

Zody, Pelath plot Democrat comeback

Reelected Democrat chair sees party right on issues, need to build, communicate

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – As the dust has settled on the Indiana Democrats' 2016 disaster, state Chairman John Zody coursed through the state, including the rural outposts where his party is barely a factor, to gather thoughts and perspectives.

He was decisively reelected to a second term last Saturday, defeating State Sen. Lonnie Randolph and former legislator John Aguilaria, both who believe the party is ignoring its base of Lake County. "Over the course of the last four months I've done 12 forums," Zody said on Tuesday. "I got a lot of input on moving forward after a tough election."

It was an election that President Trump ruined. Despite a well-funded, issue-oriented campaign, gubernatorial John Gregg went down to defeat, Evan Bayh's political career ran into a wall, the party was routed from all its constitutional Statehouse warrens and controls



Indiana Democratic Chairman John Zody at the Democratic National Convention last summer. He won a second term last Saturday. (HPI Photo by Mark Curry)

only 40 of the 150 General Assembly seats. It has only three of the 11 congressional seats. In Zody's view, the party simply met the perfect storm in the Trump/Pence

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The art of the (mis)deal

By **MARK SOUDER**

FORT WAYNE – It seems a good time to review the key points of the Donald Trump's "Art of the Deal." At the start it is important to be clear: The Republican bill is TrumpCare just as much as the current law is ObamaCare.



President Obama did not draft the health care named after him. Hillary Clinton was its mother from her days as First Lady. The Democrat House wrote it and the President signed off. Because he was the President, it became ObamaCare. What goes for one side also goes for the other. They aren't trying to replace Pelosi-Care.

Thursday night President



“For seven and a half years we have been promising the American people we will repeal and replace this broken law, because it’s collapsing and it’s failing families. And tomorrow we’re proceeding.”

- Speaker Paul Ryan



**Howey Politics Indiana
WVHowey Media, LLC 405
Massachusetts Ave., Suite
300 Indianapolis, IN 46204
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Brian A. Howey, Publisher
Mark Schoeff Jr., Washington
Jack E. Howey, Editor
Mary Lou Howey, Editor
Thomas Curry, Statehouse
Mark Curry, photography

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Ray Volpe, Account Manager
317.602.3620

email: HoweyInfo@gmail.com

Contact HPI

bhowey2@gmail.com
Howey's cell: 317.506.0883
Washington: 202.256.5822
Business Office: 317.602.3620

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Trump, after making his best offer to recalcitrant conservatives who want to gut the law, he demanded that the House vote Friday. If the alternative doesn't pass, he's ready to let ObamaCare remain the law and move on to other issues.

It is not totally out of character for him. Another of his books ("The America We Deserve") which was written as he considered running for President in 2000, he made his views on health care clear: "We must have universal health care ... I'm a conservative on most issues but a liberal on this one. We should not hear so many stories of families ruined by healthcare expenses."

He since amended his praise of single-payer systems in Canada and Scotland, saying that it was a different time, and that universal care wouldn't work now. He also stated during the campaign that he felt offering state's flexibility and opportunities for the private sector to develop more creative options was important, though he continued to want to leave no one behind (so to speak). His appointment of Seema Verma to run Medicaid and Medicare illustrates those commitments. The leaks of his negotiations and talks with House Members show a consistency in his remarks.

His most famous book outlined 11 key points to close a deal. They are worth reviewing as to how they are working in the political realm on this issue.

Think big. If there was a big thought, it's been lost in the "this is a lot more complicated than I thought" detail. It is always harder to govern, especially when unrealistic expectations have been cranked up for eight years. It was out of character for Republicans to have spent years promising a "free lunch" such as everyone is being covered with better care but for less money.

Protect the downside and the upside will take care of itself. Never mind.

Maximize the options. ("I never get too attached to one deal or one approach.") The President tried this approach by offering amendments but ultimately, "not getting too attached to one deal" may turn out to be moving on to other deals. As in "take it or leave it."

Know your market. If the House passes the bill, it would prove that he knew his market. He called the bluff of the opponents. If it doesn't, it



may be an example of, in the business world, of knowing the market but understanding that the particular market doesn't like your product so you move on.

Use your leverage. The last few days were barely a snapshot of this. There wasn't much time to do much power leveraging. It is my impression that "forgiveness" or "letting bygones be bygones" is not a political strength of our President. On the other hand, there are many more issues yet to come so the full use of Presidential leverage is likely to be more of a developing list of "not friends" for possible future use.

Enhance your location. 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue works fine for deal-making.

Get the word out. While I understand the downside and risk of "getting the word out" in this case, it is rather awkward that after years of complaining about not being able to read the ObamaCare bill, not having town meetings, jamming the bill through committees, and not having general public buy-in to the changes, that the Republicans are repeating the same approach that the House Demo-

crats did. It is tough to inform the public when the basic points are changing in private meetings.

Fight back. Issuing an ultimatum to the House to pass it or he will move on certainly is proving that he will fight back. It was the ultimate threat: Put up or shut up.

Deliver the goods. We shall see. His approach is about the only way to have a chance though, since the demands from the critics – though they may have sounded reasonable years ago – at this point could be the title of a hit movie. Say, “La La Land.”

Contain the costs. A core problem of critics of ObamaCare was to focus on the costs. Any alternative was going to be expensive. The question was whether there would be any private market that could provide the innovation necessary to both provide better medicine and force logical future cost containment through things like telemedicine. A total government program will always stagnate. But the demands of voters are not consistent with “containing costs.”

Have fun. Yeah right. That’s what Mar-a-Lago is

for.

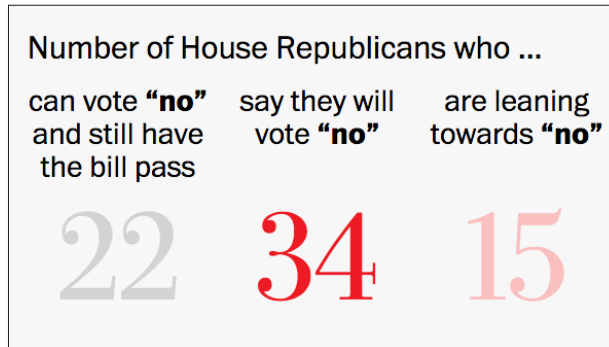
The bottom line is that Trump has been going through his list fairly consistently. The President seems to like quick decisions. He understands schmoozing but his ideas of the time clock on such things runs more along the lines of his “Apprentice Show” experiences than the never-ending debates of Congress. In fact, he mocked the process when campaigning.

In this case I believe that his approach is correct. It may be the only way to pass a bill which everyone agrees is not perfect. Dick Armey, when Majority Leader, lectured me and

other troublemakers 50 times not to let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

When your Party doesn’t control the White House, there are severe limits. But once President Bush won, we swallowed hard and governed. Perhaps Friday will be the first real test of this President and this Congress. ❖

Souder is a former Republican congressman from Indiana.



Zody, from page 1

ticket. “We need to be proud of the work our candidates did,” he said. “Not just in raising money, but knocking on doors and making phone calls. John Gregg ran 12 points better than the top of the ticket.”

That would be presidential nominee Hillary Clinton, who brought glaring attention to the fact that despite support from all of Indiana’s super delegates and its leading officerholders and party leaders, it was Sen. Bernie Sanders who won the Indiana Democratic primary with 53 percent of the vote. The Hoosier African-Americans and even organized labor had a tepid view of the Clintons and turnout in Lake County and Indianapolis wasn’t enough to staunch the Trump tide. In rural Indiana, the party barely has a presence. Many of the Sanders supporters stayed home or voted for Trump.

Zody believes all of that is changing. Candidates for 2018, he said, are coming out of the woodwork to run for Congress and the General Assembly. Some names are

known, some will be new blood. They are motivated by the looming repeal of Obamacare, a Trumpian budget that runs roughshod over the type of non-defense programs that Democrats tend to love. And there are his excesses that gall the party faithful.

Zody also sees a deep bench, headed by 2016 lieutenant governor nominee Christina Hale, South Bend Mayor Peter Buttigieg, Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett, Kokomo Mayor Greg Goodnight and Hammond Mayor Thomas McDermott Jr.

The stakes for 2018 could not be higher. If U.S.

Sen. Joe Donnelly loses, the party will be without its most conspicuous headliner. Three years later, the 2021 redistricting will take place. So Democrats have a mere two election cycles to cleave its way back into relevance.

The 2011 map-making set into motion the collapse of the Democratic prospects, coming on the heels of U.S. Sen. Bayh’s decision to bail from a reelec-



tion bid. That move hastened a ceding of the party's river country strongholds along the Ohio and Wabash. Counties like Clark, Posey and Warrick, which might have voted for a Reagan or Bush for president, but would vote Hamilton, Hill or McCloskey for Congress and would keep Democrats in the courthouses, began shifting to straight ticket Republican. The GOP now controls more than 75 percent of county offices statewide.

How does the party make its comeback?

"We are looking at building a statewide organization," Zody said. "It has to be a sustainable organization. The county parties have to have the tools they need to recruit candidates, have a presence on social media, and tools to bring more people into the party. We have to have better communications. Messaging is something people want to talk about. The problems we talked about last year, living wages, are still very prevalent issues.

"And we have to hold the other side accountable," Zody said of the GOP. That will come on wage issues, health care where some of the 430,000 Hoosiers on the Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0 could lose coverage, and issues such as voting rights and redistricting.

That last one is huge. If Democrats can't cut into the General Assembly super majorities, it will face a second decade of tough maps. It may be something that even Beau Bayh might not be able to rectify, should he decide to settle in Shirkieville after earning a Harvard degree.

Asked about the four counties – Henry, Martin, Daviess and Gibson, that didn't even elect a county chair – Zody said those occurred due to scheduling and notification issues. All four will have caucuses within the next month.

And he observed the HPI analysis where Donald Trump won Daviess County with 79.6 percent of the vote, 71.6 percent in Gibson, 69.2 percent in Henry and 76.9 percent in Martin, and how those counties will fare under the RyanCare replacement proposals, and you find Daviess losing subsidy money to tax credits by 557 percent (yes, 557 percent), in Gibson down 61 percent, in Martin 115 percent and in Henry 73 percent. Essentially, these Hoosiers are voting against their own economic interests.

That's the message Indiana Democrats have to make to have a fighting chance in the coming decade.

"We're at a critical point today," Zody said of the emerging impacts the Trump health care and budget will have on rural Indiana. "They are very much a numbers game."

Zody believes Donnelly is well-positioned for reelection. "He's working hard," Zody said. "He's just a workhorse. His common sense approach, fighting for health care, people see that. He works hard. He's out there in front of people."

Zody believes that new blood and some reliable names will join Donnelly on the 2018 ticket. He hopes to position Indiana Democrats to take advantage of the Trump miscues in Washington. The stakes for the party couldn't be any higher or compelling. ❖

Pelath sees 2018 as critical cycle for Dems

By THOMAS CURRY

INDIANAPOLIS – Reeling from an abysmal 2016 election cycle, Democrats around the country find themselves grasping the few remaining seats they have in state government. Many Indiana Democrats were left alone on the battlefield after President Trump cruised to a dominating victory, leaving but 31 Democratic seats in the Indiana



House and a pitiful nine seats in the state Senate. There is little question that the Democratic party is at its weakest point in Indiana history, unable to connect with voters it once counted on during its heyday under Govs. Evan Bayh and Frank O'Bannon.

The effects have manifested plainly during the 2017 session. In the House, Democrats have provided their own ideas to the salient issues of the state budget and road funding, even going so far as to propose their own infrastructure plan. But the Democrats get little more than lip service on the House floor, often unable to pick up a single vote from the other side of the aisle. Democrats rose well over a dozen times to amend the state's budget this year, but the scoreboard always showed nays in the high 50s and yeas some 30 votes behind.

Although the present and future don't look bright for Indiana Democrats, Indiana House Minority Leader Scott Pelath (D-Michigan City) believes the party has a chance at a comeback starting in 2018, if they avoid the mistakes made in the past and if Republicans get dragged down by President Trump.

"We have to be honest about some of the deficiencies made in the past presidential campaign," Pelath told HPI in an interview at his Statehouse office. "It's everyone's sacred duty to figure out what went right and what went wrong. Some things absolutely need to be improved upon. If you look at a map, two-thirds of the governorships and statehouses are controlled by Republicans. That is why focusing on the states is so important."

Pelath believes the party needs to look back to

when it found success in a 50-state system and move away from a national focus. "The information age has totally changed how the system works. State success is now tied very closely to national success." The minority leader pointed out, "There are parts of rural America that the Democratic structure has totally decayed," and that leaves the party in limbo.

The Indiana Democratic Party currently finds itself with multiple vacant county seats, a small sample of what the rest of the country looks like. Pelath commented that it's not a lack of talent but instead the lack of a working system. "There are talent and energy out there but there is no structure. The party has to realize it needs to rebuild not in the old way but in a new way," he said. "It's no longer about filling seats for the chili supper, it's about forging a message that people can get behind."

Last weekend, Indiana Democrats reelected state Chairman John Zody after he oversaw the 2016 disaster. Pelath agrees with this fellow Democrats that Zody is right for the job, praising him by saying, "John Zody is a very hard worker and he cares deeply about the party. He has been listening to the different parts of the party since the election. I think he has the right idea. If you listen to your supporters and their ideas you will be set in the right direction. It's smart to go to the grassroots level and hear what people who are truly concerned about the country are saying."

On the national level, however, Pelath is self-described as "disappointed" about what he has seen from Washington recently. Pelath wishes that Democratic figureheads would go back to the ideas of Howard Dean, when the party enjoyed large success around the country. "Howard Dean had the right idea, there needs to be a 50-state strategy and resources at the state level," Pelath explained. "Regrettably, the DNC got away from that, particularity in the last election. Resources were consolidated in the presidential election, and that's okay, if you win the presidency. If you don't win, it's a big problem. That part is undebatable. The national party made many mistakes."

Not even winning the Democratic primary in Indiana, Hillary Clinton proved to be a toxic commodity

to Democrats in the state. Voters who propelled Sen. Bernie Sanders to a primary victory stayed at home or went Trump in 2016, a bad omen for Democrats down the ballot. Turnout for Democrats wasn't close to the level of 2008 and lined up more closely with defeats in 2012. "The turnout figures can only lead to one conclusion, and that is there wasn't a lot of enthusiasm for the top of the ticket," Pelath reflected, "The grave concerns of Donald Trump didn't outweigh the desires for something different. Hillary Clinton ended up representing an establishment viewpoint. That is a retrospective judgment that has to be assessed and analyzed."

Despite what he calls a lack of bench talent on the national level, Pelath believes there are plenty in the



Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane and House Minority Leader Scott Pelath during the 2017 State of the State address. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howe)

Indiana Democratic Party who can make a difference. "I think we have a future governor here somewhere among our caucus at the Statehouse. People like Dan Forestal, Karlee Macer, Melanie Wright, someone like Earl Harris Jr. I hesitate to say too many names because there are more I'd like to include. These are people who understand the Democratic Party needs to be a pragmatic party. The young leaders we have the statehouse have the right vision for its future."

The minority leader also believes there are enough talented and concerned citizens out there to make 2018 interesting for Democrats in Indiana. "There are enough energized people, thanks to Donald Trump, who will want to follow the example of some of our younger Democratic leaders here in Indiana. The problem will be identifying the really good ones."

With the knowledge of past mistakes and what he called the undeniable fact that the president's party has proven unpopular in recent history, Pelath believes a comeback is possible but it will be "a long slow climb and it's not for people who aren't willing to take a longterm view."

To Pelath, success in 2018 is not "cursory but tangible gains in statehouses around the nation. It also entails the U.S. House transforming as well. They have to demonstrate they can win on maps drawn by Republicans on the state level. It also means preserving the U.S. Senate. And that last one is a tall order."

"U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly is extremely important to us here in Indiana," Pelath said. "We recognize he is going to be a primary target of national Republicans. The side benefit of that is that there are going to be a lot of resources and national attention here. This combined with an unpopular president means there is a chance."

Ultimately Pelath believes, "Our best friends in this effort are the Republicans themselves. They are having great difficulty governing at the national level. People will look to the economic message of fairness from the Democratic Party." ❖

Chairman Wieser says Lake Democrats lack 'a strong voice'

By RICH JAMES

MERRILLVILLE – Election after election, Lake County Democrats deliver for the party. They did so last November, but the massive vote totals were overshadowed by the losses of each of the Democratic statewide candidates. The Nov. 8 results were fairly typical; Lake County Democrats delivered a huge plurality, but the party suffered big losses on the state level.



And yet, the strongest county Democratic party in the state doesn't received any respect, according to Jim Wieser, the newly elected county chairman. "We don't have a strong voice in the state,"

Wieser said shortly after taking over as chairman.

That lack of respect, Wieser said, has to change. And, he sees a couple of ways to make that happen. One way is for the party to make regular stops in Indianapolis to "pound on the door." The party, Wieser said, needs a bigger voice in shaping statewide policy and elections, including a larger role for Lake County's Young Democrats, a group that outgoing Chairman John Buncich energized.

It wasn't by Wieser's direction that had Lake County natives – former state Rep. John Aguilera and state Sen. Lonnie Randolph – running for state party chairman a week ago. While each lost to incumbent John Zody, the message was sent that Lake County wants to play a bigger role in the party.

Wieser also said it is important for party lead-

ership to convince the rank and file that "Republicans are taking everything away from you." Wieser was suggesting that Republicans were sucking in Democrats with issues involving God, guns and gays, while at the same time taking away middle class rights. Yet, Wieser said he knows that little will change for Lake County Democrats unless the party's image changes.

"If we don't address the issues of corruption or the perception of corruption, we are not going to get anywhere," Wieser said.

The new chairman said he intends to do that with the help of Calvin Bellamy, head of the Shared Ethics Commission in Northwest Indiana. Bellamy has had considerable success teaching government employees in Northwest Indiana what is right and wrong for elected officials and workers in the public sector. ❖

Rich James has been writing about state and local government and politics for more than 30 years. He is a columnist for the NWI Times.



Critchlow returns to St. Joe Democrats

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – Jason Critchlow was reelected without opposition as St. Joseph County Democratic chair.

So, why would he want four more years in a job without a salary, where expectations are seemly unrealistically high and where losing candidates often blame the chairman, while winners say they did it all by themselves with their own political skill and personal charm?



Critchlow is coming back for more, even after St. Joseph County, that supposed bastion of Democratic strength, gave the party's presidential nominee a margin

of a mere 288 votes out of nearly 112,000 cast in 2016. He says it's because of a passionate belief that politics is important. The election of Donald Trump proved that, he says, and gives him more incentive now, not less.

"I've never seen anything like this," Critchlow says of determination he sees in party ranks and with new volunteers, packed in "elbow to elbow" in meetings at the small Democratic headquarters in downtown South Bend.

He relates that six potential Democratic candidates for Congress came forward quickly after Jackie Walorski, the 2nd District Republican incumbent, won an overwhelming victory last fall, carrying nine of the 10 counties in the district and losing only in St. Joseph County by just 2,511 votes, a bit short of some of those old-time St. Joe Democratic pluralities of 20,000.

Isn't it unreasonable, even laughable, to claim that big Democratic margins like that can be achieved again soon? Critchlow makes that claim and contends that he will have the last laugh. He points out that there was a county plurality of over 21,000 for Democrat Brendan Mullen, who nearly defeated Walorski in the Republican-drawn district in 2012.

Also, he sees signs of a strong party base in Democrats still winning the vast majority of offices at stake in the county, despite the Republican tsunami in Indiana, and in South Bend Mayor Pete Buttigieg winning reelection

by a landslide in 2015.

Critchlow, 34, a project manager for a clinical research company, is just a year younger than Buttigieg, but he describes the mayor as his political mentor. Indeed, they work together on political causes, and Critchlow uses many of the same fund-raising tools and stress on transparency as Buttigieg.

For example, at the party reorganization meeting at which Critchlow was reelected as chair, he distributed a brochure detailing party revenue and expenditures, details seldom publicized by county chairs.

"It's different than back rooms, smoke-filled and bourbon glasses," Critchlow says.

But will any of this sway Democrats who defected to Trump and then voted for many other Republicans as well? What will get them back, Critchlow says, is a better message about what Democrats will do for them in contrast with what a President Trump will do to them.

"They didn't get that message," Critchlow admits. "That's our fault."

He said he was "giddy" last fall when seeing a high return of absentee ballots from Democrats. But vote totals showed that a lot of those voters didn't get a persuasive Democratic message. "We were turning out our voters but they were voting for the other guy," Critchlow says.

Another serious problem for Democrats was not with voters but with those who didn't vote.

At the Women's March in South Bend, Critchlow asked one of the many participating young women about whether she had voted. Her response: "I'm so embarrassed to say this, but I did not vote."

And there are sometimes

unrealistic expectations, Critchlow acknowledges. He tells of being chastised because Democrats did not prevent the death in the Indiana General Assembly of a redistricting bill to curb gerrymandering.

"Republicans control the legislature. Republicans killed the bill," he says. "The only thing we can do is win an election."

Winning is what Critchlow enjoys. Losing, not so much, except that losing to Donald Trump has enabled him to stress that passionate belief that politics is important, that elections matter. ❖



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

When it comes to maturity, I'll take the Indiana Statehouse

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Years ago my late journalist colleague Harrison J. Ullmann of NUVO Newsweekly used to chide the Indiana General Assembly by frequently calling it “America’s worst legislature.”



But I have to tell ya, after watching the three-ring circus in Washington, in institutions we call the White House, the House and the Senate over the past two months, when it comes to truthful, adult leadership, where prioritized legislation is based on sound research, datasets and metrics, I'll take the Indiana General Assembly any day. When it comes to civility, transparency and earnest policy-

making, the Indiana Statehouse comes off as a haven of mature leadership compared with the so-called “big leagues” inside the Washington beltway.

Can you imagine Gov. Eric Holcomb making fun of a disabled reporter or calling out “Lyin’ John Gregg?” Can you imagine Senate President David Long swearing on the chamber floor, or saying he could go shoot someone on Meridian Street and win more votes? Can you imagine Speaker Brian Bosma suggesting an opponent’s father played a role in a presidential assassination, or making fun of overweight people from the well of the Indiana House?

In contrast, our nation’s capital is a freak show. President Trump is a liar. This past week, we’ve watched FBI Director James Comey and National Security Agency Director Mike Rogers essentially debunk Trump’s allegation that he was wiretapped by President Obama. We also learned that the FBI launched an investigation last July on whether the Trump campaign colluded to the Russian government on the 2016 presidential election.

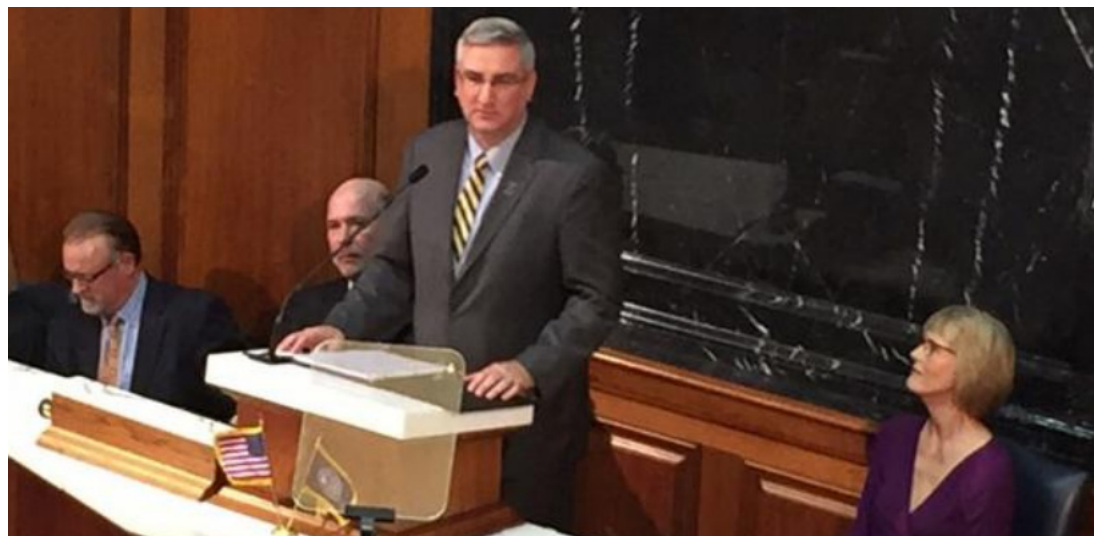
We also learned that President Trump’s first campaign manager, Paul Manafort, proposed in a confidential

strategy plan as early as June 2005 that he would influence politics, business dealings and news coverage inside the United States, Europe and the former Soviet republics to benefit the Putin government. “We are now of the belief that this model can greatly benefit the Putin government if employed at the correct levels with the appropriate commitment to success,” Manafort wrote in the 2005 memo to Russian aluminum magnate Oleg Deripaska.

Don’t want to take my word for it? The conservative Wall Street Journal editorial board observed on Wednesday, “If President Trump announces that North Korea launched a missile that landed within 100 miles of Hawaii, would most Americans believe him? Would the rest of the world? We’re not sure, which speaks to the damage that Mr. Trump is doing to his presidency with his seemingly endless stream of exaggerations, evidence-free accusations, implausible denials and other falsehoods. The latest example is Mr. Trump’s refusal to back off his Saturday morning tweet of three weeks ago” where he alleged without evidence that President Obama had wiretapped him. A bit further down, the Journal compared President Trump’s clinging to the wiretap assertion with no evidence like a “drunk” clinging to an “empty gin bottle.”

In contrast, our new governor, Republican Eric Holcomb, appears to be an earnest public servant in the first two months of his administration. If Holcomb tells us something, my inclination is to believe him. He has given no reason to think otherwise.

The American Health Care Act, written by House Speaker Paul Ryan and embraced by President Trump and Vice President Mike Pence, at this writing, teeters on the brink of defeat in the Republican-dominated House, with the conservative Freedom Caucus in rebellion. A vote last night was postponed, possibly canceled, with



the Washington Post reporting that 37 Republicans were preparing to vote no and another 13 were leaning that way. President Trump told House Republicans, “I honestly think many of you will lose your seats in 2018 if you don’t get this done.” This from a president whose modus ope-

randi has been an “eye for an eye” style retribution, where a growing enemies list has been created to inflict vindictive pain.

Mike Allen on his Axios website observed of Trump’s 2018 election threat: “True enough, but these members also could lose their seats and the House majority if they do vote to pass the bill currently being considered. So they’re left with a terrible choice: Vote against Obamacare repeal after campaigning on repeal for seven years, or vote to cover 24 million fewer people and potentially raise premiums for senior citizens.”

In contrast in the General Assembly, House Bill 1002, a plan to fund the state’s infrastructure needs over the next two decades (not the next two election cycles) was developed based on a wide array of metrics developed by Purdue University and other research institutions. It was unveiled in 2016, with parts of the plan passing and road maintenance money flowing to dozens of local communities over the



past year. It is now poised for passage in the Senate after emerging from the House.

Our Hoosier Republican leaders don’t lie. Neither do their Democratic counterparts, House Minority Leader Scott Pelath and Senate Minority Leader Tim Lanane.

They don’t denigrate their opponents, racial minorities, women or the handicapped. They conduct business on the House and Senate floor with civility and maturity. They don’t swear. They lack the mean-spirited partisanship and rancor that marks daily business in Washington. There is still a degree of camaraderie and respect even among

partisan foes at the Indiana Statehouse.

Are they perfect? No. Are there still controversial bills that push credibility? Yes. In the legislative sausage making, there always will be. But I’ll take our Hoosier leadership crew any day over the national clown show we are subjected to in Washington. ❖

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Henderson to join growing Senate field; Messer finance team

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – The 2018 Republican U.S. Senate race is now looking as if it will be a crowded affair with the coming entry of Atlanta, Ind., businessman Terry Henderson. The former congressional aide who now runs Achieva told HPI he will officially enter the race on April 29.



He joins a likely field that includes U.S. Reps. Luke Messer and Todd Rokita, Kokomo attorney Mark Hurt, and possibly State Sen. Mike Delph and former Indianapolis mayor Greg Ballard. Evansville

Mayor Lloyd Winnecke will not run, announcing recently he will seek a third term in 2019.

Sources tell HPI the Republican Senatorial Campaign Committee wants Messer and Rokita “to get this thing settled early on” on the money front to avoid a replay of the 2016 race between then U.S. Reps. Todd Young and Marlin Stutzman.

Messer’s fledgling campaign continued to take shape when he named Greg Pence, brother of the vice president, as his campaign finance director, and a team that includes Bob Grand, an early supporter of Rokita, and former state chairs Jim Kittle, Murray Clark and Al Hubbard. The rest of the Messer finance team reads like a who’s who of the business wing of the GOP, including Devin Anderson, Brian Burdick, Dan Evans, Steve Chancellor, Peter Deputy, Marty Obst and John Hammond III. It also includes the Mike Pence wing of the party, including Bill Smith, Jim Bopp Jr., and Jean Ann Harcourt.

Henderson is president of Achieva, a customized technology and product training firm based in Carmel that also specializes in Wall Street Journal commentaries, white papers and focus groups, as well as scientific and industry-based articles. It was an off-shoot from Dow Agra, where Henderson worked for 13 years in government and public affairs. Prior to that, he was an aide to

U.S. Rep. Mike Synar, an Oklahoma blue dog Democrat.

While at Dow, he worked with Mitch Daniels, then at Eli Lilly, in attracting the national FFA headquarters. He also worked extensively with the EPA. That work, he says, will give him an edge now that the Trump administration has taken over the EPA and is in the process of cutting back regulations.

Henderson told HPI on Wednesday that he stands out from the rest of the field in that he’s a businessman, not an attorney or career politician. “The time is right to bring an experienced and capable business person into the U.S. Senate,” said Henderson, noting it was that platform that propelled President Trump to the White House.

The comparison to Trump ends there, saying he views himself more like Daniels. “I am more aligned with Mitch Daniels,” Henderson said. “Mitch Daniels had the ability to be a good social conservative but did an excellent job for all the people. That’s what inspires me.”

Henderson said he will self-fund the “foundation of our campaign” and will build a robust financial network.

How does Henderson win? He responds by noting that Sen. Donnelly and most of the emerging Republican field are all attorneys and career politicians. “I’m going to bring a business approach and methodology, and connect with people like Mitch Daniels did. We can’t beat Joe Donnelly with more of the same.”

Donnelly gets Chamber citation

If you want to know what a potent force the U.S. Chamber of Commerce can be, just ask Evan Bayh. The Chamber spent millions of dollars against him in his race with U.S. Sen. Todd Young in 2016. But on Tuesday, U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly received the Chamber’s Spirit of Enterprise Award. Chamber President Tom Donohue observed of the Hoosier Democrat, “Businesses of all shapes and sizes need sound, common sense policy in order to get off the ground, grow, and succeed. The Spirit of Enterprise Award recognizes members of Congress who have done what’s right for our friends, family, and neighbors running businesses across the country. We applaud Sen. Donnelly for his commitment to free enterprise and economic growth.” Don’t be surprised if you see that in a 2018 Donnelly TV ad.

The New York Times Magazine reports that Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer has been meeting weekly with the “Big Five” senators, presumably including Donnelly, defined as moderates in the Midwest, Mountain West and Appalachian states where President Trump won handily. Donnelly’s defense is key for Democrats in a



Atlanta, Ind., businessman Terry Henderson is preparing to enter the Republican U.S. Senate race on April 29. (HPI Photo by Brian A. Howey)

cycle where 25 will be defending their seats. If Democrats lose eight seats, it would give the GOP 60 seats, enough to override a Democrat filibuster.

3rd CD: Schrader to run again

Perennial congressional candidate Tommy Schrader said Monday he intends to run again next year for the northeast Indiana seat in the U.S. House (Francisco, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Schrader, 54, won last year's Democratic Party primary election in Indiana's 3rd District. Although the party organization publicly disavowed his candidacy, the Fort Wayne resident received more than 66,000 votes – or 23 percent of the ballots cast – to finish a distant second in the three-candidate general election. Madalyn Sade-Bartl, chairwoman of the 3rd District Democrats, said Monday in an email that the party organization "has never, nor will ever endorse Tommy Schrader's candidacy. We have been in contact with others concerning their intention to run for the seat." Schrader said in a telephone interview that Democratic leaders "don't like me. I'll win the primary anyway."

4th CD: Trio of Democrats eye bids

Since the election in November 2016, local Democrats have worked on a new path forward (Ervin, Lafayette Journal & Courier). This involved networking with area

activists, holding workshops and cultivating a bench of candidates to contest local seats. Ousting U.S. Rep. Todd Rokita from Indiana's 4th congressional district is one of the party's goals. Three potential candidates are lined up to run: Sherry Shipley, Joe Mackey and George Reed. Shipley and Mackey arrived at the Hannah Community Center on Thursday to take questions from voters. Reed was not in attendance. Shipley is a division dean at Ivy Tech Community College. Mackey worked as a machinist at Caterpillar before retirement.

9th CD: Truck driver to challenge Trey

A Bloomington truck driver hopes to take on U.S. Rep. Trey Hollingsworth in the 2018 election for Indiana's 9th Congressional District (Bavis, Bloomington Herald-Times). Robert Chatlos, a self-described populist running as an independent, filed papers earlier this month with the Federal Election Commission declaring his intention to run for Congress. While Chatlos has long had an interest in running for political office, he said the results of the 2016 election and the current political climate pushed him to officially declare his candidacy. "We are not in control of our democracy," he said. Chatlos said he would be interested in running as a Democrat should the Democratic Party "catch up" with his vision for a democracy focused on working together and not being divided on wedge issues. ❖

HOOSIERS SMOKING = \$6 BILLION IN HEALTH CARE COSTS AND LOST PRODUCTIVITY

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Holcomb gets behind RyanCare as it falters

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – Gov. Eric Holcomb had warned Indiana legislators last December that the Trump administration could throw a mid-session curve ball. With a potential repeal of Obamacare coming tonight, Holcomb told Howey Politics Indiana on Wednesday that a potential special session might have been put off due to action in the House Energy and Commerce Committee that delays Medicaid changes that could impact the Healthy Indiana Plan until 2020.



“I’ve always said don’t let the perfect be the enemy of the good,” Holcomb said of the Obamacare repeal that could take its first step in the U.S. House tonight. “When I take a first step,

as I’ve said before, repeal Obamacare and get on to the replacement phase. I was encouraged by the amendment that recently came out of the Energy and Commerce Committee that addressed my chief concern and that is giving states the appropriate glide path and flexibility and timeline to give us enough time to make sure we are a part of the reformation that is going to have to occur. I’ve always taken the position that those who are currently covered stay covered and then give us in Indiana and every other state enough time to make sure that we can be part of that solution.”

Holcomb spent Wednesday and through the night working with Republican governors of six states to make an appeal to Congress and the Trump administration. He said the letter will reveal “where these governors stand.”

Holcomb also sent a letter to members of Indiana’s congressional delegation expressing his support for the Republican health care bill. “The more flexibility, the more control that we have over cost and accessibility, the better. And so I’m asking Washington, trust the states, trust Indiana. We’ll deliver.”

Throughout the RyanCare negotiations, there was an effort to woo the Freedom Caucus by moving a cut in Medicaid funding, a major part of the Healthy Indiana Plan 2.0 from the original 2020 to 2018. Had the Energy and Commerce Committee not pushed that date back, Holcomb and the General Assembly would probably be looking at a special session sometime later this year. “That was extended to give us that longer flight path to land our program,” Holcomb said of HIP 2.0, which covers 430,000

Hoosiers. “I think it would be virtually days or weeks determining the path before things adjourn this budget session. That could have prompted us to call a special session. We’re already in this current fiscal year and so moving that out to 2020 gives us enough time to address the needs right now and to make sure we can just prepared as much as we possibly can before our next budget session when we’re going to have to huddle up again and address all the new expenses.”

“We’re talking after January 1, 2020, what will the Healthy Indiana Plan look like?” Holcomb asked. “I believe it will be the Healthy Indiana Plan 3.0 and not Medicaid as we know it. There will be new incentives, work requirements and a lot of other steps that will occur.”

Lanane warns of HIP 2.0 trigger

Senate Democrat Leader Tim Lanane (D-Anderson) and members of the Senate Democrat Caucus urged careful consideration and caution regarding the negative impact of the American Health Care Act (AHCA) on the state of Indiana and Hoosiers. The AHCA is scheduled for a full vote by the U.S. House of Representatives later today. “Today marks the seven year anniversary of President Obama signing the Affordable Care Act into law; a



measure that allowed the State of Indiana to make great strides at ensuring over 400,000 Hoosiers gain health coverage through HIP 2.0,” Sen. Lanane said. “Today marks the beginning of what could be a disaster for public health in Indiana.”

“HIP 2.0 is a critical piece of public health policy for the state, and it is being put at risk under the Republican healthcare plan due to a ‘trigger’ in our state law,” Sen. Lanane said. “We are here today to urge our Republican colleagues in the Statehouse to remove this trigger, and work to safeguard Hoosiers’ health care coverage

should the AHCA become law." Additionally, Sen. Lanane noted in the midst of the opioid crisis facing Indiana, the Republican healthcare plan would remove mental health and substance abuse treatment from the list of essential benefits, putting Hoosiers at risk of losing these services.

Appointed superintendent bill back

The prospect of the superintendent of public instruction becoming an appointed position is still alive, despite the Senate's rejection of an earlier measure (Lange, IndyStar). On Monday, the Senate Rules committee will hear House Bill 1005, which also allows the governor to appoint the top education position instead of allowing Hoosiers to elect that person. While the measure passed easily in the House by a 68-29 vote, the Senate voted 26-23 to reject a similarly-worded Senate bill. The Senate has a rule that when a bill dies or is defeated, the chamber cannot vote on legislation with "substantially similar language," so the future of the House legislation was uncertain. But House Speaker Brian Bosma, R-Indianapolis, and Senate Leader David Long, R-Fort Wayne, said the bill would be different enough if amendments are approved in the Senate committee. Bosma said the amended House bill likely would include a different start date for the change, residency requirements for the position and potentially a licensing requirement.

Fees hiked for public records bill passes

The cost to get public records could go up under a bill passed unanimously by the Senate Local Government Committee on Wednesday (Kelly, Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). Under current law, local governments and state agencies can charge for copies of a record but not for the time and effort of doing a search. House Bill 1523 would change that – allowing a public records search fee for any search that goes beyond two hours. The cost would be the lesser of the hourly wage of the employee conducting the search or \$20 an hour. A similar bill passed the legislature in 2015 and then-Gov. Mike Pence vetoed it. He said "the cost of public records should never be a barrier to the public's right to know." It is unclear where Gov. Eric Holcomb stands on the issue. He hasn't met with the Statehouse press corps since Feb. 9.

Rickers beer won't last long

A loophole that's allowed some gas stations to sell cold beer is likely to be short-lived (Berman, WIBC). Only liquor stores and restaurants are allowed to sell cold beer -- gas stations and convenience stores can't. But two Ricker's gas stations got alcohol permits after opening restaurants on the property. Senate President Pro Tem David Long and House Speaker Brian Bosma say legislators will step in next week. They say the decision goes against more than 30 years of what everyone, including the convenience stores, understood the law to be. The stores have even challenged the law's constitutionality in

court, to no avail. Long and Bosma say they don't blame Ricker's for what both call a "creative" idea. They're less charitable toward the Alcohol and Tobacco Commission for agreeing with it. Long says the bill will not grant an exception for Ricker's or any other business which got its permit approved before the law passed.

Long, Bosma put breaks on prayer bill

Legislative leaders are pumping the brakes on a school-prayer bill (Berman, WIBC). The bill guaranteeing students the right to assert their faith passed the House with just 12 no votes, and sailed through a Senate committee on an 8-2 party-line vote on Wednesday. But House Speaker Brian Bosma says the bill needs a close review before final approval. He's previously said the bill just puts into law religious freedoms that students already have through case law and the constitution. But some supporters have characterized it as a significant change, and Bosma says that warrants a closer look. Senate President Pro Tem David Long says he doesn't see any constitutional issues, but says the bill could still open "a can of worms" in making sure all religions are treated fairly, and creating unanticipated disruptions for schools. The bill could come up for a Senate vote as early as Tuesday, but would still have to return to the House because of changes made in committee.

Changes to gaming fund dispersal

The Senate Appropriations Committee made several changes Thursday to a bill dealing with Indiana gaming taxes and revenue (Smith, Indianapolis Public Media). Representative Todd Huston's (R-Fishers) legislation makes several gaming industry changes, including creating a new wagering tax on casinos and eliminating the admissions tax casinos pay. An alteration in committee would reduce guaranteed money paid to counties across the state each year that comes from gaming revenues. Essentially, as total gaming revenues decrease in the future, so would the guaranteed payouts. Huston says the issue is one of fairness. "For a lot of years, it was a great, great industry for the state of Indiana, putting lots and lots of revenue into state and local communities. But it isn't that way anymore and we're going to have to kinda have that shared sacrifice together," Huston says. Reducing that guaranteed money draws significant objections from lawmakers with casinos in their communities.

Bill prohibiting 'ban the box' advances

Indiana lawmakers are trying to ensure one particular question stays on job applications: "Have you ever been arrested or convicted of a crime?" (Shuler, Statehouse File). Senate Bill 312 is their method. The bill passed the House Courts and Criminal Code Committee 11-0 Wednesday and moves to the full House for consideration. The bill was approved by the full Senate 38-10 late last month. The legislation, co-authored by Sen. Phil

Boots, R-Crawfordsville, and Sen. Chip Perfect, R-Lawrenceburg, has two main parts related to "Ban the Box" laws and business protections for hiring criminals. The first makes sure city and county governments can't enact "Ban the Box" laws, which encourage—or even require—employers to remove the check box that asks potential employees to answer "yes" or "no" about whether they have a criminal record on a job application. The second half of the bill reforms business liability. It would lower the legal concerns for a business that wants to hire someone with a criminal background, as it would give employers legal protection from any potential illegal actions of employees with criminal backgrounds.

Tobacco group opposes tax hike

You Should Be Furious! That's what it says on the new anti-tobacco tax fliers that area gas stations are passing out (Kposowa, WANE-TV). The organization behind

the fliers is called Citizens for Tobacco Rights and they are determined to stop Indiana politicians from raising tobacco prices. The Director of Tobacco Free Allen County Nancy Cripe is concerned that the fine print on the flier indicates Citizens for Tobacco Rights is operated by Phillip Morris USA, one of the countries largest cigarette manufacturers. Proposals to raise state taxes on tobacco have been as much as a \$1.50 and the organization hopes that by connecting Hoosiers to their lawmakers to protest the proposed cigarette tax could be avoided. Phil's One Stop on Hillegas Road is one gas station proudly passing out the new anti-tobacco tax fliers. "It's something that concerns our customers. We actually hear it a lot. Daily. And they're actually happy that we're handing these out," manager of Phil's One Stop Matt Kudrop. "A lot of our customers are upset by the \$1.50 and as they should. Anyone who smokes more than a pack a week is affected by the rate increase." ❖

You can't take the truth

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – This column is for Mr. W of Columbus, Mr. R in Terre Haute, and the many readers who see Indiana exclusively as a wonderful place. They believe, however, I tear Indiana down, not appreciating its glory.

Indiana is a wonderful place because it has the opportunity to build a better future. We do not suffer from the overwhelming burdens of poverty, ignorance, and indolence that afflict many places in this world. Our problem is that we refuse to use our wealth, knowledge, and energy to make our state and communities better.



Complacency is a public health hazard in Indiana. We suffer serious air and water pollution, decaying infrastructure, inadequate education, low quality public services, reactionary legislation based on superstition, all in fear that a step forward will upset the stagnation of our perceived equilibrium.

The posse seeking Hoosier heretics was distressed I did not trumpet the first place ranking of Indiana's government by U.S. News and World Report. That Indiana could not achieve better than a mediocre rank in other measures did not faze them. A crumb of something good in a bog of bilge excites these readers.

Week after week, for more than 25 years, this column presents the facts about Indiana's economy. Sadly, we live in times where facts are ignored if they do not reinforce commonly held fictions.

Indiana's economy has been in trouble since the

late 1970s. For too long we lived off the strength gained in the post-war era. That's the post-Civil War era. It was an advantage of geography; the railroads of the north had to go through Indiana to get to Chicago and St. Louis. The southern rails had been destroyed by the war.

Similarly, after WWII, Indiana had the transportation routes and the industrial composition to enjoy unprecedented economic advantage. But we hit a wall in the mid-'60s and saw no major public or private investment after the Bethlehem Steel plant in Northwest Indiana.

Hoosiers were comfortable with income levels above the national average, so they took a nap for a decade. Then they could not wake up when the computer and energy revolutions of the '70s gained momentum. We fought internal battles against property taxes, took steps to degrade cities and towns, and passed power to a state legislature obsessed with yesterday's fantasies.

As we slid relative to other states, we resisted steps forward. We did not repeal a 1933 law that strangled bank expansion until 1983. We called it progress as we failed to find meaningful education reform. We were so confused about public finance, willy-nilly, we changed our constitution to cap property taxes. Decay surrounds us. Population growth slows. Our children leave as rapidly as the jobs of their parents. Our location does not change, but our place among the states drifts downwards.

Privately we lament our condition. Publicly, in our newspapers, on our TVs, we want to celebrate whatever we can, no matter how false, how insignificant, or how self-destructive. ❖

Mr. Marcus is an economist, writer, and speaker who may be reached at mortonjmarcus@yahoo.com.

How are property tax levels established?

By **LARRY DeBOER**

WEST LAFAYETTE – Consider the eternal questions. Why is the sky blue? Why is the grass green? Why are some Indiana local government property tax rates high, while others are low? Let's leave the answers to the first two to actual scientists. I'll take a stab at that last one.



Suppose we measure the revenue capacity of Indiana local governments. Our counties, cities, school districts, libraries and townships receive revenue from property taxes and local income taxes. Schools get a lot of aid from the state. Counties, cities and towns receive state aid for roads. And there are interest earnings, charges and fees, and dozens of other smaller revenue

sources.

Let's calculate the average property tax rate for all Indiana local governments, then multiply that rate by the taxable assessed value in each county. That gives the amount they could collect if their tax rates were just average. Calculate the average revenue from local income taxes by multiplying the average local income tax rate by each county's taxable income. Then add in school and road aid, which depend on state aid formulas. And take the state average of the other revenues per person, and multiply by county population.

Add it up. That's the amount that local governments in each county could raise if they behaved like the state average. It's a dollar measure of revenue capacity. The median county has \$2,553 per person in local government revenues at average tax rates. You can see the numbers and an article explaining it all on the web at pcrd.purdue.edu/ruralindianastats.

Some counties have high capacity. Benton County has all those wind turbines and very few people. They'd raise \$4,572 per person at average tax rates. Boone has high incomes and high home values. Their local governments could raise \$3,371 per person at average tax rates. Some counties have low capacity. Delaware County has a lot of people, but has lost a lot of its industry over the past couple of decades. Its capacity is \$2,019 per person.

To answer the tax rate question, though, we need to know about the costs of local government services too. It costs more to deliver services like police and fire protection in cities and towns. So, take the state average appropriation by cities and towns times the number of people in cities and towns in each

county. School kids are expensive. Schools are the biggest government expenditure we've got. Multiply the state average appropriation per pupil by the number of pupils in each county. Do the same with average road appropriations per road mile, and the average of everything else per person.

Again, add it up and it's a measure of service costs for the local governments in each county, if services were delivered at the statewide average cost. The median cost per person is \$2,508.

Some counties face higher costs. Clinton County has a lot of school kids as a share of its population. Its service cost number is \$2,914 per person. Urban counties have a lot of city and town population, of course, but usually fewer school kids. Their service costs depend on that balance. Lake has higher costs, \$2,709, while Vanderburgh has lower costs, \$2,204. Suburban Hamilton has lots of population in cities, and a lot of school kids too, which produces service costs of \$2,998 per person.

Now, let's put revenue capacity and service costs together in a capacity-cost index. Just subtract costs from revenues. Then, if the index is positive, it means that the local governments in the county could more than meet the costs of average services with average tax rates. But if the index is negative, average tax rates won't be enough to meet the cost of average services. To cover those costs, a county would need higher than average tax rates.

Sure enough, it turns out that counties with negative capacity-cost indexes do tend to have higher average property tax rates. Counties with positive capacity-cost indexes tend to have lower average tax rates. Less revenue capacity and higher costs make for higher property tax rates.

Lots of other factors enter into the tax rate decision. But it's true that a county's economy and population are a part of its tax rate destiny. ❖

DeBoer is a professor of agricultural economics at Purdue University

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YOUR FRIENDS ALL HANG OUT HERE... DO YOU?

John Van Valkenburg's strange story from Peru to Huntsville

By CRAIG DUNN

KOKOMO – Working up my best Andy Rooney imitation I ask, “Ever wonder why there are no Van Valkenburgs in Peru, Indiana, and there’s a plethora of them in Huntsville, Alabama? It all comes down to an offhanded remark, a letter, a screwup by the United States Post Office, a misunderstanding, nasty politics and a vengeful Indiana governor.



As episodes of history go, this tale seems insignificant in the long march of time. It does illustrate that many little events over time add up to big history. So as you go about your day, remember that every little thing said, every email sent, and every social media item posted just may alter the course of history.

Our story begins in June, 1861, in the beginning months of the Civil War. Governors throughout the Union were scrambling to fill regiments to comply with President Abraham Lincoln’s call for 75,000 volunteers. Indiana’s response was overwhelming, and the 6,000 men called for from the Hoosier State flocked to Indianapolis to enlist, along with several thousand superfluous volunteers who all vied to enlist for 90 days or the end of the Rebellion, whichever came first.

William Lyon Brown, of Logansport, a politically connected ally of Gov. Oliver P. Morton, was tentatively appointed colonel of the 20th Indiana Volunteer Infantry. When Brown’s men, along with those of Cols. Solomon Meredith and James McMillan, were turned away because they weren’t needed, the three colonels, with permission from Gov. Morton, made their way to Washington, D.C., to visit President Lincoln in a quest to get his authorization for their additional regiments. Lincoln bowed to the request by the three officers, greatly influenced by Gov. Morton’s letter of introduction. With Lincoln’s approval, the men returned to Indiana to form their regiments.



At the beginning of the Civil War, senior officers were appointed by the governor and, generally, appointments to high rank went to political allies, influential newspaper publishers, community leaders and others who might prove of benefit to a politically savvy governor. Lower ranks of captain on down were usually filled by an election conducted by the hundred-plus men who made up a company. While popularity was an important attribute to win an election, partisan politics took a side seat when it came to voting. Newly minted soldiers were more apt to vote for an honest cattle broker than for the local town politico.

Such was the case when John B. Van Valkenburg, of Peru, was elected captain of his company of soldiers that were to become Company A, 20th Indiana Volunteer Infantry. Van Valkenburg was a purveyor of agricultural implements and in that capacity knew just about every farmer in Miami County.

Van Valkenburg was strong Jacksonian Democrat. He grew up in Cleveland and as a young man volunteered to join the army heading out to fight Indians in the upper Midwest. It may have been a strong desire to receive the 400 acres of virgin land promised by his government for enlisting, or an even stronger desire to avoid imprisonment for theft that made the young man chance the uncertain and hard duty of a frontier soldier.

After the Indian fighting ended, Van Valkenburg received his land in Miami County and set about building a life as a respectable farmer and merchant. When the call to arms came at the beginning of the Civil War, Van Valkenburg enlisted, not out of support for Lincoln or a quest to free the slaves, but rather for the honorable goal of saving the Union.

The general attrition of the 20th Indiana Volunteers in the months from the formation of their regiment in July, 1861, until the two belligerent armies found themselves staring at each other on the Peninsula in June, 1862, created opportunities for promotion. Van Valkenburg had become a highly respected and capable officer and found himself promoted to major and then to lieutenant colonel of the 20th.

To the Indiana farm boys who aspired to martial glory, their dreams descended into the seven rings of the Inferno at 5:30 on June 25, when their regiment pitched into the bloody morass that would be known as the Seven Days Battle. In the span of only 10 minutes, over 125 men were cut down while making a headlong charge at the heavily concealed Confederate line.

Lt. Colonel Van Valkenburg led one half of the 20th in the charge, while former Crown Point newspaper publisher

John Wheeler, now Maj. Wheeler, commanded the remaining half. Van Valkenburg had two horses shot from under him during the attack, but he gamely carried on, leading the charge on foot. He soon found himself felled by a rebel marksman, with the musket ball striking him below the knee. Van Valkenburg was carried to the rear and eventually sent home to Indiana with orders to recuperate from his wound and also act as a recruiting officer for the many new regiments being formed back home.

Van Valkenburg's recovery and recruiting were going well when he received the shocking telegram that Col. Brown had been killed at the 2nd Battle of Bull Run (2nd Manassas) and that he had been appointed by Gov. Morton as the new colonel of the 20th Indiana. Van Valkenburg quickly put his affairs in order and made his way to Indianapolis with his new recruits where they would find transport back to the Army of the Potomac.

It had been several months since Van Valkenburg had been paid. Paymasters visited each regiment more or less every two months and if you weren't present, you weren't paid. While in Indianapolis, Van Valkenburg visited a friend, a Mr. Reynolds, in an effort to borrow \$50 until he made his way back to his regiment and the paymasters. Reynolds, no great fan of the Lincoln Administration, said that he didn't know if he wanted to lend money to a representative of that damn n***** administration. His feelings vented, he loaned the money and the newly minted colonel returned to his regiment.

Upon being paid when he returned to the 20th Indiana, Van Valkenburg sent the borrowed \$50 back to Reynolds with a brief note that read, "See, I told you that you could trust this representative of that damn n***** administration."

At this point, events quickly spun out of control. Van Valkenburg's letter was delivered by the post office to the wrong Mr. Reynolds, the brother of Union Maj. Gen. Joseph Jones Reynolds, a staunch supporter of Abraham Lincoln and his new Emancipation Proclamation. The note was forwarded to Gen. Reynolds, who then sent the errant post to Gov. Morton.

Gov. Morton might have been more forgiving had he not received some erroneous information from one of his assistants.

For those of you who believe that nasty reporting by newspapers was a 20th Century phenomenon, you would be greatly wrong. At the time of the Civil War, just about every town of any size had two newspapers, one Republican, and one Democrat. They were partisan, nasty

and took no journalistic prisoners. Our colonel's lasting curse was that the publisher of the Democratic newspaper in Plymouth, Indiana, was a wild-tongued seditionist who just happened to share the last name of Van Valkenburg. No relation. Who'd a thunk it?

When Morton saw the name on the forwarded note, he immediately sent the note to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton, who promptly dismissed Van Valkenburg from the service "at the orders of President Lincoln," for disloyalty to the Union. The officers of his regiment, brigade and division were as shocked as if a bomb had gone off in their midst. They unanimously petitioned Stanton for Van Valkenburg's reinstatement, but were denied. A good, loyal and brave officer was sent home to Peru in disgrace, bearing the burden of the taint of disloyalty to his country.

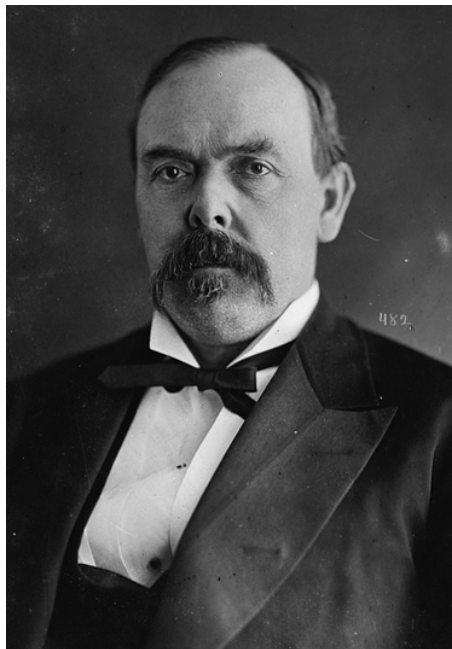
As you might have expected, life failed to return to normal for John Van Valkenburg. His business fortunes faded along with his personal reputation and Indiana no longer felt like home. He was patient though, and waited for the cessation of hostilities in April, 1865. With the Civil War ended, Van Valkenburg loaded up and headed south in 1866. Alabama sounded like a good place to make a new life, and Huntsville seemed like a good town to make his start.

Van Valkenburg, a personable fellow and talented salesman, made a successful fresh start. He married the daughter of one of Huntsville's wealthiest families. He quickly gained prominence in the business and social affairs of northern Alabama. He became an influential leader in the Democrat Party, attracting the attention of a Republican-led Congressional inquiry into the operations of the Ku Klux Klan in northern Alabama. While not a member of the Klan himself, he knew who the leaders were and what they were doing. He was called to give testimony to a congressional committee and asked to name the names

of leading Klansmen. He refused to co-operate and would not give up the names, which further cemented his popularity.

John Van Valkenburg passed away in 1883, a pillar of the Huntsville, Alabama, community and owner of the grandest home in the town, a home still toured to this day.

What became of the abrupt dismissal without courts martial and solely on the urging of a vindictive Gov. Morton and mean-spirited Edwin Stanton? On April 27, 1866, the War Department reversed the dismissal and granted Van Valkenburg his much-deserved honorable discharge. By then it was too late. Peru's loss had become Huntsville's gain. ❖



Gov. Oliver P. Morton

Dunn is the former Howard County Republican chairman.

In praise of pragmatism

By LEE HAMILTON

BLOOMINGTON – The challenge our political leaders face is how to get through the thicket of conflicting principles, interests and dogmas in our sprawling democracy.

As you watch the healthcare proceedings on Capitol Hill, imagine what things might be like if we lived in more functional political times. In particular, what if Congress were run by pragmatists?



It would not change the issues at hand. On the one side, you'd have the Republican majority in Congress, which for the most part believes that the healthcare system should be left to the private sector. On the other side would be Democrats who, to varying degrees, see an important role for government to play.

What would change would be how the two sides reconciled their differences. Rather than maneuver the proceedings for political gain or worry first about their political bases, they'd be dead-set on a healthcare overhaul that improved the system and was politically sustainable.

I don't think our system can work without such an approach to our problems, healthcare and everything else. So what do I mean by "pragmatism"?

At heart it's a mindset, a preference for a practical, workable solution to problems. It recognizes the diversity of our country and the need for compromise, negotiation, dialogue, and consultation in order to reconcile conflicting interests and viewpoints. Pragmatists ask themselves how they can best navigate the differences, factions, and political frictions inherent in any substantive issue so that everyone can leave the table having achieved some gain.

Let's be clear that this is hardly an easy approach. On Capitol Hill, you work under intense scrutiny and pressure in a dynamic, always changing, politically supercharged environment. You can't make the world stand still while you work through the problems.

And if you're trying to hammer out agreement, you have to keep the conversation moving; when a group or a participant threatens to walk out, you have to calculate whether you can get the votes you need without them. If not, you have to keep them at the table, even if it means nights that stretch into the early morning. And always, of course, you have to try to keep things as courteous and civil as possible.

You also have to be very careful of labels. When you're trying to solve problems, labels get in the way. I've

had my share of fraught negotiations, and what I focused on most was trying to figure out whether people at the table wanted to solve the problem and advance a solution, not whether they were Republican or Democrat. And you're constantly counting votes, because you don't get anywhere without a majority of them.

So you have to pause, hesitate, weigh the situation, calm the passions, figure out what's achievable, and then decide whether or not what's possible is actually worth getting.

Because there are risks to pragmatism in politics. For starters, some issues should not be compromised: to my mind, they include basic values involving torture and the right to vote.

And the pragmatic approach tends not to produce dramatic breakthroughs; it's incremental, step-by-step, unglamorous work. It means downplaying ideology. This is difficult in these partisan days, yet I was always wary when I heard a fervent ideological speech in the middle of negotiations — it's an expression of principle, yes, but it raises the question of whether the person giving it is going to help you reach an agreement or not.

Which is why you get a lot of criticism as a pragmatist. People inevitably accuse you of not doing enough or of giving away too much. You're often accused of abandoning your principles. You have to ask yourself what's really important in this negotiation, both to yourself and to the others participating: how much can you give to get support for that principle, how much do you have to give up, and is it all worth it?

Yes, indeed, I'd argue, because the country would implode without the pragmatists. The challenge that our political leaders face is how to get through the thicket of conflicting principles, interests and dogmas in a sprawling democracy like ours. All too often, politicians lock themselves into a position; they give a speech to loud applause, then another, and soon enough they have no room to maneuver. In the end they, too, often have to rely on the pragmatists to get things done. ❖

Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar, IU School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice, IU School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.

Ken Ferries, Kokomo Tribune: Matthew 25:35: "For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat." Move along. Not in this budget, buddy. The current tenant at 1600 Pennsylvania Ave. has sent his initial budget proposal to the Congress. There is much to talk about, but one example epitomizes the callousness that permeates the whole. Meals on Wheels is not a federal program. It is funded from several sources, with one of the contributors being the federal government, in some cases through block grants to individual states. Nationwide, Meals on Wheels, a non-profit group relying primarily on volunteers, serves hot meals each year to 2.4 million senior citizens between the ages of 60 to over 100 years. Disregard for the moment that while Mr. Mulvaney carries the title "budget chief," he was apparently laboring under the misapprehension that major federal funding for the Meals on Wheels program comes from CDBG sources. Actually, the major federal funding source is through the Administration for Community Living, an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services, which has a \$227 million line item for "home-delivered nutrition services," according to published reports in USA Today. Meals on Wheels is "just not showing any results." As is happening all too often with this new administration, inconvenient facts have a way of contradicting the official narrative — at least on Meals on Wheels. As reported in the Washington Post, a 2013 study concluded home-delivered meals for seniors "significantly improves diet quality, increases nutrient intakes, and reduces food insecurity and nutritional risk among participants." Moreover, for many homebound seniors, daily contact with Meals on Wheels volunteers is the main contact recipients have with the society beyond their front doors. Beyond the touchy-feely nonsense, in this new dawn of non-military spending austerity, what's the business case for continuing to mollycoddle these non-contributing parasites who have not yet had the decency to die? "Meals on Wheels sounds great ...," Mulvaney said, "but to take that federal money and give it to the states and say, 'Look, we want to give you money for programs that don't work' — I can't defend that anymore." The dismissive treatment of Meals on Wheels in No. 45's budget proposal is symptomatic of the treatment accorded to many of the programs directly affecting ordinary Americans. As for Mr. Mulvaney's assessment of this particular program, there are only two words that seem appropriate in a family newspaper. Bull hockey. ❖



remembering. When Pence's attorneys turned over his emails for archiving, they gave 13 boxes of printouts to sort through. Why paper? Why not turn over electronic forms of the data that could be searched more quickly, more easily and more inexpensively? We are in the information age, when data are kept in digital format and not primarily on paper. There has been a long tussle over government records, with some of the bureaucrats who create them not wanting to share their work product with the public they represent. That's just wrong. That's the bureaucrats forgetting they serve the public, not the other way around. ❖

Michael Gerson, Washington Post: Every new administration has a shakeout period. But this assumes an ability to learn from mistakes. And this would require admitting mistakes. The spectacle of an American president blaming a Fox News commentator for a major diplomatic incident was another milestone in the miniaturization of the presidency. An interested foreigner (friend or foe) must be a student of Trump's temperament, which is just as bad as advertised. He is inexperienced, uninformed, easily provoked and supremely confident in his own judgment. His advantage is the choice of some serious, experienced advisers, including Defense Secretary Jim Mattis, national security adviser H.R. McMaster and deputy national security adviser Dina Powell. But success in their jobs depends on Trump's listening skills. Mere incompetence would be bad enough. But foreigners trying to understand the United States must now study (of all things) the intellectual influences of White House chief strategist Stephen K. Bannon. His vision of a Western alliance of ethno-nationalist, right-wing populists against globalists, multiculturalists, Islamists and (fill in the blank with your preferred minority) is the administration's most vivid and rhetorically ascendant foreign policy viewpoint. How does this affect the alliances of the previous dispensation? That is the background against which Trump's peevishness is being viewed. Foreigners see a president who has blamed his predecessor, in banana-republic style, of a serious crime, for which FBI Director James B. Comey testified Monday there is no evidence. They see an administration whose campaign activities are being actively investigated by the executive branch and Congress. If close Trump associates are directly connected to Russian hacking, foreigners will see the president engulfed in an impeachment crisis — the only constitutional mechanism that would remove the taint of larceny from the 2016 election. The sum total? Foreigners see a Darwinian, nationalist framework for American foreign policy; a diminished commitment to global engagement; a brewing scandal that could distract and cripple the administration; and a president who often conducts his affairs with peevish ignorance. Some will look at this spectacle and live in fear; others may see a golden opportunity. ❖

Doug Ross, NWI Times: The controversy surrounding Vice President Mike Pence using a private email account to conduct state business when he was Indiana governor, somewhat reminiscent of Hillary Clinton using a private server to conduct her own state business, is all about public access to government business. This being Sunshine Week, a time for an especially sharp focus on public access to the public's business, that case is worth

Trump ultimatum on RyanCare

WASHINGTON — President Trump delivered an ultimatum to House Republicans on Thursday night: Vote to approve the measure to overhaul the nation's health-care system on the House floor Friday, or reject it and the president will move on to his other legislative priorities (Washington Post). The president, through his aides in a closed-door meeting, signaled that the time for negotiations was over with rank-and-file Republicans who were meeting late at night on Capitol Hill to try to find common ground on the embattled package crafted by House Speaker Paul D. Ryan (R-Wis.). The move was a high-risk gamble for the president and the speaker, who have invested significant political capital in passing legislation that would replace the 2010 Affordable Care Act. For Trump, who campaigned as a skilled negotiator capable of forging a good deal on behalf of Americans, it could either vindicate or undercut one of his signature claims. If the measure fails, it would be a defeat for Trump in his first effort to help pass major legislation and it may also jeopardize other items on his wish list, including a tax overhaul and infrastructure spending. Defeat would also mean that Obamacare — something that congressional Republicans have railed against for seven years — would remain in place. "Disastrous #Obamacare has led to higher costs & fewer options. It will only continue to get worse! We must #RepealANDReplace. #PassTheBill," Trump tweeted from his official presidential account as the meeting was wrapping up Thursday night.

McCormick blasts Trump budget

INDIANAPOLIS — Indiana schools stand to lose about \$56 million for teacher training and after



school programs for low-income students, under proposed budget cuts by President Donald Trump's administration (Balonon-Rosen, Indiana Public Media). Jennifer McCormick, Indiana superintendent of public instruction, says the proposed budget would be "a big hit" to the state. She says cuts would hamper efforts to attract teachers, stifle new programs under a new federal education law and reduce programs for low-income students. "Is it concerning? Absolutely," McCormick says. "We need as much money to flow into our traditional public schools, and our public charter schools that are struggling, [as] we can get there." Trump's proposed budget would slash the U.S. Department of Education's budget by \$9 billion, a 13.5 percent reduction.

Nunes apologizes for 'going public'

WASHINGTON — House Intelligence Chairman Devin Nunes apologized to members of his panel Thursday for not informing Rep. Adam Schiff, the ranking Democrat, before going public with allegations that Trump transition messages were inadvertently intercepted by U.S. intelligence agencies (Politico). A committee aide said Nunes (R-Calif.) apologized "for not sharing information about the documents he saw with the minority before going public" and that "he pledged to work with them on this issue."

Cardwell joins consulting firm

INDIANAPOLIS — The former chairman of the Indiana Republican Party has a new job. Jeff Cardwell has joined Indianapolis-based consulting and strategic communications firm Sextons Creek as senior vice president (Brown, Inside Indiana Business). Cardwell announced his resignation from the Indiana GOP in December and officially stepped down in late January. He was succeeded by Kyle

Hupfer, who previously served as the party's fifth congressional district chairman.

Young says he'll back Gorsuch

WASHINGTON — In an op-ed that appeared on website of the IndyStar yesterday afternoon, U.S. Sen. Todd Young (R-IN) laid out his support for Supreme Court nominee Judge Neil Gorsuch. "Today, I can say without a doubt that Judge Gorsuch has met Hoosiers' high expectations," Young wrote. "I'm proud to say that I will be voting to confirm him on the floor of the U.S. Senate. Going into this process, I was hopeful that President Trump would nominate someone who was within the mainstream of judicial interpretation and one who came to the job with independence and respect for our constitution. In Judge Gorsuch, President Trump made a great pick. The role of a jurist in our constitutional system is to apply the text of the constitution and legislative statutes impartially and independently."

Mutz, 2 others off IEDC board

WASHINGTON — In what state officials are describing as a "changing of the guard," the Indiana Economic Development Corporation has informed three longtime board members that they will no longer continue their terms with the state agency (Segall, WTHR-TV). WTHR has confirmed John Mutz, Robert Koch II and James Marcuccilli are each being replaced and their service as board members will end this month. "I was basically told, 'Don't bother coming to [next Tuesday's] board meeting,'" Mutz told 13 Investigates Thursday morning. "I think I've contributed a lot to the board and have been there since the very beginning, but anytime you can bring in new blood, that's not necessarily a bad thing." The three business leaders were each appointed to the IEDC Board in March 2005 by then-Gov. Mitch Daniels.