

The Howey Political Report



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“QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“The window of history is still open....”

- U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar, to WTHR-TV, on the destruction of half the Soviet nuclear arsenal, after he was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.

A disastrous week for David McIntosh

Rebuked on accuracy of ad, basketball

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

The Howey Political Report

INDIANAPOLIS - No matter how the Republicans tried to put a positive spin on it, last week was a disastrous one for gubernatorial nominee David McIntosh.

First came his decision to endorse one-class high school basketball, which earned him TV coverage on Aug. 21, and about a dozen newspaper editorials and columns telling him he was “out of bounds” (*Indianapolis Star*) and tossing up “airballs” (*Anderson Herald-Bulletin*). More ominously, the normally friendly and sympathetic *Star* editorialists noted, “But even if he does lose the race, McIntosh can serve an important role in shaping the debate....”

Then Gov. Frank O’Bannon extended his gasoline tax suspension through the Labor Day holiday and Indiana Democrats released a Garin-Hart-Yang Poll showing the governor was leading 53 to 30 percent.

McIntosh’s week ended when the campaign of Gov. O’Bannon ripped a page right out of the 1996 playbook: they called the Republican on what they considered erroneous information on a TV ad about property taxes. It was reminiscent of Stephen Goldsmith’s 38-tax increase assault against O’Bannon in early September 1996, one the heavily favored Republican had to withdraw and one that many believe sent him on a tailspin he was never to halt.

The William Statom TV ad in which the Muncie man insisted his property taxes had “doubled” on his “house” just didn’t add up. WISH-TV reported that Statom’s tax bill went up from \$804 in 1991 to \$1,101 last year. The *Indianapolis Star* reported Statom’s tax bill went up from \$773.26 in 1992

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CNN POLL DEADLOCKED: A CNN/USA Today/Gallup Poll had the presidential race virtually deadlocked, with Bush leading Gore, 46 to 45 percent. The poll was conducted Aug. 24-27 and consisted of 1,019 adults, 664 described as likely voters. The sample error was +/- 4.1 percent. Green Party nominee Ralph Nader came in at 3 percent and Pat Buchanan of the Reform Party had 1 percent.

GORE STILL LEADS IN NEWSWEEK POLL: Democrat Al Gore had a 46 to 42 percent lead over Republican George W. Bush in the latest Newsweek Poll released over the weekend. Senior editor Howard Fineman wrote, "As Labor Day approaches, Bush is in an unaccustomed, uncomfortable new place: the fight of his life. For now at least, Gore has managed to emerge from the shadow of Bill Clinton, to sell himself as the champion of government aid for the middle class and to impress insiders with his relentless and strategic savvy. Bush, by contrast, seemed unsure of his message and his game plan and shaky on details of his own sweeping proposals. The numbers portend a down-to-the-wire race, perhaps the closest since 1960."

BUSH TO VISIT INDIANAPO-

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McIntosh, *from page 1*

to \$1,101.38, an increase of 42 percent.

The sequence had Republican Party pros shaking their heads in disbelief. "How could they not have checked out the math on the man in that ad," one incredulous House Republican asked HPR. The McIntosh campaign only made things worse when lamely defended the ad and kept it on rotation after telling WTHR-TV that it would be pulled.

"In his mind, they have doubled. Conceptually, the ad is correct," McIntosh campaign manager Kelli Waggoner told the *Indianapolis Star*. She told Terry Burns of the *Times of Northwest Indiana*, "I think we talked about property tax bills going up. In (Statom's) mind, he believes they have doubled."

Even more embarrassing, Mike Smith of the Associated Press reported that McIntosh's own property taxes have not doubled. Smith wrote for AP, "According to the Delaware County treasurer's office, the bill for 1994 taxes payable in 1995 was \$3,321. It went down slightly the next year, and then dropped to \$2,730 for 1997. For taxes payable in 1998, the first due under O'Bannon's watch, the bill

was \$2,769. It dropped to \$2,556 the next year, and was \$2,563 this year. During O'Bannon's term, McIntosh's property taxes dropped 7.5 percent."

Smith reported, "Waggoner said she couldn't comment specifically about the tax bills because she had not seen them."

All of this occurred just as the Republicans were making a case that McIntosh had positioned himself to make a credible homestretch challenge by Labor Day. Even the release of the McLaughlin poll showing him trailing O'Bannon by 8.7 percent was more of a staggering event that a finesse point - it was delayed almost a week after the survey's Lugar and Bush numbers were publicized.

Hostage to rhetoric

The pain McIntosh's campaign is inflicting on itself is eerily similar to the way Stephen Goldsmith's campaign sloganeering eventually doomed the effort. In 1996, Goldsmith had preached "smaller government is better."

But the mayor had spent \$1.2 billion more in his first four years as mayor of Indianapolis than Bill Hudnut had in his final four years. The city's long-term debt load had increased by \$170 million.

Goldsmith found himself trying to shoe-horn his statistics into a slogan that didn't fit and that Hoosier voters didn't buy.

"In Indianapolis, we have demonstrated that smaller government and low taxes can create growth and opportunity," said Goldsmith in September 1996. "The same prescription - cutting property taxes, reducing regulation, and shrinking the size of government - can help prepare our state for the 21st Century."

On Sept. 12, 1996, O'Bannon countered with a TV commercial that made this claim: "The truth is, it's under Goldsmith as mayor that taxes and fees have gone up. He increased spending a billion dollars ... and forced the city deeper in debt."

The O'Bannon campaign readily pulled out tax bills in that 1996 sequence, with campaign manager Tom New using his own to show - this time - that his city taxes had increased from \$431.91 in 1994 to \$455.03 in 1995. The idea that the O'Bannon camp might actually produce real tax bills (with more pending on other conspicuous Republicans) apparently didn't dawn on the McIntosh campaign.

McIntosh came up with his "guaranteed 25-percent property tax cut" in April of this year, months before he was able to substantiate the workings of such a plan. He had laid the premise for that tax cut earlier in the year, declaring that property taxes had doubled, something that former Republican chairman Al Hubbard had been saying in his faxed letters to supporters and opinion leaders in the last part of 1999. It was an assertion the late Harrison Ullmann contested in his final published story (April 20 edition of *NUVO Newsweekly*). Ullmann reported that in 1989, "Hoosier schools and local governments levied \$2.9 billion in property taxes. By 1998, the levy was up to \$4.4 billion. That's not double."

Ullmann wrote somewhat prophetically, "It's not enough to have a candidate who tells half the truth about taxes because we need a governor who tells the

whole truth. If you have a candidate who only tells half the truth, then you would have a governor who also tells half a lie and that's reason enough not to hire the son of a bitch."

Missed opportunity

The missed opportunity for Republicans is had they not been held hostage by the "property taxes have doubled" sloganeering, the message William Statom and the McIntosh campaign were trying to deliver might have been a compelling message for the Indiana voter and a winning issue had a real person with one real house where property taxes really had doubled been located and used.

The last HPR/TeleResearch Poll released on June 19 showed that property tax reform was rated the top issue by likely statewide voters (30 percent, compared to 29.5 percent for improving public education). Instead, the McIntosh message was garbled, the opportunity squandered, and the candidate's credibility tainted.

McIntosh and LG nominee Murray Clark tried to carry on as if nothing serious had happened. McIntosh told the *South Bend Tribune* over the weekend that he would "absolutely not" pull the TV ad.

Clark told the *Tribune* that the campaign's mistake was referring to Statom's taxes on "my house."

"They called poor old Will a liar," Clark said, and brushed off the O'Bannon assault as an "effort to distract voters."

The bottom line is that in a week when the incumbent governor awarded \$3.3 million in school safety grants to 196 districts in 84 counties; announced that Klipsch Audio Technologies was keeping 55 jobs in Indianapolis and adding 132 more; extended the gas tax suspension; and announced brownfield grants in 10 cities, the challenger has to run a perfect strategy. And that didn't even come close to happening for David McIntosh last week. ❖

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LIS ON SEPT. 6: Republican presidential nominee George W. Bush will appear at a Republican National Committee Presidential Trust fund-raising event on Sept. 6 at the Westin Hotel in downtown Indianapolis. The fund-raiser will be a \$1,000-a-person event.

RECORD GRAIN FORECAST: Carryover stocks from 1999 combined with record yields this year have made grain storage a critical issue for farmers planning for the upcoming harvest. Lt. Governor Joe Kernan explained how the state was helping to ease farmers' minds. He announced the temporary and emergency grain storage options that are available to elevators under the Indiana Grain Buyers and Warehouse Licensing Agency (IGBWL). "We've been monitoring crop conditions all summer," said Kernan, who serves as Indiana's commissioner of agriculture. "The U.S. Department of Agriculture's August Crop Report confirmed predictions for record yields nationally and here in Indiana. This means elevators will require storage options to meet producers' needs in just a few short weeks." U.S. corn production is forecast at 10.4 billion bushels, up 10 percent from last year. The nation's soybean produc-

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tion is forecast at a record high 2.99 billion bushels, up 13 percent from 1999. USDA forecasts average Indiana corn yields of 155 bushels per acre, a record for the state. The previous high was 147 bushels set in 1992. The lowest yields in Indiana are expected to average around 139 to 140 bushels per acre. Soybean yields are expected to reach 46 bushels per acre, just one bushel off of the record 47 bushels per acre set in 1994. The lowest soybean yields for Indiana should still reach 40 bushels per acre.

DEDELOW HAS A PLAN: Hammond Mayor Duane Dedelow Jr. has a plan to raise money even if property taxes take a hit (Robin Biesen, Times of Northwest Indiana). He says the state's property tax climate leaves no choice but to become the first industrialized city in the region to attempt a fee-based revenue plan instead of relying solely on property tax income. Hammond has a tax rate hovering around \$28 per \$100 of assessed valuation, the highest in the state. Dedelow's plan was developed by a group of 15 business, civic and labor leaders working throughout the summer.

INDY FACES DOWNGRADE: Moody's Investors Service has issued a "negative outlook" on the City of Indiana

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PERHAPS... WE WANDER

By Brian Howey

Libertarians get Andy into Hoosier TVLand

INDIANAPOLIS - For the past two decades the Libertarian Party has operated on the fringes of Hoosier politics.

Its 1996 Libertarian gubernatorial nominee Steve Dillon polled 35,261 votes compared to 1,075,342 for Frank O'Bannon and 997,505 for Republican Stephen Goldsmith.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the 2000 election. In an event that flabbergasted the American political community and Garrison Keilor, a former pro wrestler named Jesse "The Body" Ventura won the Minnesota governorship in 1998, spending a mere \$500,000 and waging a populist campaign largely via the Internet.

During the Libertarian's 1999 convention, they invited Ventura's campaign manager in for a talk. They also had this columnist in for a speech and my message was this: You've spent 20 years as a fringe party. It's time for you to either grow up, mature into a party that can poll more than 5 percent of the vote, or you're destined to be relegated to the dustbin of electoral politics.

Sam, Cokie & Andy

On Aug. 20, as I was watching Sam and Cokie on ABC's *This Week* here in Indianapolis, up popped 2000 Libertarian gubernatorial nominee Andrew Horning in a 30-second TV ad, talking against a black backdrop about education. In the coming weeks, there will be similar TV ads running in the Fort Wayne, Louisville, Evansville and South Bend media markets, along with a sprinkling of exposure on cable systems across the state.

It is further evidence that Horning is taking the Libertarians into new territory - TVLand.

We live in a political world where exposure in TVLand is absolutely essential in order to have a major impact in an election. To do that, you have to have money - a lot of money. Gov. Frank O'Bannon and Republican gubernatorial nominee David McIntosh could raise and spend close to \$20 million by Election Day, not that much more than what Norm Coleman and Skip Humphrey spent in the '98 Minnesota gubernatorial race.

Earlier this month, Horning raised \$10,000 in one night. He took the other \$5,000 that he had and began a limited TV ad campaign. It is literally the playing the proverbial "chicken and the egg: which came first."

The Libertarian dilemma has long been, we can't get our message out if we don't have money. But we don't have money because we can't get our message out.

More news coverage

An amazing thing happened this past week after Horning began running in TVLand. There was a story on the front page of the *Indianapolis Star's* City/State section and then another extensive story inside Sunday's City/State section. And another in the *Fort Wayne News-Sentinel*. Horning has begun to get his exposure. When Gov. O'Bannon extended the gasoline tax suspension, WTHR-TV in Indianapolis actually had Horning on live to respond to O'Bannon live, while McIntosh was nowhere to be found.

He also knows what kind of reality he is facing. When he ran for mayor of Indianapolis in 1999, Horning raised and spent about \$26,000 and finished with 7,772 votes out of nearly 200,000 votes cast. "Last year, most of that money dropped in during the final weeks of the campaign," Horning said. "If we would

have had that kind of money earlier, we would have done better. For us to talk about winning, we'd have to move our total another decimal point over."

In a world where Horning might have \$250,000 or, like *The Body/The Mind*, \$500,000, he would then get enough additional free press to move into that 33 to 35 percent range, which is what Ventura did to pull off one of the biggest upsets of the century.

"The news media decides the eventual winner by telling us the odds," Horning observed of a world where far too often the first question a political reporter asks of a candidate is, "How much money have you raised?"

Said Horning, "Until we get that free media, it really doesn't matter how much money we raise, if the media doesn't take notice. But a half million would do it."

You are witnessing history

What you are witnessing this very second is another example of the news media taking notice.

This columnist noticed Horning over the Fourth of July weekend when he wondered why the State of Indiana makes its citizens lie when they buy fireworks. That's when law-abiding folks have to fill out a "license" that says they will take them out of state. Heck, the State of Indiana made a liar out of me.

This columnist has noticed Horning talking about the phasing out of property taxes. "Those parts of government which currently depend on them for funding, should, over time, obtain alternate funding through user fees, privatization, direct voluntary contributions and, if necessary, consumptive taxes."

And this columnist took notice when Horning volunteered the notion that our legislators - most of whom enjoy Politburo status with safely drawn seats protected from the electorate - are not lazy. "This isn't true at all," Horning insists. "They spit out laws like machine

gun bullets. And a funny thing about laws: They never go away, no matter how much trouble and money they cost us."

And the Horning solution? "All non-constitutional laws and agencies must have a sunset, that is, an expiration date. If the laws or agencies serve a useful purpose, they will be restored. If not, they die so that the rest of us might live in harmony with laws that we understand and respect."

The 42-year-old Libertarian has questions. He wonders what David McIntosh will do to get his guaranteed 25-percent property tax cut should he win in November. "In 1973, Gov. Bowen gave us the temporary property tax cut, but he had to give collective bargaining to the Indiana State Teachers Association," Horning said. "No one knows what McIntosh is going to give away to get his tax cut."

As for Gov. O'Bannon, Horning believes that Indiana is fat on the "happy times" and is ill-prepared for the inevitable economic downturn (folks in 1928, like now, thought it wasn't going to happen again). He calls it "constructive destruction." His entire division was laid off at Kodak as American businesses and industry downsized and pruned.

"It was very painful and I was personally hit. But many of these companies bounced back better than before," said Horning, who talks extensively of his ideas at www.horning2000.org. "Government programs can work if they're nimble and strength is added where needed. Right now, Indiana government is too expensive and too inefficient. The last thing we need in an economic downturn is a big Frankenstein government."

Horning will be invited to debate Gov. O'Bannon and McIntosh - the first coming on Sept. 22. He has a lot of questions and a lot of answers.

He doesn't have a lot of money, so he'll be advertising on a Discovery Channel near you. ❖

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polis's AAA credit rating. The rating is in jeopardy due to looming budget shortfalls, most of which Mayor Bart Peterson inherited from his predecessor, Stephen Goldsmith. Moody's has predicted the city's police and fire pension shortfalls could grow to \$25 million in 2002 and \$40 million in 2003. HPR's Brian Howey in a number of 1998 and 1999 articles for *NUVO Newsweekly*, wrote extensively about the potential police and fire pension deficits, other deficits in the IndyParks system, as well as the diversion of state highway maintenance funds into Goldsmith's Building Better Neighborhoods program. The deficit issue was largely ignored by the Indianapolis Star and other media outlets during the 1999 mayoral campaign. Since coming to office, Peterson has announced a \$31 million deficit in the 2001 budget.

COUNTY DIVISION NOT LIKELY: Proponents of splitting Lake County into two counties concede the plan appears unworkable since Hammond Mayor Duane Dedelow Jr. said he would never support splitting the urban north from the rest of the county (Robin Biesen, *Times of Northwest Indiana*). Timothy Raykovich, chief aide to East Chicago Mayor Robert Pastrick, said the proposal

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now appears to be economically unfeasible, but "is still under study." Dedelow's opposition removed about 40 percent of the population and area and 20 percent of the taxable property from the proposed new county.

EXPENSIVE CLEANUP: Decontamination and demolition of the Continental Steel plant in Kokomo was estimated to cost \$8.7 million. It already has cost \$30 million and the final tab is expected to be \$85 million (Marc B. Geller, Kokomo Tribune). Rep. Steve Buyer of the 5th CD met last Tuesday with fellow Republican Rep. Mike Oxley of Ohio to tour the site and discuss the need to reform the federal Environmental Protection Agency's superfund program. Oxley chairs the House Finance and Hazardous Materials subcommittee, which oversees the superfund program.

NEW POWER PLANT ANNOUNCED: Kentucky-based EnviroPower said it will build a waste coal-fired merchant power generating plant about 3 miles east of Sullivan (Terre Haute Tribune Star). A similar plant is being built by the company about 15 miles south of Petersburg in Pike County. The new plant will have two 250-megawatt generating units. The company expects to begin construction on the \$600 million plant next

COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

Ben Smith, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette - So Tony Hinkle comes to Earth last week, and he lays a hand on David McIntosh's shoulder. (No, of course, he didn't, not really. But as long as McIntosh can indulge in flights of fancy as regards basketball in Indiana, so can I). Anyway, old Tony lays a hand on McIntosh's shoulder, leans close to his ear, and whispers this: "Are you nuts?" McIntosh's eyes grow wide. "Yeah, you didn't think I saw you down here last week, didja? Standing in front of my Fieldhouse. Talking about places like Kendallville and Vigo. Weeping great big crocodile tears for the demise of Hoosier Hysteria - born 1911, died 1997 - so you could vacuum up that all-important geezer-codger I-saw-Oscar-play vote. "Fine strategy there, Dave. And when was the last time you saw a high school basketball game in Indiana? Hmmm?" Now McIntosh's eyes are round as moons. ❖

Amos Brown, Indianapolis Recorder - Even though Vice President Al Gore did a great job delivering passion and energy in his acceptance speech, some African Americans remain leery about Gore's choice of Sen. Joseph Lieberman as Gore's running mate. Sen. Lieberman not only talked the talk about fighting for civil and human rights, but he walked the walk as a civil rights worker, helping Blacks gain their vote in Mississippi in the mid-1960s. Yes, Sen. Lieberman waffled on affirmative action. But, I remember a guy named Bill Clinton did too. It was his administration that revised Federal affirmative action policy to the infamous "mend it, but don't end it". Even though Sen. Lieberman has a powerful, positive record on behalf of minority rights, some African-Americans are criticizing Lieberman, invoking old stereotypes about his

ethnicity that approaches reverse racism and anti-Semitism. And it didn't help when Minister Louis Farrakhan again put his foot in his mouth, libeling Lieberman with inaccurate assumptions about Lieberman's loyalty to America. Statements that by any objective standard were anti-Semitic. His choice of Lieberman has unleashed the malevolent forces of racism and hate. Our African-American community shouldn't hold Lieberman's faith against him. Lieberman's record on the battlefield of civil rights sets a new standard. He and Gore are deserving of our African-American community's unhesitating support. ❖

Jack Colwell, South Bend Tribune - Congressman Tim Roemer has said it frequently, said it firmly: "I've never voted for a tax increase." Nobody doubted him. Not past congressional opponents. Not the news media. Not organizations in Washington, both partisan and nonpartisan, that rate congressional voting records. Nobody. Until now. Republican challenger Chris Chocola is running TV commercials that say this of the Democratic congressman from South Bend: "When Clinton and Gore needed him on key votes, he was there -- to raise taxes -- to take over the health care system -- to stay in office." Roemer was miffed. What rankled him was the suggestion that he provided some vote President Clinton and Vice President Al Gore needed "to raise taxes." After all, Roemer pointed out, his break with Clinton, when the president desperately needed every vote to pass a deficit-reduction plan in 1993 -- which included major tax increases as well as spending cuts -- was well documented. Ann DeLaney gave Roemer a public paddling back then, saying the White House was so mad that chances of federal appointees from the 3rd Congressional District were doomed. ❖

Indiana 2000 Racing Form

GOVERNOR, congressional races

Governor: Republican: U.S. Rep. David McIntosh. **Democrat:** Gov. Frank

O'Bannon. **Libertarian:** Andrew Horning. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon 1,107,342, Goldsmith 997,505, Dillon 35,261. **2000 Forecast:** Here are some additional things you need to know in gauging the Indiana governor's race. There doesn't appear to be any more bombshell exposes in the works about the O'Bannon administration, according to our Republican, Democratic and news media sources. The *Indianapolis Star's* Kevin Corcoran is supposedly working on some followups to his June FSSA investigation, but the word on the street now is that there is nothing particularly explosive. Republican sources in Marion County tell Horse Race that Democrats are registering scores of voters - much more than the Republicans. The reason? The Army of Julia Carson is out to take over the county judiciary. Thus, there is rampant registration in order to win more than a dozen judge-

ships on the ballot. Obviously this could have an impact on the governor's race. Six months ago, after the White River fish kill, the thought of O'Bannon carrying the state's largest county like he did in 1996 seemed slim. But our sources say that the Carsonites are far more motivated than they were in 1999 in the Peterson/Gilroy race. On the Republican side, there is an effort being organized by the Republican State Committee to form a united front with the Lugar campaign, the statewides, House and Senate races as far as advertising goes. This coalition has already been at work on GOTV efforts. How would Dick Lugar's Nobel coattails play on behalf of McIntosh? Lugar headed up a united front in '94, but even that was dwarfed by the nationalized GOP tsunami. Our suspicions are that his coattails will be limited as many voters make distinctions between federal and state offices and vote accordingly. The dynamic that is shaping up is that Hoosiers will be in a ticket-splitting mode ...BIG TIME. We still believe GWBush will carry the state (gauged by the fact that Chairman Robin Winston still hasn't bet us a St. Elmo's steak dinner), Lugar will win by a landslide, and O'Bannon is looking strong at this point. U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer told the *Logansport Pharos-Tribune* that 5th CD voters will be looking to "cleanse" themselves of Clinton fatigue with Bush and Lugar, although not necessarily the governor's race. "I would say the ouch there is David McIntosh," Buyer said. "That's just my political gut." Our Labor Day outlook: O'Bannon is in far better position than anyone would have imagined. **General Status:** *Leans O'Bannon.*

U.S. Senate: Republican: U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar. **Democrat:** David L. Johnson. **1988 results:** Lugar (R) 1,430,525, Wickes (D) 668,778. **1994 results:** Lugar (R) 1,039,625, Jontz (D) 470,799, Bourland (L) 17,343, Barton (A) 15,801. **2000 Forecast:** Lugar's nomination for a Nobel Peace Prize essentially sews this race up. It is perhaps an unprecedented obstacle for a congressional challenger. Lugar and former Sen. Sam Nunn were nominated for one of the most prestigious awards in the world for their legislation that has eliminated about 5,000 former Soviet nuclear warheads following the end of the Cold War. It may be the first time in history where a former adversary has been invited into an unconquered country and allowed to dismantle its arsenal. Lugar was emotional about the news, telling WTHR-TV's Kevin Rader, "I was speechless." Lugar said he didn't realize "people were paying attention" because stories 8 or 9 years long "are not topical." Lugar said that 5,014 Soviet warheads have been disassembled, or only half. "The window of history is still open." **Status:** *Safe Lugar.*

Congressional District 2: Republican: Mike Pence. **Democrat:** Robert Rock Jr. **Independent:** Bill Frazier. **Geography:** Muncie, Anderson, Richmond, Shelbyville, Columbus and East Central Indiana. **1994 Results:** McIntosh 93,592, Hogsett 78,241. **1996 Results:** McIntosh 122,288, Carmichael (D) 83,478, Zimmerman (L) 4,662. **1998 Results:** McIntosh (R) 99,584, Boles (D) 62,426, Federle (L) 2,236. **2000 Forecast:** A mid-July poll by Chris Wilson of Wilson Research Strategies shows Pence up by 20 percent. "Interestingly it showed that Bill Frazier was taking almost as many Democrat votes as he is taking GOP votes," Pence

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year and complete it in the spring of 2004.

ONE RAIL LINE OR TWO? South Lake County residents got together in Merrillville last week to talk about a commuter rail system linking the region to Chicago (Robin Biesen, *Times of Northwest Indiana*). The consensus seemed to be that what they want are two rail lines, one through Valparaiso and another through Lowell farther south. About 100 persons attended the meeting.

TIM FRANKLIN TAKES A BREATH: Tim Franklin moved from the Chicago Tribune in January to become editor of the *Indianapolis Star*. Then Gannett Co. bought the *Star* in June and Franklin wondered about his future (Mason King, *Indianapolis Business Journal*). Now he can take a deep breath. Gannett, known for pinching pennies and putting its own people in executive positions in new acquisitions, has asked him to remain as editor and continue to transform the way the paper gathers and presents news.

LUGAR ANNOUNCES CHIP PILOT PROJECT: U.S. Sen. Richard Lugar announced that Indiana has been selected to participate in pilot program as part of the Lugar-

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Carson Access to Children's Health Insurance Program Act. "Indiana's participation in the pilot program will help Hoosier Healthwise, the successful Indiana CHIP program, identify and, therefore, insure more eligible children," Lugar said.

ANDREW CHIDES BUSH: Democratic National Chairman Joe Andrew chided George W. Bush about his "non-existent" prescription drug plan. "They are up with another ad touting a prescription drug plan that even Bush's own running mate admits doesn't exist," Andrew said in an Aug. 28 statement. "Just like my 5-year-old son has imaginary friends, it seems like Bush and the Republicans have an imaginary prescription drug plan." The Bush campaign has told CNN that it will release its prescription drug plan next week.

BAYH, O'BANNON EYE METH: Gov. Frank O'Bannon and U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh teamed up on a Monday press conference as they visited an Indiana State Police demonstration of its Clandestine Laboratory Response Team. The team was set up to battle a growing methamphetamine threat to Indiana communities. "While we have had success in fighting meth - we destroyed 128 labes last year and about 200 so far this year - much more needs to be done," O'Bannon said. ❖

told HPR. **Status:** *LIKELY PENCE.*

Congressional District 5: Republican: U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer. **Democrat:** Greg Goodnight. **Libertarian:** Scott Benson. **Geography:** Kokomo, Marion, Peru, Monticello, Lowell, Northern Indiana. 1994 results: Buyer 108,575, Beatty 43,619, Alfred (L) 3,328. **1996 Results:** Buyer 133,604, Clark (D) 67,125, Lehman (L) 5,255. **1998 Results:** Buyer (R) 101,567, Steele 58,504 (D), Waters (L) 2,317. **2000 Forecast:** Buyer and Greg Goodnight, his Democratic opponent, agree that prescription drug coverage, Social Security, Medicare, crime and education are the primary issues voters in the district are talking about, but they disagree about what will happen Election Day (Dave Kitchell, *Logansport Pharos-Tribune*). Goodnight believes his Howard County base is strong, but Buyer says he's going to win the county. Buyer said Goodnight played his cards too early and concentrated on the center of the district and "he doesn't have to care about the rest. That's a political mistake." **Status:** *Likely Buyer.*

Congressional District 8: Republican: U.S. Rep. John Hostettler. **Democrat:** Dr. Paul Perry. **Geography:** Evansville, Bloomington, Vincennes and SW Indiana. **1994 results:** Hostettler (R) 93,529, McCloskey (D) 84,857. **1996 Results:** Hostettler (R) 109,582, Weinzapfel (D) 106,134, Hager (L) 3,799. **1998 Results:** Hostettler (R) 92,227, Riecken (D) 81,381, Hager (L) 3,395. **2000 Forecast:** Hostettler has been challenged to debates in each of the 8 CD's 13 counties by Democrat Paul Perry (Tim Starks, *Evansville Courier & Press*). A group of businesses and insurance companies sponsored a print ad in last Wednesday's editions of the *Evansville Courier-Press* and *Terre Haute Tribune-Star* designed to bolster Hostettler on health care. In a half-page ad, the Health Benefits Coalition praised Hostettler for his vote against a patients' bill of rights that it said would hurt employers by allowing unlimited lawsuits. The ad is a "thank you" to Hostettler for voting against the Kennedy-Dingell-Norwood legislation. "We know that they're in tough re-election races, and we wanted to put something out that would thank the congressmen and tell voters what they supported," said a coalition spokesman. The ad, which is running in six districts, is funded by coalition membership, which is approximately 50 percent business and 50 percent insurance providers. "The big insurance companies love Congressman Hostettler," said Carter Wells, Perry's campaign manager. "He hasn't supported a patients' bill of rights. They know Dr. Perry is talking about this issue, so they're coming to support their friend." Jim Banks, Hostettler's campaign spokesman, said that the 8th CD would be a target for issue ads because of its competitive nature. He said Hostettler's congressional office is challenging an AFL-CIO television ad on HMO reform, charging that the spot inaccurately describes accountability provisions in a recent bill. The labor ad is up now in the district. **Status:** *Tossup.*

INDIANA HOUSE races

House District 19: Republican: Ron Johnson. **Democrat:** Rep. Bob Kuzman. **Geography:** Crown Point, south Lake County. **1994 results:** Conlon (R) 8,850, McCall (D) 5,280. **1996 Results:** Kuzman (D) 12,236, Sparks (R) 10,453. **1998 Results:** Kuzman 9,130, Gasparovic (R) 6,917. **2000 Forecast:** A real race is brewing here. Johnson beginning to get local news coverage. Republicans like the idea that GWBush is going to be blitzing Chicago TV with ads. As one GOPer said, "This will be the first time since 1992 that we have had a national Republican message on Chicago TV. Could make a big difference in a close Republican district. **Status:** *Leans D.*

House District 24: Republican: Rep. Rick McClain. **Democrat:** Bob Sabatini. **Geography:** Logansport, Cass, Carroll, Miami counties. **1994 results:** McClain 10,421, Frantz (D) 7,686. **1996 Results:** McClain 15,538. **1998 Results:** McClain 10,281, Fincher (D) 7,345. **2000 Forecast:** McClain raised \$30,000 at a Logansport fundraiser. **Status:** *Tossup.*

House District 60: Republican: John Shean. **Democrat:** State Rep. Peggy Welch. **Geography:** Bloomington, Bloomfield, Lawrence. Greene and Monroe Counties. **1994 results:** Bales 11,825, Anderson 5,210. **1996 Results:** Bales 15,743, Germann (L) 1,931. **1998 Results:** Welch 10,172, Ellington 8,987. **2000 Forecast:** Indiana Chamber, which sank more than \$50,000 into the Jeff Ellington campaign in 1998, is taking a pass on this race for now, largely because they don't want to support Shean, a trial lawyer. That's a huge break for Welch and a significant blow in Republican attempts to regain the House with this seat, which was beyond Democratic touch when Jerry Bales held it. **Status:** *LEANS WELCH.* ❖

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