

# The Howey Political Report



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## “QUOTE” OF THE WEEK

“People’s principles and beliefs change when they are hit in the pocketbook. Now people are saying, ‘We have to look at trimming costs, cutting budgets.’”

- Joseph Gomeztagle, who initiated the property tax reforms, to the *Post-Tribune*

# Bush comes back for ‘My man Mitch’

## Miller draws Daniels to the right

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY** in Indianapolis

Indiana Republicans, wandering the gubernatorial desert for nearly half the time Moses did during his biblical travails, are girding for what appears to be a hotly contested primary that has brought both President Bush and Vice President Cheney to the state in the final weeks. Mitch Daniels will greet President Bush in South Bend at noon today, a last-ditch effort to derail the populist Christian right campaign of family activist Eric Miller.

“After greeting the President, Daniels will leave to resume his campaign schedule in southern Indiana, culminating in a return visit to Milan where he spent his first evening on the campaign trail in early July,” his campaign said on Sunday.

For Hoosier Republicans, a Daniels defeat would be a continuation of nearly 20 years of bad luck and poorly performing campaigns, whether it was Linley Pearson’s convention floor demise in 1992, Stephen Goldsmith’s lack of a ground game four years later, or David McIntosh getting his property tax math wrong in 2000.

**Daniels made a decision in 2003** to “talk to a broad spectrum of voters” while he insisted his campaign would take the Miller campaign seriously. Some observers believed that having Miller in the race would allow Daniels to appear centrist and position himself to pick off independents, moderate Republicans, women and Reagan Democrats who had been supporting conservative Democratic Govs. Evan Bayh and Frank O’Bannon. But Miller has essentially pulled

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*HPR Forum Will Feature Dr. Larry Sabato  
on Oct. 1 at the Downtown Marriott*

# TICKER

## T A P E

**TOON REACTS TO GOP DEBATE:** In response, Kernan campaign manager Bernie Toon said both candidates continue to ignore positive signs of recovery for Indiana economically (Fort Wayne Journal Gazette). "There was a continual focus on the past in terms of more negative aspects of the economy and very little recognition that the economy is starting to turn the corner," he said. "I think to some degree both of these campaigns base their message on bad news, and when that happens, it's not a good time for them when there's good news, which there has been lately."

**KERNAN WON'T WITHER ON CAMPAIGN TRAIL:** Few Republicans expect Kernan to wither in battle, especially since he's armed with the powers of incumbency, a compelling personal story, and polished communication skills (South Bend Tribune). "Those are not inconsiderable factors," said Peter J. Rusthoven, an Indianapolis Republican who worked with Daniels in the Reagan White House. This early in the campaign, Kernan has focused on the duties of his office and on introductory TV spots. "There are lots of folks that don't know who I am or where I come from or what I've been up to," he said

Daniels to the right during the debates in the final weeks of the campaign. That was clear Saturday during the WTHR debate when Miller told viewers, "I've been crystal clear of where I stand on the issues. I'm not a politician. I'm not a Washington insider."

Asked about same-sex marriage, Daniels explained, "Eric and I have the same view precisely on this question. I will protect both by any means necessary. I will not support the concept of civil unions."

It was a departure from his WISH-TV debate stance when Daniels explained, "I'm very slow to condemn that behavior that I may not approve of in other people. And if there are rights that those who choose an exclusive relationship would like to have of a legal character, of a practical nature, perhaps some accommodation of that could be made."

**Those are the words** that Miller's campaign would like his purported 200,000 supporters to remember on Tuesday.

Throughout Saturday's debate, Miller tried to reveal his Christian conservative consistency. Asked about home schooling, Miller explained, "I've spoken in the Home School State Convention for many years. I've worked for 20 years at statehouse to have that option. I've been an advocate for home schooling and parental rights. I will continue to lead the fight."

When the candidates were asked about abortion, both said they believe the Supreme Court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* should be overturned, and the issue of abortion should be left up to individual states. Miller said he advocates a ban on all abortions unless the life of the mother is at stake. Daniels said he would accept a rape or incest exception, "if that were the will of the people of Indiana."

The *Indianapolis Star's* Matthew Tully observed in his Sunday debate story, "Daniels carefully has tried to prove himself conservative enough for primary vot-

ers -- clearly stating his opposition to civil unions Saturday, for instance -- without turning off independents and others who will vote in the fall general election."

Another regional front Miller tried to exploit was the I-69 issue. "I'm the only candidate running for office that supports the common sense route of I-70 and U.S. 41," Miller said. Improving those roads, he added, would save roughly \$1 billion and make funds available for other highway projects such as U.S. 31.

**Daniels said the I-69** route is in "the economic interest of our whole state, end to end" and supported the new terrain route.

*Terre Haute Tribune-Star* reporter Pete Ciancone said that Miller is playing for the support of the Southwestern Indiana Wabash River corridor Republican Hostettler voter. "Miller is the only option for people supporting the old terrain route," Ciancone said, noting that Miller is drawing strong support in Vigo County where he is supported by Republican Chairman David Lohr.

**And, on the daylight-saving** time question, Miller insisted it would "never be settled in the Indiana General Assembly. It should be put to a referendum."

Daniels said Indiana "needs to be on daylight-saving time. We need to be a part of the global economy."

Here, too, Daniels risked being outflanked on the hard conservative right by Miller, who understands the mentality of what former House Speaker John Gregg once said of the people of Southwestern Indiana: "They're against communism, regional government and daylight-saving time."

Most political observers still believe Daniels will win the GOP nomination on Tuesday and will have plenty of time to reposition himself to recapture the "Bayh-O'Bannon Republicans" next fall.

The greeting of President Bush today could either be seen as insurance, or a last ditch effort to stave off on populist

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insurgency on the right. Bush's entry into Indiana politics can crush those in the path of a friend, as Paul Helmke found out in his 2002 challenge to U.S. Rep. Mark Souder. Bush also helped Daniels clear the primary field after his May 2003 Fairgrounds visit.

Despite attempts to out-flank him on the right, Daniels appeared confident, sending out a "Notes from the Road" e-mail over the weekend, writing, "Next Tuesday's Primary will determine whether

the road show continues, and produces a couple dozen more of these missives. Remember to renew your subscription by voting on May 4th to keep RV One rolling down the Road to Comeback."

Miller's campaign is also using e-mail to rally his forces.

But there is no independent polling, just a great deal of conventional wisdom in a state with a tendency to ideologically pull to the right during the primary season. ❖

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during a recent interview in his office. Those facts have fed Republican broadsides for months, including the charge that Democrats failed to plan for the economic future while times were good. Kernan bears special responsibility for that, according to Republicans, because his portfolio as lieutenant governor included economic development. But that charge may not stick, according to retired Indiana University economist Morton Marcus, who said most voters know that lieutenant governors don't make policy. "He wears the team uniform," Marcus said, "but he sits on the bench. And now that he's been put in as quarterback, he can project a different image."

**KERNAN'S ALMA MATER WITHDRAWS INVITATION:** Gov. Joe Kernan's high school alma mater has withdrawn a commencement speaking invitation to Kernan based on Kernan's policy statements on abortion (South Bend Tribune). South Bend St. Joseph High School withdrew the invitation at the direction of Bishop John M. D'Arcy of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Fort Wayne-South Bend, who has direct authority over the school. D'Arcy, who confirmed his actions in conversation and a written statement Friday, said

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## Borst, Waltz joust with mailers, phone calls

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

GREENWOOD - Powerful Senate Finance Chairman Larry Borst resorted to "killer phone calls" late last week as he tries to stave off a challenge from Johnson County Councilman Brent Waltz in SD36.

The calls accused Waltz of voting to raise cigarette taxes, though the Waltz campaign said Friday the Johnson County Council has never attempted to raise cigarette taxes.

Meanwhile, Waltz has sent out 10 mailers over the past two weeks, the final three hitting Johnson and Marion county mail boxes late last week. One shows a headline that reads: "Borst seeks tax on churches and charities."

**Another mailer quotes a March 16 Indianapolis Star** editorial under the headline: "This deal is so good they want to keep it a secret." That mailer quotes the *Star* editorial: "The Indiana General Assembly did not accomplish a great deal this past session in the way of child protection. However, it took a lengthy stride in self-protection. Passed easily in both chambers and slipped through without citizen input, House Bill 1285 bans public inspection of taxpayer financed employee pension funds. Especially for legislators, no state employee gets the kind of deal these part-timers enjoy. For every \$1 they kick in, the taxpayer contributes \$4."

The Waltz flier adds, "Larry Borst voted in favor of secrecy."

**The last flier Waltz sent out reads:** "100,000 children in Indiana will go to bed tonight without health insurance. My opponent, Larry Borst, recently voted himself lifetime health care benefits at taxpayers expense, in addition to his \$51,000 salary working three months a year as a legislator. What would this insurance cost the average family? About \$10,000."

Former Indiana Republican Chairman Rex Early sent a letter to SD36 Republicans late last week noting that "Sen. Borst has indicated he will run on his record. He has helped craft every budget and every tax raise we have had since 1970. I have watched as my sales tax has been tripled (from 2% to 6%). I have watched as my income tax, cigarette tax, and my gasoline tax have been raised dramatically, as well as my property tax. I have watched as the current state budget is now out of balance by \$1.03 billion as our legislators spend and spend. If our Republican legislators spend and tax and spend and tax, we really don't need a Republican Party -- there is already a party that does that called the Democratic Party." ❖

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theology teachers at the school believed that Kernan's appearance would directly contradict the moral truths they teach and expect students to embrace. "I am in full agreement with these teachers," D'Arcy said. He then directed school Principal Kathleen Ratliff to withdraw the invitation in writing and to inform Kernan that D'Arcy had requested the action. "It all happened before I was even aware of it," Kernan said of the controversy Sunday (Indianapolis Star). "St. Joseph High School is a place that I love. It's where I went to school. It's my alma mater. It's a place that I still support."

**HAMILTON GETS 911 COMMISSION TO TONE DOWN RHETORIC:** Fearing that their high-profile inquiry was being dragged into election-year politics, 9/11 commission chair Tom Kean and vice chair Lee Hamilton made powerful private pleas to fellow commissioners to tone down the rhetoric and avoid politically charged questioning, panel sources tell Newsweek. Those entreaties were one reason last week's long-awaited showdown between the 9/11 panel and President Bush and Vice President Cheney was more muted than the commission's public sessions. Although Hamilton didn't single out members, the talk seemed

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# 2004 Racing Form

## Indiana 2004 Gubernatorial

**Governor 2004: Republican:** Mitch Daniels, Eric Miller. **Democrat:** Gov. Joe Kernan. **Libertarian:** Kenn Gividen. **1996 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,075,342, Goldsmith (R) 997,505, Dillon (L) 35,261. **2000 Results:** O'Bannon (D) 1,230,345, McIntosh (R) 906,492, Horning (L) 38,686. **2004 Forecast:** "It could be close or it could be a blowout," said Robert Dion, an assistant professor of political science at the University of Evansville (*Louisville Courier-Journal*). "You always have to remember that in a primary, with such low turnout, sometimes there's an advantage to the candidate with a more intense organization." Conventional wisdom says that's Miller, who founded the lobbying group Advance America and has spent more than 20 years fighting for social conservative ideals. The group claims 42,000 families, 3,800 churches and 1,500 businesses in its grassroots network. "I know the conventional wisdom is that Mitch Daniels is going to win," said Linda Gugin, a political science professor at Indiana University Southeast. "But I'm not as convinced as everybody else." Eric Miller has a strong grassroots base. Driving around in New Albany, I was struck by how many Eric Miller signs I saw in yards. I didn't see a single Mitch Daniels sign. That doesn't necessarily mean something, but it gives you an impression." Daniels' deputy campaign manager, Ellen Whitt, said the campaign is "definitely where we want to be" just days before the election. But she said the campaign has never counted Miller out. "We've always been taking this challenge seriously," she said. "We've been working that way from the beginning. Mitch has been out on the campaign trail since July earning the nomination." But Miller was undaunted. "I think a lot of people early on, when they saw everybody else drop out, thought the election was over and thought I'd drop out too," Miller said Friday. "They never expected that we'd run the grassroots campaign we're running." In fact, Miller's campaign has surprised a number of political observers. He's done more advertising, more travel and raised more money than most political observers expected. He's been on television for weeks, although at a less aggressive clip than Daniels. He's made the round of Republican Lincoln Day dinners -- at least the ones that would permit him to speak. (Daniels was granted the lion's share of such keynote speeches.) He's raised just a fraction of the money of his competitor, but he said it's been enough to get his message out to the voters. And he swears he's winning the yard-sign war, especially in Southern Indiana and northwestern Indiana, which his supporters weeks ago dubbed "Miller country." What's our final take on the GOP primary sequence? We still forecast a Daniels victory, though we have seen glimpses of the political ghost of Michael Bailey who out-flanked another Washington Republican who tried to come back home to Indiana (Kevin Kellems, now Vice President Cheney's press secretary) in 1998. In that upset, Bailey did what Miller is attempting to do now: harness the energy from the anti-abortion, pro-family and pro-gun Republican. If the Daniels team has prepared amply on the nuts and bolts side of GOTV, the campaign will prevail. If they didn't, he will join the dustbin of Hoosier Republicans (John Mutz, Linley Pearson, Stephen Goldsmith, David McIntosh) who despite great promise couldn't get the job done. **Republican Primary Status:** *LEANS DANIELS*; **General Status:** *Tossup*.

# HORSE RACE

## Indiana 2004 Congressional

**U.S. Senate: Republican:** Marvin Scott. **Democrat:** U.S. Sen. Evan Bayh. **1992 Results:** Coats (R) 1,267,972, Hogsett (D) 900,148. **1998 Results:** Bayh (D) 1,012,244, Helmke (R) 552,732. **2004 Forecast:** Rarely has so much speculation generated so little information. James A. Johnson, a well-regarded figure in Democratic politics tasked by Sen. John F. Kerry (Mass.) to screen prospective running mates, has for weeks been quietly making the rounds on Capitol Hill, talking to dozens of House members and senators, and consulting party officials

and stalwarts about the ticket. But after about 60 meetings and consultations in a profession not known for discretion, the wags have come up almost dry (*Washington Post*). In interviews with more than 20 Democratic and campaign operatives with some direct or indirect knowledge of the process, it is clear that Sen. John Edwards (N.C.) and Rep. Richard A. Gephardt (Mo.) are being officially investigated by Washington lawyers. Iowa Gov. Tom Vilsack apparently is also under consideration, as is Sen. Evan Bayh (Ind.) -- each viewed as a moderate, midwestern balance for the Massachusetts senator. **Status:** *Safe Bayh.*

**Congressional District 4: Republican:** U.S. Rep. Steve Buyer, Dennis Hardy, Mike Campbell, Brian Paasch. **Democrat:** David Sanders, Bill Abbott. **Geography:** Tippecanoe, Clinton, Boone, Montgomery, Hendricks, Morgan, Lawrence and parts of Marion, Johnson, Monroe, Fountain and White counties. **Media Market:** Lafayette, Indianapolis, Terre Haute, Evansville, Louisville. **People:** urban/rural 68/32%; median income \$435,947; Poverty 8%; Race 93% white, 1.3% black, 2.6% Hispanic; blue/white collar 29/56%; **2000 Presidential:** Bush 66%, Gore 31%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** R+18; **2002 Results:** Buyer 112,760 (71%); Abbott 41,314 (26%). **2002 Money:** Buyer \$924,869, Abbott \$21,634. **2004 Outlook:** As presidential candidates and political parties toil to assign blame for the events that led up to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the same political debate is playing out on a smaller scale amid western Indiana's flatlands and small towns (*Chicago Tribune*). But unlike many disputes, the finger-pointing in Indiana's 4th Congressional District involves a Republican blaming a fellow Republican in a notable departure from the typical patriotic themes associated with many political ads. Using images of a smoldering World Trade Center, Republican Brian Paasch is accusing incumbent Rep. Steve Buyer of supporting immigration policies that made the nation vulnerable to attack, as part of his long-shot bid to unseat the sometimes-controversial Buyer, elected to the House in 1993. As Indiana residents go to the polls in Tuesday's statewide primary the appropriateness of using images from the worst terrorist attack on U.S. soil is being debated. The Paasch ad, which began running about a week ago, highlights the hijackers as it states, "The 19 men should have never been allowed past our borders." It also includes pictures of the candidate's two adopted Asian children to suggest that he's not opposed to all immigration. Buyer, a leader in the effort to impeach President Bill Clinton and an Army Reserve colonel, so far has ignored the ads and his challengers. He declined to participate in person or by phone in a candidates' forum Thursday at Purdue University in West Lafayette. Paasch, a first-time candidate financing his campaign mostly out of his own pocket, launched the ad as something of a Hail Mary pass in advance of the primary. He expects to spend about \$13,000 on the ad, which is scheduled to run along with radio messages, on other issues through Tuesday. "The government did fail in that event," he said of the Sept. 11 hijackings. "The bottom line is that foreign invaders did invade our country and inflict terrible harm on us. And the government's first job is to protect us from that." The pharmaceutical researcher at Eli Lilly & Co. in Indianapolis is one of three Republicans challenging Buyer in this heavily Republican district. The two other GOP hopefuls are: Mike Campbell, who has been largely inactive in the congressional campaign; and Dennis Hardy, who also has aggressively attacked Buyer, suggesting that the incumbent used the war in Iraq to try to boost his political career. Hardy has pointed to an incident a year ago when Buyer sought a leave of absence from Congress from House Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-Ill.), saying he had been called to active duty and had skills and experience the military needed. **Status:** *Safe Buyer.*

**Congressional District 7: Republican:** Bob Croddy, Andy Horning. **Democrat:** U.S. Rep. Julia Carson, Bob Hidalgo. **Geography:** Indianapolis. **Media Market:** Indianapolis. **People:** Urban 99.7%; median income \$36,522; poverty 13.5%; race white 63, black 29.4%, Hispanic 4.4%, Asian 1.3%; blue/white collar 26/58%; **2000 Presidential:** Gore 55%, Bush 43%; **Cook Partisan Voting Index:** D+6. **2002 Results:** Carson 77,478 (53%), McVey 64,379 (44%). **2002 Money:** Carson \$1.099m, McVey \$1.15m. **2004 Forecast:** Horning has better name ID (as a Libertarian), but many Republicans view him as a ... Libertarian who is always running for something. We give a slight edge to Croddy. **Primary Status:** *LEANS CRODDY.*

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aimed at two of his Democratic colleagues, former Watergate prosecutor Richard Ben-Veniste and Tim Roemer; their tough grilling of Rice forced her to concede key details about the crucial Aug. 6, 2001, presidential daily briefing

**BUSH LAUDS VALPARAISO LAW SCHOOL:** Former President George Herbert Walker Bush lauded the Valparaiso legal community Saturday night as maintaining the ideals vital to the American way of life (Times of Northwest Indiana).

"Those of you who study, teach and practice law are an invaluable, indispensable part of the process," Bush said to a packed crowd at Chicago's Field Museum to celebrate Valparaiso University School of Law's 125th anniversary. Bush, the 41st president of the United States, spent considerable time speaking about how "the grand experiment of self government" could not exist without the legal system, and the ethics taught at schools like Valparaiso University. The nation needs to return to a system of ethics, justice and values, Bush said, and law schools are vital to maintaining those characteristics and upholding the virtues of a nation based in law. Flanked by Valparaiso University President Alan Harre and Law School Dean

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Jay Conison, the former president entered the museum's main hall to a rousing ovation. Elected officials, prominent attorneys and public figures, like Valparaiso University basketball coach Homer Drew and U.S. Rep. Pete Visclosky, D-Ind., were on hand for Bush's speech.

**BROWN'S PROPERTY TAXES GO UP:** State Rep. Charlie Brown will have to pay \$1,309 more in property taxes than his Democratic colleague Robert Kuzman even though Kuzman's house is worth twice as much. Property tax bills for the 13 state legislators living in Lake County clearly illustrate the inequities and confusion many people are experiencing with reassessment. Brown lives in the Miller section of Gary, where high tax rates and shifts from industry have supersized tax bills. Kuzman lives in Crown Point, where his taxes decreased \$310 after reassessment shifts. Brown's \$5,401 jump was the most severe in the legislative group that believes it is being unfairly blamed for rising taxes in north Lake County (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). "I understand that people are shouting from the rooftops about their property tax increase," Brown said. "People are mad at me, but I'm in the middle of this."

## Indiana 2004 Legislative

**Senate District 2: Republican:** Open. **Democrat:** State Sen. Sam Smith Jr., Mario Montelongo, Joe L. White. **2000 Results:** Smith (D) 27,151. **2004 Forecast:** Two Democratic challengers for the state Senate's 2nd District seat said the time is right for a change, but incumbent Samuel Smith Jr. said he hopes to continue fighting for his constituents (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). Smith, D-East Chicago, faces a double challenge -- rising property bills that have the public looking for someone to blame, and legal problems that have dogged him for the last few years. First, he was cleared of wrongdoing in a probe of Build Indiana money steered to the Rev. Lee Gilliam Sr., pastor of New Second Baptist Church, who was convicted last November of stealing more than \$100,000 of state funds for personal use. Then, on April 6, Smith pleaded guilty to one count of tax evasion for failing to pay state sales taxes on his funeral home business. "People are not asking me about it," Smith said. "It came up, it was dealt with and it's over. People have been more sympathetic than trying to crucify me." But Mario Montelongo, an East Chicago resident and steelworker at Ispat Inland Inc, said it's time to end the corruption in state government. He said schools and property taxes would be his top priorities, and that he's a quick learner despite little experience. "It's time for a new direction, someone who works for the people, not himself," Montelongo said. The other challenger, Joe L. White, also of East Chicago, said he's a thinker and a communicator. White said he has a 40-year history of activism in politics, including as a delegate to the state convention and member of the county employee grievance board. "I'm driven by numbers and research, particularly with tax relief," White said. "I'd find the best way to do a non-aggressive tax that wouldn't penalize one group but spread the burden out." **Primary Status:** *Leans Smith*

**Senate District 5: Republican:** Vic Heinold, Cresley Walker. **Democrat:** State Sen. Nancy Dembowski. **2000 Results:** Alexa (D) 33,383. **2004 Forecast:** Secretary of State Todd Rokita endorsed state Senate candidate Vic Heinold at the Porter County Government Center on Friday (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). **Primary Status:** *Leans Heinhold*

**Senate District 36: Republican:** Sen. Larry Borst, Johnson County Council President Brent Waltz. **Democrat:** Terry Rice. **2000 Primary Results:** Borst 7,513. **2000 General Results:** Borst (R) 24,621, Reno (D) 12,120, Williamson (L) 1,026. **2004 Forecast:** This was the extent of the coverage of this race in the print media over the last weekend: *The Johnson County Daily Journal* observed, "In a race that has garnered statewide attention, longtime state Sen. Lawrence Borst is challenged by Brent Waltz, a Johnson County Council member who is giving up his council seat to run for the legislature. As Senate finance chairman, Borst, 76, is one of the most powerful people in state government. Waltz, a 30-year-old investment banker, spent \$85,000 of his own money in an attempt to unseat Borst. The winner of the Senate District 36 primary will face Democrat Terry Rice in the fall." **Primary Status:** *Tossup*.

**House District 1: Republican:** Jerome Baffa. **Democrat:** State Rep. Linda Lawson, Hammond Councilwoman Kathleen Pucalik. **2002 Results:** Lawson (D) 5,669, Rosenbloom (R) 3,006. **2004 Forecast:** Property taxes dominates this race. "If there is a No. 2 issue, I haven't heard it. The only thing I have heard from people in the last two to three weeks is property taxes," Lawson said (*Post-Tribune*). In a more sedate year, the incumbent would have the advantage, but the 1st District stretches through parts of Hammond and Munster, where many homeowners are expected to see dramatic increases in their property tax bills when the county sends bills later in the month. "I would say property taxes is the only issue. When I go door to door, that's all people talk about to me," Pucalik said. Neither Lawson nor Pucalik has a clearcut plan for blunting the effects of high property tax bills. Pucalik said she would not have supported an independent reassessment of Lake County, which cost as much as \$25 million. "It doesn't seem like they care much about Northwest Indiana in Indianapolis," Pucalik said. Lawson agrees that a special session is needed. "But the way the system works, I'm not sure it could be very productive," Lawson said. "To be honest, I didn't receive a phone call or a letter about it back at the time. I have only begun to hear from people in the last few weeks," Lawson said. Aside from property taxes, Lawson and Pucalik have been drawn into a feud between Hammond Mayor Tom McDermott Jr. and Lawson's husband Jim Hornak, an official with the

Carpenters Union. Hornak supported the former Mayor Duane Dedelow, a Republican. Lawson said McDermott pushed Pucalik into what has become a bitter primary battle. State Democrats, including Speaker of the House Pat Bauer campaigned for Lawson and criticized the new mayor for forcing Democrats to spend scarce resources on a primary fight. Pucalik said she decided to run on her own. She points to her first run in 1996 as evidence that she has wanted a seat in the legislature. She has the backing of McDermott's Hammond precinct organization. "I'm glad I have the mayor's support," Pucalik said. Lawson has wide support from organized labor, picking up the endorsement of the Carpenters Union, United Steelworkers and the United Teachers Federation. She acknowledges that it will be a tough re-election bid because of the outcry surrounding property taxes. "All I can tell people is my bill went up 300 percent. I understand what they are going through," Lawson said. **Primary Status:** *LEANS PUCALIK*.

**House District 12: Republican:** Dan Fagen. **Democrat:** Rep. John Aguilera, Alicia Lopez-Rodriguez. **2002 Results:** Aguilera 7,343. **2004 Forecast:** For the second time in the campaign, Lopez-Rodriguez filed a complaint with police after receiving a threatening phone call (*Times of Northwest Indiana*). Friday morning, Lopez-Rodriguez said she received a phone call that included a series of eight or nine gun shots, followed by an audio clip of a radio broadcast or movie clip of a woman being stalked and then shot by a man. "It said, 'This is your last chance to get out'" Lopez-Rodriguez said. There was nothing in the message that could immediately identify the caller, though the gunshots sounded real, said Lopez-Rodriguez. She filed the first report with East Chicago police March 13 after receiving a similar call. The Lake County Prosecutor's Office subpoenaed her Nextel phone records. The results are not in, according to Barbara McConnell, chief deputy prosecutor. "It can take anywhere from two weeks to a few months," McConnell said. The prosecutors now plan to subpoena the phone records from Friday morning, she said. "This is something that should not be taken lightly," she said. **Primary Status:** *TOSSUP*.

**House District 13: Republican:** Open. **Democrat:** State Rep. Chet Dobis, Merrillville Councilman David Uzelac. **2002 Results:** Dobis (D) 8,379, Azcona (R) 3,906. **2004 Forecast:** Dobis was quoted in a Times of Northwest Indiana story about the shift of property taxes from industry to homeowners. "The job of the legislature is to look at the product, figure out what's wrong, and then tweak it," said Dobis. "This is a first-time experience for everyone. We knew there would be some mistakes." Two unusual legislative measures, both friendly to business, appear to have shifted nearly \$700 million in assessed value from U.S. Steel Corp., Ispat Inland Inc., Industrial Steel Group and BP to other property owners, a preliminary analysis of county figures shows. Former State Rep. Ron Tabaczynski said he doubts his former colleagues fully understood the laws they passed. I don't think they really ever knew the impact of the industry tax breaks. Big industry drove the train down there and got a lot of things put on the table," Tabaczynski said. "And I don't believe we will ever know the true impact of the shift to market value, because so much was done at once." Rich James of the *Post-Tribune* tells HPR he believes Dobis will pull out a win, as does State Rep. Ed Mahern. Our gut tells us that Dobis may not survive a "throw the bums" mentality prevalent in northern Lake County. **Primary General Status:** *Leans Uzelac*.

**House District 44: Republican:** State Rep. Andy Thomas, Kenneth J. Eitel Jr. **Democrat:** Eric A. Wolfe. **2002 Results: Thomas (R) 8,997, Schimpf (D) 6,507. 2004 Forecast:** Our district sources still believe Thomas will prevail, but they note that the race has gotten nasty and that Eitel is from the "right side of the population center" in Greencastle and Putnam County. Thomas, our sources say, still has his family's political legacy. This could be a close one. **Primary Status:** *LEANS THOMAS*; **General Status:** *LEANS R*.

**House District 86: Republican:** Andy Miller, Mort Large. **Democrat:** State Rep. David Orentlicher. **2002 Results:** Orentlicher 9,909, Atterholt (R) 9,872. **2004 Forecast:** Miller continues a heavy rotation of TV advertising on Indianapolis network affiliates, while Large is relying in direct mail **Primary Status:** *Tossup*. **General Status:** *Tossup*

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# TICKER

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Kuzman said the difference in tax bills and reassessment changes reflect the difference in local governments and problems with past assessments in the county. While poverty in Gary does create more needs than Crown Point, he said a tax rate three times higher causes problems that need to be addressed. "There's something wrong, in that local governments in my area have been more efficient with their money," Kuzman said. "The locals, including education, need to look at their budgets and find ways to spend less." Brown predicted property taxes will be the biggest issue in the county for years after the reassessment fallout. Homeowners who can't pay tax bills will have a hard time selling their homes, he said. "There's no way anyone would move there," Brown said. "Now we have high property taxes, but we still have the old problems of bad schools and high crime."

**DAVIS QUOTES LENNON:** History and Vincennes University go hand in hand, what with the university being Indiana's oldest and the campus home to some of the state's most-famous landmarks such as Grouseland, William Henry Harrison's mansion. Saturday afternoon history was perhaps made again: The state's first female lieu-

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tenant governor, Kathy Davis, gave the commencement address, and she quoted, probably for the first time in a major speech at the university, the late Beatle John Lennon. "Remember always what John Lennon once said," Davis told the more than 900 students taking part in the ceremony at VU's Physical Education Complex. "Life is what happens when you are busy making plans."

**BIG PROFITS FOR CHEVRON/TEXACO:** ChevronTexaco, the second-biggest oil and gas company in the US, on Friday reported record first-quarter net income - \$2.56bn, or \$2.40 a share, up 33 per cent on the year (CNN). The record figures continue a trend among the company's peers. The industry has profited from high oil and natural gas prices, as well as increased demand and better margins for refined products and chemicals. "All of Chevron Texaco's business segments were better than we had modelled," said Michael Mayer at Prudential Financial. He had forecast earnings per share of \$2.05, and the consensus estimate of analysts was \$2.02 per share. ChevronTexaco's share price rose \$2 to \$92.4 in midday trading.



# COLUMNISTS ON INDIANA

**David Rucker, *Post-Tribune*** - We will call this the Chicken Feather Conspiracy. At the core of Lake County electoral credibility is the question: Can the foxes guard the chicken coop? For the more skeptical among us, it's more a question of whether there are any hens left. The foxes came calling last week. We hid the office poultry. County Democratic Party Chairman Robert Stiglich dropped by our abode to discuss these issues. In his official Election Board uniform, he was joined by his GOP counterpart John Curley and board lawyer Jim Wieser (the Official Democrat Mouthpiece, or ODMO to his friends). They came promising the people of Lake County that any elections under their purview would be fair, open and trustworthy — as the law suggests is their duty. Promised. Vowed. Take it to the bank. Slam dunk. Check's in the mail. Yes, dear, I'll respect you in the morning. Perhaps it's a sign of the Dawning of the Age of Aquarius that Stiglich sat down graciously and appeared to defer to Curley as though he were a professional peer, or at least a person who had been admitted to the grownups' table at Thanksgiving. In the middle of several long passionate monologues on Democracy and Fairness and Integrity in Public Life, he came screeching up to a rhetorical stop sign and announced, "Of course I'm not speaking for Mr. Curley." Democrat Party chairs in Lake County generally treat Republicans as if they were doorstops. This deference is all so new. In fact, the person who preceded Curley in his job was drummed out of the GOP corps — jettisoned over the side of the political dingy — for running what essentially was the Democrat Auxiliary. But the parties, at least the persona of the parties as represented in the Election Board, are all equanimity these days. Maybe they're serious. But at least they know elections in this county have a

credibility gap — one was overturned in the last primary and another will be if the state Supreme Court comes out of its cave and sees its shadow. ❖

**Jack Colwell, *South Bend Tribune*** - *Q.* Could the timing of the presidential visit on the day before the Indiana primary involve the race for the Republican nomination for governor, with Eric Miller challenging Mitch Daniels, referred to by the president as "my man Mitch" and a presidential favorite who was Bush's budget director? *A.* Just a coincidence? Maybe. But not much is left to coincidence by the White House political advisers. We will see if the president puts in a plug for his man Mitch. It could well be that the only significance of arriving in South Bend for the Michigan campaigning is that Air Force One can land here. The only significance of the timing may be that the White House decided quickly to counter a campaign trip by John Kerry that included Ohio and Michigan stops. Or, maybe, the day and the airport were picked with a secondary purpose of helping Daniels. We can only speculate. *Q.* Does Daniels have the nomination all wrapped up, meaning he doesn't even need any help anyway? *A.* Not like Chocola. Daniels is a heavy favorite to win the nomination. But Miller is a serious contender who could do particularly well in this area, thanks in large part to the backing of former Gov. Otis R. "Doc" Bowen. *Q.* Do younger people remember Doc? *A.* No. But most of them won't vote. *Q.* Is the president's support of Daniels important in the nomination race, even if he doesn't make a big pitch for Mitch here Monday? *A.* Absolutely. Presidential support helped clear the field for Daniels, with only Miller remaining to challenge. It also has helped in fundraising and in GOP organization endorsements. ❖