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Nearby resident Ella Riffel asks a question Thursday evening at the LaSalle Branch library during a public meeting about the possible closure of that library branch.

Tribune Photo/GENE KAISER

Saving LaSalle Branch

Community planning efforts to stop library closure.

By MARGARET FOSMOE
Tribune Staff Writer

SOUTH BEND — Planning has begun for a full-fledged community effort to save the St. Joseph County Public Library's LaSalle Branch from closing its doors.

Ideas including fundraising, changing the branch hours or even raising taxes were broached Thursday night during a meeting of residents concerned about the near westside branch's possible closure because of declining circulation and financial pressures.

"We as a community need to come together and decide a plan of action," said South Bend Common Council member Henry Davis Jr., D-2nd District, chair of the council's commu-



Ferraro



Saunders

ty relations committee. Davis called the meeting to gather public input.

The meeting drew Mayor Stephen Luecke and about 45 members of the public. About a dozen other people listened outside the door or left when they found the room at capacity.

Luecke noted that many units of government, including the city and the library district, are under "extreme financial pressure" because Indiana's property tax caps have reduced operating revenue.

"My suggestion is that everyone in

this room start spreading the word. We need to start a 'Save the LaSalle Branch' campaign," said Julie Ferraro, who said her 16-year-old son visits the branch almost every day. She recalled visiting an earlier library branch on Lincoln Way West as a child.

Dustin Saunders said he grew up near the LaSalle Branch and is bothered that each time a school or public service shuts down it seems to be on the city's west side. It's having a dire impact on that section of the city, he said, noting that seven of the nine houses on the block where he grew up are boarded up. "We need to rally the troops," he said.

"I believe this library is critical to this community. I believe we can come up with a comprehensive plan as to why this library should stay open," said council member Karen White, D-at large.

See LASALLE/A4

Buzz builds for Daniels as president

But governor says he's focused on running state.

By KEVIN ALLEN
Tribune Staff Writer

Pundits continue to pile up predictions that Gov. Mitch Daniels will be the Republican presidential candidate in 2012, even though he insists he's focused on leading Indiana and nothing more.

Forbes publisher Rich Karlgaard is the latest person to place Daniels atop the list of potential White House candidates.

On Wednesday at Century Center in South Bend, Karlgaard told members of the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association that "you can hear the rumbles of a Mitch Daniels boom," despite having less name recognition and monied backing than some other GOP candidates.

"I am going to go out on a limb," Karlgaard said. "I am going to say Mitch Daniels will be the next president of the United States."

The governor dismissed the remarks, just as he has similar opinions from New York Times columnists David Brooks and Ross Douthat, Washington Post columnist George Will and many, many others.

"Well, he's a smart guy, but he's been wrong before," Daniels quipped Thursday when a Terre Haute television reporter asked him about Karlgaard's prediction.

Daniels has crafted plenty of creative ways to say "no" during the past year when reporters have asked him if he's interested in running for president.

"There has never been a president of the United States in my bathroom mirror," he joked in April on C-SPAN's "Newsmakers" program.

At other times, he's been more blunt.

"I don't plan to do it, don't expect to do it, and I really don't want to do it," he told reporters in February. "There are 100 reasons that no sane person wants to do this."

But such statements from Daniels haven't managed to kill the buzz among fiscal conservatives



Daniels

See DANIELS/A4

Silent sirens worry residents

Officials say direction of twisters caused lack of warning.

By DOUGLAS FARMER
Tribune Staff Writer

ST. JOSEPH — When multiple tornadoes battered Berrien County Saturday night, many residents heard no sirens alerting them of the danger. Simply put, they didn't hear the sirens be-

cause the sirens did not sound off.

The Berrien County Board of Commissioners faced questions concerning the sirens' silence Thursday, and explained the direction of the storm's origin led to the issue.

"In this case, it came over the lake," County Administrator Bill Wolf said. "It was on top of us, and we didn't even get a tornado warning until it touched down in the county."

Furthermore, the county

is able to activate only a handful of sirens, Wolf said.

"That's the key thing. We don't have a tornado siren system under county control other than those at Cook (Nuclear Plant)," Wolf said, adding that only eight of the 29 sirens at fire stations in the county can be activated remotely.

With so few sirens warning residents, those in the areas that tornadoes struck, such as in the Baroda area, were caught unaware. In order to prevent this in the fu-

ture, county commissioner John LaMore encouraged anyone concerned to purchase a National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration weather radio.

"If you are in bed, your windows are closed, with your insulation and all the things that we do, it is highly unlikely, if we had sirens that cover every inch of the county, which we don't, that you and your family would have been alerted," the

See SIRENS/A4



Tribune Photo/MIKE HARTMAN

This home on Lincoln Avenue in Berrien County suffered extensive damage after a tornado touched down late Saturday night. Residents complained to the county commissioners Thursday that warning sirens did not sound.

Army probe finds mix-up at Arlington Cemetery

Remains have been misidentified or misplaced, officials say.

WASHINGTON (AP) — An Army investigation has found that potentially hundreds of remains at Arlington National Cemetery have been misidentified or misplaced, in a scandal marring the reputation of the nation's pre-eminent burial ground for its honored dead since the Civil War.

Army Secretary John McHugh announced

Thursday that the cemetery's two civilian leaders would be forced to step aside, and he appointed a new chief to conduct a more thorough investigation to examine the graves and sort out the mix-up.

"I deeply apologize to the families of the honored fallen resting in that hallowed ground who may now question the care afforded to their loved ones," McHugh told a Pentagon news conference.

Arlington National Cemetery is considered among the nation's most hallowed burial sites, with more than 300,000 people

buried there with military honors. An average of 30 funerals are conducted there every day.

Among those buried at the cemetery are troops killed in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as service members from past conflicts dating back to the Civil War.

Famous presidents and their spouses, including members of the Kennedy family, also have been buried there. The cemetery, located across the Potomac River from Washington in northern Virginia, attracts more than 4 million visitors annually.

An Army investigation was launched last year after reports of employee misconduct, first reported by the Web site Salon.com.

Led by the service's inspector general, Lt. Gen. Steven Whitcomb, the investigation found lax management of the cemetery, where employees relied on paper records to manage the dozens of burials each week and maintain the thousands of existing grave sites.

Whitcomb said at least 211 remains were identified as potentially mislabeled or misplaced and that there could be more.

"We found nothing that was intentional, criminal intent or intended sloppiness that caused this. ... But of all the things in the world, we see this as a zero defect operation," he told reporters Thursday.

Whitcomb could not say how old the mixed-up remains might be or from what conflict, saying only that the problem had been confined to three areas of the cemetery known as sections 59, 65 and 66.

Separately, the Army is investigating whether the cemetery's deputy superintendent, Thurman Higginbotham, made false

statements to service investigators. Higginbotham, who ran the day-to-day operations at the cemetery, has been accused by former employees of creating a hostile work environment and breaking into their e-mail systems.

Higginbotham is on administrative leave, pending further review.

Higginbotham's boss, John Metzler, is set to retire on July 2. Service officials say he is being pushed out with a letter of reprimand that blames him for failing to rein in Higginbotham's mistakes.



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FROM PAGE A1

Daniels: Buzz builds for bid by governor

who trumpet the governor's role in turning Indiana's \$200 million deficit into a \$1.3 billion surplus, which has helped the state stay in the black during the recession.

The cover of this week's issue of conservative magazine The Weekly Standard features an illustrated caricature of Daniels riding his Harley-Davidson along with a lengthy, favorable profile titled "Ride Along with Mitch ... from the Indiana statehouse to the White House?"

University of Notre Dame political analyst Robert Schmuhl said it's natural to consider the presidential possibilities of a two-term governor with extensive Washington experience, especially when no Republican candidate has emerged as a clear front-runner.

"He's known as an excellent campaigner who is willing to look at subjects from new and different perspectives," Schmuhl said. "In that sense, you might call him a creative conservative who would be appealing to many in the base of the Republican party."

That being said, Daniels "has not been shy about putting himself forward," Schmuhl said.

The governor has penned op-ed pieces for the Wall Street Journal and New York Times. He has spoken to audiences at think tanks such as the Hudson Institute, where he worked as chief operating officer until leaving to be director of the Office of Management and Budget under President George W. Bush. And, perhaps most noteworthy, his political action committee, Aiming Higher, is hosting a fundraiser Monday in Washington, D.C.

On the other hand, he hasn't made the rounds in key primary states Iowa and New Hampshire, either.

Schmuhl noted that Daniels still has a lot of work to do in Indiana. The governor is hoping to help turn a slim Democratic majority in the Indiana House of Representatives into a Republican majority with this year's election. Redistricting for state and congressional legislative districts will be on his agenda in 2011.

Schmuhl said a more clear view of Daniels' ambitions will emerge after this year's mid-term election.

"You really need a year to raise money and to establish your staff. That would have to start very soon after the mid-term election," he said. "Then it's a sprint."

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Mexican officials condemn shooting

Some calling for extradition of U.S. border patrol agent.

By **CHRISTOPHER SHERMAN** and **ALEXANDRA OLSON**
Associated Press Writers

EL PASO, Texas — Mexico condemned the shooting of a 15-year-old boy by a U.S. Border Patrol agent Thursday through diplomatic correspondence and an angry phone call to the Homeland Security secretary. Some Mexican politicians called for the agent's extradition to face Mexican justice.

Anger over Monday's shooting across a muddy riverbed on the international border was fueled by a cell-phone video that showed key moments in the shooting, as debate be-

gan over which country has jurisdiction in the case.

A still-unidentified Border Patrol agent trying to arrest illegal immigrants running into the United States fired his weapon from the U.S. side into Mexico, killing 15-year-old Sergio Adrian Hernandez Huereka while people on the Mexican side threw rocks at the Border Patrol agents on the scene.

What is still unclear is whether Hernandez was one of the rock-throwers and whether the agent or the victim crossed the international border. Shortly after the shooting, Mexican federal police chased Border Patrol agents out of the riverbed with rifles trained on them while a crowd on the Mexican side taunted the U.S. officials and threw rocks and firecrackers.

"We are worried by this surge of violence against

Mexicans, which comes along with a surge of other anti-immigrant and anti-Mexican occurrences in the United States," Mexican President Felipe Calderon said in a new statement, apparently referring to Arizona's new immigration law, which the Mexican leader has previously condemned as discriminatory.

The grainy cell phone video aired by Univision in Mexico shows an edited glimpse of the violence. In it, a Border Patrol agent on a bicycle arrives in the riverbed as several men attempt to run back to Mexico. He detains one on the U.S. side and once he has him on the ground, fires two audible shots toward Mexico. The camera then shows what appears to be a body under a nearby railroad bridge.

Interior Secretary Fernando Gomez Mont

phoned U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano, to protest the killing of Hernandez and a man on the California-Mexico border two weeks ago. Gomez Mont's office said he demanded that the U.S. and Mexico carry out a joint review of protocols on the use of force by border officers.

Gomez Mont told Napolitano the "unjustified use of force against our population is unacceptable to the Mexican government."

Border Patrol agents are allowed to use lethal force against rock-throwers.

Jesus Ortega, president of the opposition Democratic Revolution Party, said the Border Patrol agent who shot Hernandez should be extradited to Mexico.

Calderon gave no indication his government had any intention of seeking ex-

tradition.

So when a bullet leaves one country and kills someone in another, who has jurisdiction?

If it is determined that the shooting was a crime and not justified use of force by law enforcement, long-standing legal principle in the U.S. states that the victim's location determines jurisdiction, international law experts said.

For example, if someone fired a bullet from North Carolina and killed someone in South Carolina, the latter would have jurisdiction, said Kal Raustiala, professor of law at UCLA.

Still, most countries believe that they can prosecute anyone who harms one of their citizens, regardless of location, he said. In the case of the U.S. and Mexico, no treaty covers this specific set of circumstances, he said.

FROM PAGE A1

Sirens

Niles Township representative said. "What you need is a personal alert in your house that will warn you as soon as possible."

LaMore also said if the tornadoes had come from any other direction, there could have been time to trigger the sirens.

"If it comes from the north, the east or the south, we can get a warning out in decent time," he said. "When it comes off the lake, it is just where we are at, there is no way to track it to begin with."

Laura Giardina, of St. Joseph, addressed the board for a few minutes to begin the weekly meeting, and left unsatisfied with the response of it simply being too late to set off the sirens.

"I discount the excuse that since the tornadoes had already touched down, there was no reason to sound the sirens when in fact this same storm spawned several more tornadoes that night," she said. "One could just as easily hit St. Joseph or as far south as New Buffalo. They're unpredictable. Isn't that what we're always taught about tornadoes?"

The idea of setting the sirens off after the tornadoes, or installing a system that would set off all the sirens countywide, did not sit well with Wolf.

"My concern is people would become so immune to hearing sirens that they would lose the effect, and that is an equal danger," he said. "Then the question is, how many times can we set the sirens off until people start ignoring them?"

Giardina said precautions should trump false alarms.

"If once every year I am false alarmed and head to my basement, I am willing to sacrifice those two or three minutes of my life in order to know I can keep my family safe," she said. "This is just a small symptom of a much larger problem. This county is clearly not prepared to alert the whole county in case of an emergency."

Wolf said he expects this issue to be discussed much further, and he knows it should be.

"We are going to look at this, explore things," he said. "We are concerned about the need. I am not sure I have a solution at this time."

Staff writer Douglas Farmer: dfarmer@sbtinfo.com

FROM PAGE A1

LaSalle: Closure foes plan battle

Several speakers made reference to the neighboring and once thriving LaSalle Square Shopping Center, which has lost most of its retail tenants over the years.

"I moved (near) here 20 years ago, and I was thrilled to death to have this lovely shopping center here within walking distance of the library," nearby resident Ella Riffel said. "This library is convenient for those who don't have a car or don't drive."

County Commissioner Dave Thomas, D-District 2, noted the commissioners appoint two members of the library board. "I'm telling my representatives on the board to make sure this library stays open," he said.

There was discussion in 2006 about possibly closing the LaSalle Branch when the new German Township Branch was built. Public outcry saved LaSalle. Circulation at the branch briefly rose but has since plummeted, dropping nearly 50 percent between the first quarter of 2007 and the first quarter of this year.

Nearby resident Vera Smith said she is offended that the library district built the new German Township Branch on the city's far northwest side, knowing it would further erode LaSalle's circulation. "I think they did that to make it more convenient for the rich people, the white people," she said after the meeting.

Library director Donald Napoli attended the meeting and answered some questions raised by the

audience. He said it isn't easy to recommend a branch closure. "This was my branch. I made the recommendation that it be located here. I was most proud of this branch," he said.

Census data show about 16,000 people live near the LaSalle Branch, including 5,000 within walking distance. "Where are they?" Napoli asked.

If LaSalle stays open, it likely will mean additional service hour cuts throughout the library system to reduce expenses, he said. There is the possibility that each of the four city branches might be cut to service just three days a week, he said.

Staff writer Margaret Fosmoe: mfosmoe@sbtinfo.com (574) 235-6329



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