregg noted that the 27 recommendations are not popular with many legislators. “We need to include county, city and local officials,” he said of reforms. He said he could find great efficiencies by talking with Knox County Recorder Brenda Hall. “It’s got to be more inclusive,” adding that the input needs to come “from the bottom up.”

### **Pence centers on tax cut, jobs**

Pence discussed his proposed 10% across-the-board income tax cut, saying that with 90% of Indiana businesses paying such a tax, it will create jobs while “put-

ting a lot of money in the pockets of every Hoosier.”

“I truly believe that Indiana is on the verge of an era of growth and opportunity,” Pence said. “If we produce the right leadership with the right ideas, Indiana can take its rightful place as the leading state in the Midwest and one of the fastest growing state economies in America. Energy will be a big part of that.”

On the energy front, Shepard reminded Pence that the Indiana economy has been built on fossil fuels. Pence explained, “One of the long-term assets Indiana has is we’ve been a low-cost energy state. That’s given Indiana an extraordinary competitive advantage. I think the first priority of policy going forward is that we have to make sure we preserve that.” He called it the “lodestar of maintaining low-cost energy.” He called coal “one of the great assets of the Hoosier state.”

As for energy alternatives, he cited “great progress in other areas,” citing wind, solar and nuclear power. “When people ask me where I stand on my positions on energy, I say, ‘I’m for all of the above.’”

Shepard, on behalf of a student, asked where Pence’s “green” priorities lie, as opposed to coal and traditional sources. Pence responded, “Very smart student. My hope would be we could do both.” He added that the state has a great tradition in agriculture and stewardship of the land. “I honestly believe if we come up with the right policies, we don’t have to make a choice.” The congressman added, “Creating incentives for great efficiency and greater conservation is a function of my philosophy of government. Creating mandates or establishing forcible standards on industry” is problematic.

Pence talked of elevating vocational education to



develop a workforce that is now unable to fill many advanced manufacturing jobs, citing a "skills gap." He called for federal workforce development dollars, 99% of the total with "close to that" controlled by the federal government instead to be directed by the states. He reiterated his call for taking the "Office of Procurement" and repurposing it as the "Office of State-Based Initiatives," saying it would give Indiana "flexibility to more effectively use federal dollars."

Pence quoted former Lt. Gov. John Mutz when he talked about "no adult is left behind." He said that over the past three decades, "industrial arts waned" while companies like Cummins Engines in his hometown of Columbus is seeking a better trained workforce. Pence said he wanted to create "authentic pathways" from schools to businesses and manufacturers to develop "career-based education" with a "seamless integration" between schools, business and industry.

Pence said he wanted to make education more affordable by "creating incentives" for four-year degrees to be achieved in four years, "or maybe four-year degrees in three years." He said he would look for resources to help public universities lower tuition rates.

Going forward, Pence says his campaign is all "about where we go from here."

"My first principle is this," he said. "We cannot, in these uncertain times, with certain elements of the economy slowing down, we cannot jeopardize our hard-earned reputation for fiscal responsibility." He said \$500 million should be used to strengthen reserves. "I would say let's take one out of three dollars . . . and put that in the bank. The other two of three dollars I want to use to grow the economy. We propose an across-the-board cut."

Pence noted that 90% of small businesses file taxes via personal income. "There is no more effective way to cut taxes on job creators than to cut the individual income tax rate. Lowering taxes on individuals and thereby lowering taxes on small businesses is by far the most effective way to do that."

He said the extra money in the pockets of Hoosiers is not inconsequential, and that by lowering the income tax by 10%, "It will be official: We will be the lowest tax state in the Midwest. Right now we are No. 2. That would give us one more competitive advantage for investment and it will create new jobs."

Pence vowed never to raise taxes. "Indiana has become the fiscal envy of the country," Pence said. "The budget surplus says a lot about Hoosiers. We live within our means."

As for infrastructure, Pence said he would "encourage more public/private partnerships." He cited Major Moves that "moved a lot of plans out of the cupboard" and said that he would look for more projects that are ready

to go. "One of the very first things we do in the very first month is initiate a process where we would commission a blue ribbon panel to explore a 21st Century infrastructure that would serve agriculture, logistics, advanced manufacturing and life sciences."

Shepard also spent time with Libertarian Boneham, who offered up the expected humor lines, but had little detail on how he would actually govern, something that he has absolutely no chance of doing. ❖

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## Gubernatorial forum will be rebroadcast

INDIANAPOLIS — Last night's Policy Choices for Indiana's Future Gubernatorial Forum, which featured all three candidates for Indiana governor addressing issues critical to Indiana's future, will be rebroadcast by WFYI Public Broadcasting and air in communities across Indiana in the coming weeks.

**WFYI-3 (20.3)** and most other Indiana public television stations – Aug. 23, 4:30 p.m.

**WNIN, Evansville** – Aug. 23, 8 p.m.

**WIPB, Muncie** – tentatively scheduled for Aug. 26 and/or 27, time to be determined

**WFYI-1 (20.1), Indianapolis** – Sept. 3, 10 p.m.

**WYIN, Merrillville** – Sept. 18, at 9:30 p.m.

The event, hosted by the Indiana University Public Policy Institute, a part of IU's School of Public and Environmental Affairs, attracted a capacity crowd and was broadcast live via streaming web video.

For the forum, Democrat John Gregg, Republican Mike Pence and Libertarian Rupert Boneham appeared separately in conversations with Randall Shepard, Retired Chief Justice of the Indiana Supreme Court and current IU Public Policy Institute Executive in Residence.

Discussions focused on the policy options developed by the Policy Choices for Indiana's Future commissions on Education and Workforce Development, Energy and the Environment, and State and Local Tax Policy.

"By allowing the candidates to engage in thoughtful dialogue, free from the sparring inherent to debates, we offered voters a more substantive sense of how these men would address the issues that loom ahead for Indiana," said IU Public Policy Institute Director John L. Krauss. "We're delighted that WFYI will allow even more Hoosiers to be a part of this one-of-a-kind event."

To learn more about the IU Public Policy Institute, go to <http://www.policyinstitute.iu.edu>. ❖



## Pence says he won't implement health exchange

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

NASHVILLE, Ind. - Republican gubernatorial candidate Mike Pence has notified Gov. Mitch Daniels that he will not support the implementation of the Obamacare state health exchange in Indiana.

On July 30, Daniels had sought input on the Affordable Care Act from Pence and the two other gubernatorial candidates, Democrat John Gregg and Libertarian Rupert Boneham. Pence met with Daniels at the governor's Statehouse office last week.

In a letter to Daniels released Tuesday, Pence said that he "carefully considered this option" but said there was "too much uncertainty surrounding the Affordable Care Act to make it prudent for Indiana to even consider moving forward in implementing our own exchange."

Pence made four points:

**"First, the national debate over the Affordable Care Act is far from over,"** said Pence, a vociferous opponent of Obamacare, voting against it in March 2010 and on 33 other House votes to repeal. "While the Obama Administration, its allies in Congress and the Supreme Court have had their say on this health care law, the American people will have their say in November. With such political uncertainty surrounding the Affordable Care Act, it would not be prudent for the state to require Hoosiers to spend their time and hard-earned money on the implementation of a federal health care law that may be overturned in the next Congress."

**Second, Pence said, "There is too much regulatory uncertainty surrounding the operation of exchanges. The federal government is still delinquent on complete guidance for exchanges and there are many unanswered questions. Just last week, it was revealed that the federal government still refuses to answer whether the Healthy Indiana Plan can serve as the coverage vehicle for the Medicaid expansion under the Affordable Care Act. Furthermore, a state operated exchange will still be subject to federal oversight, regulation and delay in the future. Operating our own exchange might seem like a way around the health care law's onerous regulations right now, but the way the regulations are written, the federal government will be hyper-regulating state-based exchanges. This would reduce the State of Indiana to a branch office of the Department of Health and Human Services, and leave Indiana lawmakers**

to blame for the price increases that will occur and for market related decisions that are largely outside their control. All told, this is entirely too much regulatory uncertainty to justify moving forward at this time."

**Third, Pence explained,** "There is fiscal uncertainty. The cost to Hoosier taxpayers for setting up our own exchange could be at least \$50 million per year and perhaps higher. There is no evidence that this investment will improve the lives of Hoosiers, or will lower the cost of health insurance. This is money that would be better invested in helping our kids achieve educational results, providing tax relief for all Hoosiers, or addressing the cost drivers of health care and improving quality and health outcomes."

**Finally, the Columbus Republican said,** "There is legal uncertainty surrounding state-operated exchanges. Some experts argue that the Affordable Care Act's mandate on employers, which would raise taxes on Hoosier businesses by imposing a tax penalty if those employers fail to provide federally-approved health coverage policies for their employees, can only be triggered by the granting of premium subsidies to finance purchasing individual policies on a state-based exchange. The Internal Revenue Service recently issued an interpretive rule

attempting to clarify that subsidies which clearly apply to purchases made on state-based exchanges also apply to purchases made on federal exchanges, which makes it all the more likely that the issue will be litigated at some point in the future."

Pence concluded, "With our unemployment rate at 8.2 percent and too many Hoosiers out of work, I will not support the implementation of an Indiana exchange when there is a chance that doing so would lead to a tax increase on Hoosier employers."

Pence noted that in 2007, the Indiana General Assembly crafted a "bipartisan, innovative solution on both cost and access." Called the Healthy Indiana Plan, more than 40,000 Hoosiers have access to health care through HIP. Pence noted that according to a recent survey, 94 percent of participants were satisfied with the program and 99 percent indicated that they would re-enroll. "The Healthy Indiana Plan therefore empowers Hoosiers in a way that will increase access to health care and drive down the cost, and I believe it is the model that should serve as the starting point for all future discussions of health care reform in Indiana," Pence explained. "Unfortunately, the Obama Administration and its allies in Congress charted a far different course in 2010."

Democrat John Gregg has not met with Gov. Daniels and has been noncommittal on the issue. ❖





## National money poised to spill into Senate race

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS - The increasingly competitive Indiana U.S. Senate race will see more national money pouring in. The Majority PAC, a Democratic super 527 group, made a \$500,000 TV ad buy on behalf of Democratic nominee Joe Donnelly this week. It comes after Americans for



Prosperity Super PAC pulled an ad on behalf of Republican Richard Mourdock.

WRTV reported that the AFP ad was pulled due to "creative differences about the content" but sources tell HPI that the ad simply wasn't ready after the TV time had

originally been purchased.

With the meltdown of Missouri Senate Republican nominee Todd Akin, the prospects of more national money shifting to the deadlocked Indiana Senate race are likely to increase. Akin was under intense pressure to exit the Senate race after he suggested that rape-induced pregnancy is rare, earning rebukes from Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell; U.S. Sen. John Coryn, who heads the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee; presidential nominee Mitt Romney, who called the remark "insulting," and U.S. Rep. Mike Pence, whose campaign said he "strongly disagrees" with the statement. Both Romney and Ryan tried to get Akin to leave the race.

Crossroads GPS and the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee have cancelled millions of dollars of TV ad buys in Missouri, once seen as a critical GOP pickup on its quest for a Senate majority. Akin is challenging U.S. Sen. Claire McCaskill.

HPI Columnist Mark Souder, the former Republican congressman, sees national Democratic spending for Donnelly "a more likely variable." But he adds, "Ironically, now they have to spend in Missouri which they had surrendered. Republican money probably needs to come to Mourdock, but unless he – not others

– makes a new mistake, Donnelly will start to fall and the focus will move to real battleground areas. If Mourdock is in doubt, it means the Senate will be Democratic."

Souder notes that Mourdock to date "seems to have a great sense, not given credit by you or others, of not getting sidetracked except by issues of his own choosing (legislative election of senators, Chrysler, Lincoln quotes) about which few care and he already had a record on anyway."

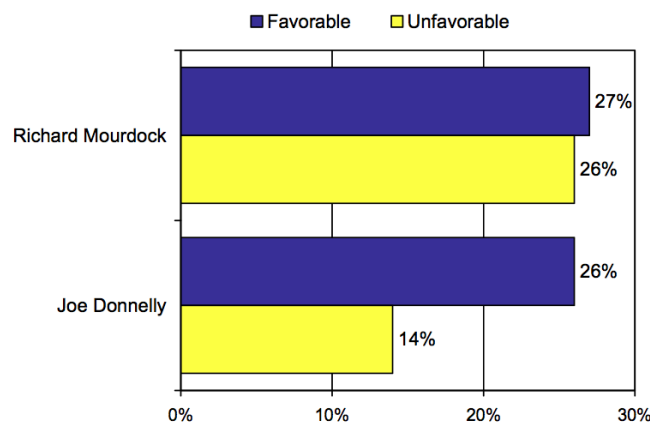
Barney Keller, spokesman for Club for Growth, which had invested close to \$2 million in Mourdock's candidacy in the primary, explained, "There hasn't been much advertising in the race yet, so I'd avoid hyperventilating over summer poll numbers because you'll look silly when Mourdock ends up winning. I would note that the DSCC hasn't made any ad reservations in Indiana, while they have in places like North Dakota and Nevada. Usually, if the national party thinks a race is competitive, they put their money where their mouth is."

In the Majority PAC ad running on behalf of Donnelly, opening with photos of U.S. servicemen, the voice over says, "They fought for us, paid into Social Security and Medicare every pay check. They earned it. But Richard Mourdock thinks Social Security and Medicare are unconstitutional. Mourdock wants to cut Social Security benefits and raise the retirement age. Mourdock even says efforts to privatize Medicare don't go far enough. The Mourdock way, the wrong way for Indiana."

The buy on Donnelly's behalf comes less than a week after two more polls show the Senate race a dead heat. A Market Research Poll conducted on behalf of the Indiana Chamber of Commerce showed Mourdock leading with a 41% to 39% margin (within the survey's margin of error). In addition to the 17% of respondents who are undecided, 3% support Libertarian candidate Andrew Horning.

Dr. Vern Kennedy of Market Research noted that "16 percent of Indiana voters who say they are completely independent will likely determine the outcome of the Senate race." Kennedy added, "Mourdock has the advantage in the election because more of the 17 percent of undecided voters on this race identify themselves as Republicans than Democrats," Kennedy explains. "For instance, among those voters undecided on the U.S. Senate race, 33 percent indicated their support for Pence for governor compared to 6 per-

OPINION OF CANDIDATES





cent who support Gregg in that race.”

But the Market Research poll shows that among “completely independent voters,” Donnelly’s fav/unfav stood at 14/4%. Among Democrat-leaning independents, Donnelly fav/unfavs stood at 43/2% while among Republican-leaning independents, he was at 7/35%. In Mourdock’s case, completely independent fav/unfavs stood at 11/24%, among independent Republicans it was 56/6% and among Democratic leaning independents, it stood at 6/53%. Democrats and Republicans were virtually equal in responding undecided, 11% and 12%. Independent voters favored Mourdock 21%, Donnelly 25%, Horning 14%, while 41% were undecided.

That kind of data is one reason why Donnelly was campaigning with former senator and governor Evan Bayh today and Wednesday, hitting most of the Northern and Central Indiana media markets. Bayh has a long history of attracting independent and Republican voters.

“I think the Democratic base is squarely in Joe Donnelly’s camp and we need to build on that and reach out to independents and Republicans because not only is that the politically sensible thing to do, it’s the only way we’re going to make progress in Washington,” Bayh told Indiana Public Media at an Indianapolis diner. “The two United States Senators who were from the same state but from different parties but had the voting record most alike were Dick Lugar and myself.”

Donnelly explained aligning himself with the model of legislators like Bayh and outgoing Republican Senator Dick Lugar connects with voters. “For me to try to make sure to keep people like Senator Bayh in mind, Senator Lugar in mind where you look and you go, ‘This is who we are as Hoosiers,’ it can’t help but be beneficial,” Donnelly said.

The Mourdock campaign told WISH-TV it thinks the images of Bayh and Donnelly together are good for the Republican. “Because it reminds voters that both these gentlemen in Congress voted for bailouts of Wall Street, for Obamacare,” said Mourdock spokesman Brose McVey.

Among female voters, Mourdock’s fav/unfavs stood at 21/27%, compared to 24/10% for Donnelly. Among men, Donnelly’s fav/unfavs stood at 27/19% and Mourdock’s were 34/24%.

Mourdock won a bitterly contested Republican primary against U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar. In that showdown, Mourdock played to his Tea Party supporters which helped him win a stunning 61-39% upset. But in doing so, Mour-



**Democratic Senate nominee Joe Donnelly (left) campaigned with former governor and senator Evan Bayh in Indianapolis on Wednesday. The pair will be in Fort Wayne, Plymouth and East Chicago today.**

dock alienated himself from many of the independents he needs to win. Among Republicans, Mourdock had a 50/9% fav/unfav in the Market Research Poll, though 35% of Republicans were neutral, suggesting that Mourdock still has work to do to bring Lugarites on board.

The Market Research Poll has Mourdock’s GOP support at 80%, while Democrat support for Donnelly is at 84%. Both are fairly typical numbers.

Jeff Brantley of the Indiana Chamber noted that at this point, “Mourdock hasn’t closed the deal.”

But Brantley notes that in the Market Research polling, Republican self-ID is up “in all state legislative districts” enough for him to believe that five or six swing districts have since been moved to “leans Republican.” That has Chamber analysts sensing a potential Republican wave developing in Indiana, which could give Mourdock a tailwind. While HPI Indiana House projections in July had the Republicans picking up 63 seats, a number Brantley wouldn’t quibble with, in a wave environment “there is a path to get to the magic” 67 seat super majority.

As for the 9% drop off of Republican support in the Chamber poll between gubernatorial nominee Mike Pence (at 50%) and Mourdock at 41% – very similar to the Rasmussen Reports drop off between presidential nominee Mitt Romney and Mourdock – Brantley notes that the two candidates have “branded themselves differently.” Pence, he said, has stayed positive in his message and has maintained control of that message. Mourdock has branded himself as an ardent Tea Party revolutionary, which does not play well with independents. “There’s real combat going on in the Senate race, but not in the governor’s race,” Brantley explained. “Any time you come out of a divisive primary, you’re going to have a harder time.”

On Tuesday, Politico included Mourdock in a story of Senate candidate “bumblers” who may jeopardize the





GOP's chance to regain the majority. Politico reported: This year, the battle for control of the Senate has turned into a far more muddled and unpredictable affair because there's no overwhelming national tide. While Democrats started out back on their heels, defending 23 seats to the GOP's 10, the unexpected weakness of several Republican candidates has left Republicans far short of the easy takeover that some once anticipated."

The story cited Mourdock, Akin and North Dakota GOP nominee Rick Berg as Republican nominees who are no longer heavy favorites to win Senate seats. Politico reported: In Indiana, conservative state Treasurer Richard Mourdock has failed to establish a lead over Democratic Rep. Joe Donnelly in the aftermath of a slashing GOP primary that turned off moderate voters. J.B. Poersch, the former executive director of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, sounded an upbeat note in an email Monday musing over the GOP's field of recruits. "The Tea Party has boxed Cornyn in from doing any real recruiting. Heitkamp and [Montana Sen. Jon] Tester and Donnelly are better candidates. They just are."

In an April/May Howey/DePauw Indiana Battleground Poll, only 12% of Lugar supporters had a favorable view of Mourdock, and 57% had an unfavorable view. In a March Howey/DePauw survey, by a 51-44% margin, the general election set of likely Hoosier voters favored the auto rescue of General Motors and Chrysler. That was unpopular with Tea Party voters, but favored by more than 60% of independent voters.

**Horse Race Status:** Tossup.

## **Governor: Pence to attend RNC**

Republican nominee Mike Pence will fly down to Tampa on Tuesday evening for the Republican National Convention. He will address the Indiana delegation on Wednesday morning, then fly back to Indiana.

Beyond Tuesday's Indiana University public policy forum, the governor's race centered on John Gregg's "clip & curl" ad to the Democrat attempts to connect Mike Pence with the Todd Akin fiasco in Missouri.

Gregg began his second TV ad drawing contrasts with Congressman Mike Pence on pay equity for women and access to Planned Parenthood's preventive health care programs. Given the recent focus on Rep. Todd Akin's comments and his co-sponsorship of legislation with Mike Pence, the ad is a timely reminder for Indiana voters of what Pence believes on social issues that affect women. "Here at Carol's Clip 'n Curl beauty salon in downtown Sandborn, they don't want to hear any more from Mike Pence," says Gregg in the ad while senior women are seen sitting beneath hair dryers or getting their hair styled. De-

tailing Pence's vote against ensuring equal pay for women, as well as his leading role in fighting to end funding for Planned Parenthood's cancer screenings for women, Gregg comments how "that didn't go over too well here at the Clip 'n Curl." The ad is the second in a series of ads featuring Gregg's friends and neighbors from his hometown of Sandborn, Indiana. "John believes that Indiana should be a place where people look out for each other," said campaign manager Rebecca Pearcey. "Cancer screening and pay equity for women are important issues by which to judge the candidates for governor, and that's what this ad tells the voters of Indiana." "I have real differences with Mike Pence," said Gregg, "and I think it's important for voters to



John Gregg's second TV ad takes place at Carol's Clip & Curl in Sandborn.

hear them. But I also believe that campaigns can be fun, which is why I will be drawing contrasts with Mike in the same way we talk about issues in Sandborn – with humor and a smile. The Washington way of slash and burn politics isn't me, and it's not the kind of campaign I intend to run. Let's hope Mike has the same viewpoint."

A week ago, Gregg used language he probably wouldn't have used at Carol's Clip & Curl. Gregg said that Pence needs to get his "ass back out to Washington, D.C." and help Hoosier farmers (NWI Times). Pence, Gregg said, has never passed a bill in his decade in Washington and "just voted for recess without addressing the drought issue facing farmers in what some think is the worst drought on record". Christy Denault, communications director for Pence's campaign, said Pence supported drought relief when he voted for a bill on Aug. 2.

It brought a rebuke from Indiana Republican Party State Chairman Eric Holcomb who said, "I don't think John Gregg's was raised to talk that way about other people. His comments today don't sound very Sandborn to me." Holcomb pointed to a string of similar remarks by Gregg on



and off the campaign trail in recent years such as calling Governor Mitch Daniels an "idiot" and saying Hoosiers "clap and bark like a bunch of trained seals."

Betty Cockrum, president and CEO of Planned Parenthood Advocates of Indiana (PPAI) attempted to link Pence to Akin. "In two short sentences, he (Akin) has devalued the lives of abused women across the country and proven that the war on women is far from over. "While I'm certain that no thinking person agrees with Rep. Akin's 'beliefs' on this issue, I'm also certain that he represents a growing faction of conservatives in this country who ignore facts and science to further their own political agendas and trample on women's rights. "Here in Indiana, we need to keep in mind that we have someone running for governor who has worked closely with Congressman Akin; someone who, in fact, co-sponsored a measure with him that would have redefined 'rape.' Indiana's own Mike Pence believes there's no such thing as 'forcible rape,' making him yet another of his gender who doesn't understand that no means no, period. End of sentence. Congressman Pence and Congressman Akin are no different," Cockrum concluded. "Both view women as second-class citizens, and both have no problem taking away preventive health care from the poor, not to mention women's legally protected rights."

Pence campaign spokeswoman Christy Denault told HPI, "Mike Pence strongly disagrees with Congressman Akin's remarks. H.R. 3 was authored by Congressman Chris Smith of New Jersey, and co-sponsored by 227 Members, including Joe Donnelly. Mike voted for the Manager's Amendment to H.R. 3 in the House Judiciary Committee on March 3, 2011, to remove the language in question."

The Associated Press reported that Donnelly, Pence and Akin joined most House lawmakers last year on a bill that would have cut off federal aid for abortion-related services and established a new category of "forcible rape." That language was later removed from the legislation. WISH-TV reported that Democrat gubernatorial nominee John Gregg's campaign is telling voters that a neutral website says that Mike Pence and Todd Akin vote together 94% of the time, and that Akin and Pence were co-sponsors of a 2011 bill to redefine rape.

**On the jobs front Pence** announced a week ago his plans to create jobs by accelerating the commercialization of new technologies and attracting new businesses. "Much of Indiana's job growth is driven by entrepreneurial ventures and companies that move into the state," said Pence. "If we want more jobs and better jobs, we have to launch and attract more high-growth, high-impact firms." Pence proposed creating a partnership with life sciences companies and university leaders to launch an industry-driven applied research institute. The private Indiana Applied Research Enterprise (IARE) will help connect university researchers with entrepreneurs and investors to increase

the volume of commercial opportunity coming from Indiana research institutions. A new Executive Innovation Network of governor-appointed business executives, entrepreneurs, investors and university executives will work to bring more investment and faster commercialization to the discoveries made in our universities. IARE and the EIN will capitalize on Indiana's strength in life sciences, which already contribute \$44 billion a year to the state's economy and, according to a 2012 Batelle Study for BioCrossroads, has \$330 billion in market potential.

"Indiana has outstanding universities doing world-class research and the right business expertise to help move those ideas into the marketplace," said Pence. "We can combine these assets to create good-paying new jobs and grow the state's life sciences sector."

**On the same day, Gregg revealed** his "Invest in Indiana Plan." The plan calls for increased taxpayer protection in economic development deals, investment in Indiana banks and opportunities for Indiana companies. The announcement is part of Gregg's Hoosier Handshake plan that he has been unveiling to voters throughout the campaign. "As governor, my first priority will be creating jobs and strengthening the economy," Gregg said, speaking at the Indiana Statehouse. "If you want to do that, you have to protect taxpayer money, invest in Indiana companies and give Indiana companies the chance to compete with out of state ones for state contracts. Under my plan, that is exactly what we will do."

The plan calls for additional taxpayer protections for funds and tax incentives used for economic development, in addition to provisions that strengthen Indiana banks and companies. In particular will: End no-strings-attached gifts of taxpayer money to out of state corporations; enact a "claw back" law that ensures fairness and transparency for all IEDC incentive packages, and will require transparency of terms of economic incentives without imposing an undue burden on companies, require IEDC to report annually on the performance of taxpayer incentives, and require reimbursement of IEDC funds if benchmarks, such as total jobs created, not met; make "Buy Indiana" mean "Buy Indiana."

Gregg said that Gov. Daniels had a good idea when he said he would divert more state funds to Indiana companies. Unfortunately, as time went on, loopholes in the law grew to take it over. "As governor, I will close those. This will give small and local businesses the chance to compete for state funds; require companies that win state contracts to sub-contract a significant amount of their work to Indiana companies; require more transparency to ensure that work contracted in Indiana is done in Indiana; bank on Indiana by banking in Indiana. Millions of dollars of the state's money is invested in Wall Street banks. As governor, I will ensure that more state money is kept in local banks



that invest their money here, in Indiana; create an Indiana Capital Investment Corporation to invest in private equity and venture capital funds that agree to establish a presence in Indiana, and to actively seek investment opportunities in Indiana; promote legislation allowing for a certain percentage of Indiana's pension funds to be invested in Indiana based venture capital funds.

**Horse Race Status:** Likely Pence

## **2nd CD: Walorski goes on attack**

Jackie Walorski has raised the temperature in this year's race for north-central Indiana's congressional seat (Allen, South Bend Tribune). The Jimtown Republican televised two advertisements earlier this summer in which she decried partisanship and talked about how she can bring the political parties together. On Tuesday, however, she released an ad that paints her opponent, Democrat Brendan Mullen, as a liberal carpetbagger. Mullen -- who was born and raised in South Bend, and now lives in Granger with his wife and two daughters -- fired back later in the day with an ad of his own. Walorski's ad begins by showing images of Washington landmarks while a narrator says, "Washington, D.C.: Home to President Obama, Nancy Pelosi and D.C. insider Brendan Mullen. "Mullen likes Washington, D.C., so much he owns three homes there," the narrator continues. "Washington liberals recruited him to move from D.C. to Indiana to run for Congress. They've showered Mullen's campaign with huge special-interest contributions, because Mullen supports their liberal agenda, including Obamacare." The three properties that Walorski characterizes as homes are rental properties that Mullen owns, his campaign manager Andy Reynolds said. "Basically, he's just held on to them as an investment," Reynolds said. "They're not homes. They're leased-out, managed investments -- no different from owning a stock or a mutual fund." **Horse Race Status:** Leans Walorski

## **8th CD: Crooks presses Bucshon on farm bill**

In light of an alarming loss of crop output due to the worst drought in decades, Dave Crooks, the Democratic candidate for United States Congress (IN-8), today challenged Congressman Bucshon to stand up for the farm communities of Southwestern Indiana and the Wabash Valley and urge his colleagues to pass the 2012 Farm Bill. With a looming Sept. 30 deadline before farm programs expire, the House Agriculture Committee passed a bipartisan farm bill in July, but instead of voting on the bipartisan legislation, Congressman Bucshon and his colleagues voted for a five week vacation. The passage of the 2012 Farm Bill before the Sept. 30 deadline is essential to providing farmers with the security and certainty they need to make planting

decisions, and to alleviate looming economic uncertainty. "This is yet another example of how dysfunctional Washington has become, and Congressman Bucshon's unwillingness to stand up for his constituents is deeply troubling. Eight district residents should give Congressman Bucshon his pink slip for taking a five-week vacation instead of doing the work that needs to be done," said Crooks. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Bucshon

## **9th CD: Farm Bureau endorses Young**

The Indiana Farm Bureau's Elect PAC informed Congressman Todd Young (R-Bloomington) that they voted this week to endorse his bid for reelection in Indiana's 9th CD (Howey Politics Indiana). "I'm thrilled to have the support of our agriculture community in southern Indiana through the Indiana Farm Bureau Elect PAC," said Young. "We have a lot of farmers and food processors in our district, and we've fought hard to make sure their voice is heard. This is recognition that we've represented our constituents well, and I look forward to pushing for more policies that benefit our Indiana ag economy. In the midst of this year's drought especially these are important issues." Both 9th District candidates met individually to discuss agriculture policy with the 9th District members of the Elect PAC in Seymour on Monday evening, and the board voted to endorse Young after those meetings. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Young

## **Indiana General Assembly**

### **SD50: White calls for school bus belts**

New school buses should have seat belts installed before they come off the assembly line, Democratic state Senate hopeful Terry White is saying (Bradner, Evansville Courier & Press). White, the Warrick County Democratic chairman who is challenging state Sen. Vaneta Becker, R-Evansville, for the District 50 seat, made his proposal last week. White cited National Highway Transportation Safety Association statistics indicating that each day there are an average of 144 school bus-related traffic accidents, and that an average of 21 school-age children die in crashes related to school transportation each year. He said installing seat belts on all new school buses would cost about \$6.4 million per year, over the next 15 years or so until all of Indiana's 16,353 school buses — most of which are currently without seat belts — are replaced. "When our children get on the bus and don't buckle up, the habit of seat belt use is not reinforced and we miss a prime training opportunity. School buses can be important extensions of the classroom for training children to build this critical lifelong habit," White said. **Horse Race Status:** Leans Becker



### **SD28 & 32: Adkins, Barnes education proposals**

Michael Adkins and John Barnes, Democratic candidates for State Senate in Districts 28 and 32, announced five joint legislative proposals concerning education. The candidates said that Indiana needs to focus taxpayer dollars toward essential services that provide a strong return on investment. Education, they pointed out, returns as much as \$6 for every dollar invested.

Their proposals include the elimination of all non-federally mandated standardized tests; the creation of a new vocational/technical degree program for high school students, a low-interest student loan program, a new teacher mentoring program, and the creation of a retired teachers advisory council.

### **Attorney General: Fleming seeks reforms**

Democrat Kay Fleming promised Wednesday to lead reform of the Department of Child Services and seek improvements to the state's sex offender registry if she is elected Indiana attorney general (NWI Times). During the past two months, the Indianapolis attorney said she has met with Hoosiers statewide who told her DCS isn't working as well as it should. Fleming said she would use her position to help coordinate the child protection work of state and local officials "to ensure that children can be kept safe and resources are not squandered." Also needing better oversight is Indiana's sex offender registry, Fleming said. The list is currently managed by the Indiana Department of Correction with input from each of the state's 92 counties and the Indiana Sheriff's Association. "Many of our county officials are stretched thin as it is," Fleming said. "The AG's office has the resources to maintain this list, ensure that it has the information that law enforcement needs and ensure that it complies with federal requirements." Fleming is running for attorney general against Republican Greg Zoeller, who is seeking a second four-year term. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Zoeller

### **Presidential: Romney in Indy next week**

President Barack Obama and Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney are both planning to vie for veterans' support in Indianapolis (Associated Press). Romney is scheduled to speak Aug. 29 at the American Legion's national convention in the city. Obama is to deliver remarks by video a day earlier. Romney's speech will come the day before he is expected to officially accept

the Republican nomination during the GOP convention in Tampa.

First Lady Michelle Obama is to attend a campaign fundraiser at Lucas Oil Stadium today.

**A University of Colorado analysis** of state-by-state factors leading to the Electoral College selection of every U.S. president since 1980 forecasts that the 2012 winner will be Mitt Romney. The key is the economy, say political science professors Kenneth Bickers of CU-Boulder and Michael Berry of CU Denver. Their prediction model stresses economic data from the 50 states and the District of Columbia, including both state and national unemployment figures as well as changes in real per capita income, among other factors.

"Based on our forecasting model, it becomes clear that the president is in electoral trouble," said Bickers, also director of the CU in DC Internship Program. According to their analysis, President Barack Obama will win 218 votes in the Electoral College, short of the 270 he needs. And though they chiefly focus on the Electoral College, the political scientists predict Romney will win 52.9 percent of the popular vote to Obama's 47.1 percent, when considering only the two major political parties.

"For the last eight presidential elections, this model has correctly predicted the winner," said Berry. "The economy has seen some improvement since President Obama took office. What remains to be seen is whether voters will consider the economy in relative or absolute terms. If it's the former, the president may receive credit for the economy's trajectory and win a second term. In the latter case, Romney should pick up a number of states Obama won in 2008." ❖



Hurricane Isaac may join Republicans in Tampa for the national convention that begins Monday. The Wall Street Journal reports today the storm could cancel the convention



## No 'Game Change' drama with Paul Ryan this time

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND - "Game Change" is the name of the HBO film detailing John McCain's attempt to change a lagging '08 campaign by gambling on Sarah Palin as a running mate.

Now, Mitt Romney selects Paul Ryan in another "game change" effort. Let's ponder some questions about similarities and differences and the odds on this gamble.



**Q.** What's similar?

**A.** Each time, the Republican presidential candidate was trailing, wasn't exactly exciting the voters and was having trouble getting the party's conservative base fired up. Palin brought some excitement and fired up the base. Ryan has done the same.

**Q.** What's different?

**A.** Palin brought more of an immediate boost. In initial opinion sampling, Ryan polled the worst as a vice presidential choice since the ill-planned introduction of Dan Quayle in 1988. But while Palin crashed by campaign close, with negative impact on McCain's chances, Ryan could have more staying power.

**Q.** Why could Ryan hold up better?

**A.** Palin wasn't ready for prime time. Ryan is. He won't have trouble answering what newspapers he reads. He may not be a foreign policy expert, but he won't talk about ability to see Russia. Palin fans mistakenly thought it was peachy keen that she wasn't a Washington insider. Ryan, however, will come across as more ready to step into the leading role in Washington because he is a career politician, an insider. Can't get more "inside" than House Budget Committee chairman.

**Q.** So, is this gamble going to work?

**A.** Depends on how voters, especially the oft-decisive independent and centrist voters, come to view the "Ryan budget" and changes proposed by the budget's author on Medicare, Social Security and the vast number of federal programs that Ryan would cut.

**Q.** What's the best case scenario for Romney?

**A.** That those key voters won't believe Romney is for all those cuts, especially changing Medicare "as we know it," but that he is determined to follow some of Ryan's efforts to cut spending in order to avoid fiscal disaster and actually to save rather than destroy popular federal programs.

**Q.** Worst case scenario for Romney?

**A.** That those voters will conclude Romney must be for changing Medicare to vouchers, privatizing Social Security and cutting education and such because he put Ryan on the ticket, that he's just using a federal debt scare to promote his tax cuts, not to remedy woes in popular programs.

**Q.** Will introduction of a real difference in governmental philosophy lead to a higher level of campaign discussion?

**A.** No.

**Q.** Will selection of Ryan affect the presidential outcome in Indiana?

**A.** No. Romney is well ahead in Indiana. Ryan, even if a drag on the ticket nationally, wouldn't enable Obama to pull another Hoosier upset.

**Q.** Will it affect the outcome in Michigan?

**A.** No. Obama is well ahead in Michigan. Ryan, even if he boosts the ticket nationally, wouldn't enable Romney to win Michigan.

**Q.** OK, where will it make a difference?

**A.** Romney-Ryan obviously target Virginia, where the running mate's introduction occurred. It's close there, with Obama now just a little ahead. They also hope the choice will cement a win in North Carolina, also close, with Romney now just a little ahead, and will lead to carrying Ryan's home state, Wisconsin, even though Obama has a fairly good margin there. The worst fear of Republican strategists is that emphasis on Ryan's Medicare views will bring defeat in Florida.

**Q.** Will Ryan affect Senate and House races?

**A.** Democrats hope it will. Republicans hope it won't. Democratic candidates such as Joe Donnelly, Senate nominee in Indiana, welcome focus on Medicare and Social Security. Donnelly quickly hit Republican opponent Richard Mourdock as backing Ryan budget plans to "dismantle" Medicare and for questioning the constitutionality of Social Security. Some Republican candidates wanted to steer clear of debate over Medicare, Social Security and Ryan budget cuts and just talk about jobs. Now, they can't.

**Q.** Will a "Game Change" sequel depict Paul Ryan as another Sarah Palin?

**A.** No. And Tina Fey won't be able to portray him on "Saturday Night Live." But whether this "Game Change" brings a happy ending or another losing gamble for a Republican presidential nominee will be told in chapters yet to be written. ❖

**Colwell has covered politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune.**



## Toll bridge could help Gregg in Lake County

By **RICH JAMES**

MERRILLVILLE – He may be trailing in the polls, but Democratic gubernatorial candidate John Gregg ought to get every vote cast in Lake County. And Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott – God bless him – is leading the charge.

At issue is the Cline Avenue bridge that has been closed since the fall of 2009. It was a wonderful link from Interstate 94 to Chicago and the Gary/Chicago International Airport and other points.



The elevated highway opened in the early 1980s as the avenue to the most concentrated steel-making region in the country. A decade or so later, it became Main Street for Lake County's four casinos.

While the issue of the future of the highway isn't new, it suddenly is playing a role in the governor's race. And beyond that,

it reinforces the way Indiana Republicans feel about Lake County, which is the most heavily Democratic area of the state.

Gov. Mitch Daniels, shortly after the highway was closed, said the state wouldn't pay to rebuild the elevated structure, but the state is paying to build a new freeway from Evansville to Indianapolis. Go figure.

The Times of Northwest Indiana brought the issue to the fore a week ago in terms of the governor's race and the fact the highway will be rebuilt as a toll road. It also quotes Daniels as saying, "Frankly, the idea that the users pay for a very specific facility or service, I think is a very fair one, instead of charging people who will never use the bridge for it."

**Republican gubernatorial** candidate Mike Pence, who is a clone of Daniels although he's intellectually inferior, agrees with the governor. A campaign spokesman said Pence believes generally that roads ought to be paid for by those who use them.

Gregg said, "...were that a bridge from Indianapolis into one of the (nearby) counties, it would have been fixed right away. It shows the bias this current administration has toward Northwest Indiana."

Gregg added that Cline Avenue ought to be a freeway in that it is a direct connection to Chicago, which is the third largest metropolitan area in the nation. "That's

an asset. That's something we need to brag about," Gregg added.

There is something to be said about building future highways through a public-private partnership and operating them as toll roads, as will be the case with the Illiana Expressway across southern Lake County into Illinois.

But in terms of Cline Avenue, we aren't talking about a new road, but rather repairing a part of the highway that was built as a freeway. It also isn't totally fair for Daniels and Pence to say those who use a road ought to pay the fare, not those who don't.

**I can't agree with that** 100 percent since those who never will drive on a toll road do reap benefits, and the road may well be a benefit to the region, resulting in the relocation of business and creation of jobs.

It is somewhat like the school issue. Do Daniels and Pence think those without children in public schools should be exempt from paying taxes that support schools? Even if you don't have children in school any longer – or never did – the schools are a benefit to the community and the quality of life. Everyone ought to pay.

And back to McDermott who doubles as Lake County Democratic chairman? He is so adamant that Cline should continue to be a freeway that he vowed last week never to drive on it if it is a toll road.

"For the rest of my life I will drive around it. I'll be 80 years old and I'll drive around it," McDermott said.

I'm not sure that I can make the same pledge, but I admire his stance. And if nothing else, it ought to send droves of Democrats to the polls in November.

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Perhaps the most upsetting campaign ad that I've seen this year is the billboard around Plymouth. It reads: "The Navy SEALs removed one threat to America... The voters must remove the other."

It was paid for by the Tea Party group in Marshall and Fulton counties. To compare the president to Osama bin Laden is an egregious act. It shows just how dangerous the Tea Party people can be.

A small group protested at the billboard last week, but the Indiana GOP hierarchy hasn't said a word. What do you think, Pence? How about state GOP Chairman Eric Holcomb? Afraid to offend the tea folks?

Those kinds of billboards explain why Democratic U.S. Senate candidate Joe Donnelly is tied in the polls with Republican Richard Mourdock, the darling of the Tea Party.

I wonder what the highly respected Sen. Richard Lugar, who lost to Mourdock, thinks. I wonder if Lugar might just vote for Donnelly. If I were a betting man, I'd say he ... ❖

**Rich James is the former editorial page editor and columnist for the Post-Tribune in Merrillville.**



## Mitch's Ryan man crush

By SHAW R. FRIEDMAN

LAPORTE – Few were as ecstatic over Mitt Romney's choice of Paul Ryan as was our own governor. Why not? They both have a way of spouting right-wing economic theory without sounding threatening or even divisive.

But let's understand what the bro-mance between the two is really built upon: It continues the same top-down economic philosophy that has been applied for the last 30 years and has meant the breakdown of America's middle class and a lowering of quality of life across the board. Paul Ryan and Mitch share in common a belief that only the wealthy and the well-to-do have the knowledge, the insight, the ability to shape policy and to define what's best for the rest of us.



How has that gone the last 30 years with only a brief respite during the Clinton presidency and now just a few years under Barack Obama? The top one percent in

our country has tripled their share of the nation's wealth since 1980. How did it happen? By sucking up shares of America's wealth that had previously gone to the rest of us.

**Oblivious to the needs** of the rest of us, the Ryan/Daniels' apologists for the wealthy helped the one percent increase their take by offshoring middle class jobs, slashing American wages and benefits in just about every sector, busting the ability of unions to fight back, deregulating corporate and financial institutions, allowing the biggest and mightiest to dodge their tax obligations and privatizing and gutting public services from schools to highways to food stamps and allowing our elections to be bought and paid for by billionaires.

Now social Darwinists like Mitch and Paul Ryan think we need more of the same. The notion of community, that we're in this all together, that we somehow rise and fall based on the general welfare or common good, is lost on these folks. Fans of the uber-greedy, self-centered Ayn Rand, they mouth platitudes about advancing us as a nation together but push policies that further divide us and insulate the rich from any sense of obligation to the larger community.

Paul Ryan's so-called "Roadmap for America's Future" actually epitomizes the social Darwinism at the core of today's Republican Party. Reward the rich, penalize the poor and let everyone else fend for themselves. It's a dog-eat-dog world and that's how Ryan and Mitch see it.

Ryan and his ideological compatriots like Mitch Daniels consistently leave the wealthiest individuals and corporations among us untouched as they spout deficit reduction plans. The Ryan budget would cut \$3.3 trillion from low income programs over the next decade. The biggest cuts would be in Medicaid, forcing states to drop coverage to an estimated 14 million to 28 million low-income persons, according to the non-partisan Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

**Ryan would turn the highly** successful Medicare plan – whose administrative costs are far lower than the private health sector now – into a privatized voucher program shifting costs onto seniors. His budget would reduce housing assistance and job training and slash the highly acclaimed Pell grants for college tuition. Though Social Security could be permanently fixed by simply raising the amount of income on which the payroll tax is applied, Ryan and Mitch talk of "entitlement meltdowns" as justification for cutting benefits or raising the retirement age.

Don't worry – the rich are protected under the Ryan, Mitch-supported budgets. Even though the 400 richest Americans currently have more wealth than the bottom 150 million of us put together, the Ryan budget would provide a substantial tax cut to the very wealthy. It's pure social Darwinism combined with the kind of fuzzy math used by Mitch Daniels when he was White House budget director. Who could forget that it was Mitch Daniels who once said that the Bush tax cuts for the wealthy would have "zero" impact on the deficits?

The massive redistribution of wealth in our country has led to an undermining of the unifying notion that we are "all in this together." Not only has it robbed millions of Americans of their share of the American dream, it's mugged the average citizen of a belief in that unifying ethos that we all have a chance if we work hard and play by the rules. Fair and just behavior – especially by the wealthy and powerful – is a pretty important staple for holding us together as a people.

The Ryan/Daniels notion that we're on our own harkens back to a time in the late 19th Century when social Darwinism was used as a justification for the inequities and cruelties of that time. It allowed John D. Rockefeller to claim the fortune he accumulated in the Standard Oil Trust through monopoly practices and corrupt government was "merely a survival of the fittest...the working out of a law of nature and God."

**As a people, we've rejected** social Darwinism in other ages and have insisted that the middle class have a fighting chance to become the engine of our economy and our democracy. We built important safety nets to help catch those who through circumstances or no fault of their own fell backward as we tried to march forward together.

This fall's election is the ultimate test at the na-



tional level between the social Darwinism promoted by the likes of Paul Ryan and Mitch Daniels vs. those who believe we've got to curb the excesses of unfettered, unregulated markets and make sure that the benefits of free enterprise are spread more evenly and distributed in a fairer way. We all are better off when we invest in the "common good" – public schools, public universities, public transportation, public health, public parks, public safety and on and on.

The Ryan budget and social Darwinism are a step back into the darkness and there's no amount of glib or genial talk by Paul Ryan or Mitch Daniels that can mask that basic fact. ❖

**Shaw R. Friedman is a LaPorte attorney and a regular contributor to Howey Politics Indiana.**

## Mayors battle fiscal hurricanes

By **MORTON J. MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS - "Fred," I said as my neighbor and I sat outdoors enjoying the unfamiliar cool temperatures, "Why have you never run for mayor?"

"Too much work," he responded. "All that city-wide campaigning for limited authority and crushing responsibility. Not for me."



"Yet you have ideas and principles that deserve attention," I insisted.

"Not sufficient," he said. "Ideas are easy to formulate yet hard to finance. Principles get you respect, but not votes; they have no value as political currency."

"Fred," I said, "there are many Hoosier mayors who maintain consistent ideas and loyalty to their principles."

"So you might believe," he replied, "if you were ignorant and naïve."

"Take for example," I offered, getting down to actuality, "Mayor Moore in Elkhart. He's advocating greater diversity in Elkhart's economy. At first glance that's a softball, easy to hit anywhere on the field. But we know that it's a potential political powder keg because the city and the county are so heavily dependent on the RV industry and manufacturing in general.

"How are the RV people and other manufacturers going to take such a call for diversity? Will they want to see other sectors of the economy courted and supported with their tax money? That's why the mayor came out in favor of projects, like high speed Internet service, that will benefit no one sector in particular, but offers opportunities for all."

"A smart move," Fred agreed.

**"Just as smart," I said,** "as the move by Mayor

Winnecke of Evansville to support city-wide fiber optic installation as part of the water system's metering of usage. Who can object? The idea surfaced in the previous administration and could make the entire city an open wi-fi community. Everyone can look in the mirror and see a winner."

Fred stood his ground. "Those are charming examples of mayors floating with the tide, but they have the same fiscal problems faced by every mayor in Indiana. Hurricane winds are pushing their boats, large and small against the rocks. The tide is not threatening their ability to stay afloat as is the local revenue deficiency dictated by the Indiana General Assembly.

"Even Indianapolis, our biggest city, is being tossed about because there is a serious shortfall of millions of dollars needed to maintain equitable pay scales for city employees and therefore city services. Mayor Ballard might as well be Gorton's Gloucester fisherman.

**"Mayor Brainard in Carmel** is battling to keep his innovated programs afloat. Mayor McDermott in Hammond had to cut bus service in his city. These are just examples of what is going on everywhere.

"The property tax, which used to be the sound foundation of local government finance, has been diminished in importance. Cities and towns, libraries and school districts are being starved of money so the ideologues in the legislature can proclaim how they are cutting taxes without saying how services are being cut.

"Why would any rational person run for a local office in Indiana?" he concluded.

"I'll give you a reason," I said. "To make the reality clear to the voters. To show people how the legislature is cheating them out of the state and local services they need and deserve. To stand up and attempt to right the wrongs being done in the name of 'fiscal conservatism'."

"Well," Fred rose to leave, "I'm not Don Quixote who dreams impossible dreams."

"If not you, then who?" I asked, but he was out of range for my voice. ❖

**Mr. Marcus is an independent economist, writer and speaker formerly with the IU Kelley School of Business.**





**Eric Bradner, Evansville Courier & Press:** How Indiana should handle implementing the health care law truly is in the next governor's hands after a recent decision by federal officials. Gov. Mitch Daniels' administration has been waiting since the law passed for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to rule on whether the Healthy Indiana Plan — an initiative launched under Daniels — can continue. He sees it as a cheaper program that requires participants to pay small amounts into health savings accounts, and incentivizes preventive care. He's suggested using it to cover the Medicaid expansion envisioned by the health care law. However, instead of giving the state the green light to do that, federal officials gave Indiana just a one-year extension of the plan — postponing until later, perhaps 2013, a final decision on whether the Healthy Indiana Plan can be used for Medicaid. "We're disappointed that after two years, Indiana still does not have an answer about the long-term future of HIP," said Michael Gargano, the secretary of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration. "We will be forced to make a difficult decision about continuing HIP enrollment for a program that likely won't exist after 2013. States have been seeking answers and flexibility, and this response hampers innovation and efforts to plan." ❖

**Elena Marks, Bloomberg News:** Texas Governor Rick Perry says he doesn't want his state to be "an appendage of the federal government when it comes to health care." So he, like a handful of other Republican governors, has publicly refused to set up an insurance exchange, as called for by the Affordable Care Act. All the governors in this group -- including Nikki Haley of South Carolina, Bobby Jindal of Louisiana and Rick Scott of Florida -- are states' rights advocates. Yet if they don't create the exchanges, they will bring about precisely what they oppose: a federal takeover of a major part of their states' insurance systems. The federal government will come in and build an exchange for them, one that will be extremely difficult to tailor to local needs. The exchanges are meant to provide private insurance options for families and small businesses. Even former Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, a Republican who opposes most of the health-care law, strongly endorses state health-insurance exchanges and is urging governors to set up their own. And Mike Leavitt, who was President George W. Bush's secretary of Health and Human Services and is now the leader of Mitt Romney's transition team, is advising states on how to set up exchanges. Nevertheless, along with the four governors who have publicly rejected exchanges, 15 more have not declared whether they will set them up. Contrary to the notion that the exchanges would somehow act as instruments of federal control,

states are allowed plenty of leeway to create systems that conform to local needs and values. The exchange that already exists in Utah, for example, primarily provides people with the information they need to help them choose an insurance plan. And Utah law explicitly prohibits any plan in the exchange from offering coverage for abortions. Massachusetts and Vermont, in contrast, impose stiff regulations on their insurance markets. It's not too late for any state to start building its own exchange. ❖

**Dana Millbank, Washington Post:** Has God forsaken the Republican Party? Well, sit in judgment of what's happened in the past few days: A report comes out that a couple dozen House Republicans engaged in an alcohol-induced frolic, in one case nude, in the Sea of Galilee, where Jesus is believed to have walked on water, calmed the storm and, nearby, turned water into wine and performed the miracle of the loaves and fishes. Rep. Todd Akin, Missouri's Republican nominee for Senate, suggests there is such a thing as "legitimate rape" and purports that women's bodies have mysterious ways to repel the seed of rapists. He spends the next 48 hours rejecting GOP leaders' demands that he quit the race. Weather forecasts show that a storm, likely to grow into Hurricane Isaac, may

be chugging toward . . . Tampa, where Republicans will open their quadrennial nominating convention on Monday. Coincidence? Or part of some Intelligent Design? By their own logic, Republicans and their conservative allies should be concerned that Isaac is a form of divine retribution. Last year, Rep. Michele Bachmann, then a Republican presidential candidate, said that the East Coast earthquake and Hurricane Irene — another "I" storm, but not an Old Testament one — were attempts by God "to get the attention of the politicians." In remarks later termed a "joke," she said: "It's time for an act of God and we're getting it." The influential conservative broadcaster Glenn Beck said last year that the Japanese earthquake and tsunami were God's "message being sent" to that country. A year earlier, Christian broadcaster and former GOP presidential candidate Pat Robertson tied the Haitian earthquake to that country's "pact to the devil." Previously, Robertson had argued that Hurricane Katrina was God's punishment for abortion, while the Rev. John Hagee said the storm was God's way of punishing homosexuality. Even if you don't believe God uses meteorological phenomena to express His will, it's difficult for mere mortals to explain what is happening to the GOP just now. By most earthly measures, President Obama has no business being reelected. No president since World War II has won reelection with the unemployment rate north of 7.4 percent. But instead of being swept into office by the worst economic recovery since the Great Depression, Republicans are in danger of losing an election. ❖





## **Mourdock won't release emails**

INDIANAPOLIS - According to documents released this week, Indiana Treasurer Richard Mourdock never contacted his attorney in his suit to liquidate Chrysler via e-mail despite more than 100,000 Indiana jobs and more than \$2 million taxpayer dollars being at stake (Howey Politics Indiana). Mourdock, in response to a public records request for any electronic mail between himself and Glenn Kurtz of White & Case, LLP, claimed that no such communication existed. Kurtz is Global Chair of Commercial Litigation at White & Case, a Manhattan-based law firm that invoiced Mourdock \$2.8 million for Chrysler-related fees and expenses. He is the signatory for White & Case



on multiple contracts and invoices for the Treasury, but he apparently was never in contact with the Treasurer at the time immediately before, during, or immediately after the case was filed and tried. Democrats, frustrated by Mourdock's troubling pattern of silence, today called on his then-counsel and current campaign manager, Jim Holden, to answer questions about the lawsuit and the stunning lack of communication between Mourdock and the senior attorney on the case. The Treasurer's office has declined to release any record of Holden's communications despite a public records request. "Richard Mourdock filed a partisan lawsuit that put more than 100,000 Indiana jobs at risk," said Indiana Democratic Party Chair Dan Parker. "We find it hard to believe that Richard Mourdock signed a multi-million dollar contract without emailing his attorney even once, and we hope Mr. Holden can help us understand why. Hoosiers deserve a responsible steward of their

tax dollars, not a 'my way or the highway' partisan that wastes those dollars on political causes with no oversight or accountability."

## **CBO warns of 'fiscal cliff'**

WASHINGTON - The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office on Wednesday warned the economy will enter a recession next year if the country goes over the so-called fiscal cliff (The Hill). In its most dire warning yet about the fiscal cliff yet, the CBO said the economy would contract by 0.5 percent in calendar year 2013 if the Bush-era tax rates expire and automatic spending cuts are implemented. Unemployment also would rise from 8.2 percent in 2012 to 9.1 percent next year, it estimates. The contraction would be very severe in the first half of 2013. CBO sees the economy contracting by 2.9 percent in the first half-- deeper than the 1.3 percent negative growth it had seen previously from the fiscal cliff.

## **Hancock coroner guilty, resigns, runs**

GREENFIELD - Tamara Vangundy, the Hancock County Coroner who pleaded guilty in a drunken driving case, is resigning. Vangundy made the announcement after she was sentenced to one-year probation in Hancock Superior Court Wednesday. According to the Greenfield Daily Reporter, Vangundy said she hopes to be re-elected in November. Vangundy, 49, is guilty of official misconduct and operating a vehicle while intoxicated, both misdemeanors. Court documents state that Vangundy appeared intoxicated when she arrived a death investigation on May 2. She told police she drove her own car to a suicide

scene near New Palestine after drinking several glasses of wine. A portable breath test registered a blood-alcohol content of .16, twice the level of what is considered drunk in Indiana.

## **Attorney advised Philpot on pay**

HAMMOND - Lake County Coroner Thomas Philpot received a letter telling him he did not need County Council approval to receive incentive payments from a child support incentive fund, according to evidence introduced on the third day of his fraud and theft trial (NWI Times). The letter was written by David Saks, an attorney hired by the Lake County Council to advise the clerk's office during Philpot's term as Lake County clerk. Philpot is charged with three counts of mail fraud and two counts of theft of government funds. Prosecutors allege Philpot received about \$24,000 in incentive payments between 2004 and 2009 that he knew he was not entitled to without Lake County Council approval. If convicted, he faces up to 25 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for each mail fraud count, and up to 10 years in prison and a \$250,000 fine for each theft count.

## **DCS hearing begins evaluation**

INDIANAPOLIS - An in-depth evaluation of the state agency tasked with child protection began Wednesday with hours of testimony from state staffers that included some regret and some promises for the future (Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Sen. Travis Holdman, R-Markle, chairman of the evaluation committee, kicked off the first meeting by cautioning against sensationalism and political posturing on the issue.