

Better to Laugh

Ensemble Showcases the Lighter Side of D.C.

By Rebecca Patrick

Nowadays, there is much frustration directed squarely at Washington. Be it the economy, health care, energy – you name it. The decisions, or antics if you will, of the nation’s leaders more and more serve to push people further into their respective red or blue corner.

At least for one night, however, Hoosiers can check their party affiliations at the door and laugh (you know it’s better than screaming, though arguably less cathartic) at all the nonsense and mayhem that go on in D.C. and within government circles in general.

On November 10, the popular political satire group, The Capitol Steps, brings its musical comedy act to the Indiana Chamber’s 20th Annual Awards Dinner in downtown Indianapolis.

The ensemble, known for having “put the mock in democracy,” has released nearly 30 albums of political song parodies; the latest is *Obama Mia*, which “features our new president, his



former rivals and all those who have helped put the country in the great shape it’s in.”

The Capitol Steps started performing in 1981 when a few Senate staffers got together. Over the years, members have worked in a total of 18 congressional offices and represented 62 years of collective Capitol Hill office experience. Today’s cast features many professional performers, with group appearances including major network television and public radio.

Throughout, the skits have centered on presidents, vice presidents, governors, hot-topic policy issues and even the occasional foreign commander.

With such real-life instances as Vice President Dan Quayle’s unique spelling of P-O-T-A-T-O-E, President Bill Clinton’s personal definition of what constitutes sexual relations and President George W. Bush’s frequent verbal miscues, let’s just say the Capitol Steps have not had to worry about source material.

The troupe last performed at the Chamber’s annual dinner

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Capitol Steps

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in 2002 – a virtual lifetime ago when it comes to political faux pas, misunderstandings and head-scratchers. Some of the most recent hits that might find their way to the Indiana stage include:

- *Sanford and Sins* (set to *Don't Cry for Me Argentina*), starring South Carolina Gov. Mark Sanford; inspired by his “hiking trip” (aka the new code for rendezvous)
- *L'il Kim* (set to *Cat's in the Cradle*), featuring North Korea's leader Kim Jong-il; triggered by his own Fourth of July missile launchings
- *Neiman's Is a Girl's Best Friend* (set to *Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend*), spotlighting former Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin; based on her spruced up wardrobe on the vice presidential campaign trail

In addition to the Capitol Steps' entertainment, Indiana's Business Leader of the Year, Government Leader of the Year and Community of the Year will be recognized at the awards dinner, which takes place at the Indiana Convention Center.

A reception preceding the event, sponsored by Equities First Holdings, LLC, begins at 5 p.m. with dinner at 6:30 p.m.

Seating is limited. Tables of 10 are \$2,250 for gold seating, \$1,650 for silver seating and \$1,200 for standard seating. Individual tickets are \$120 each. Tickets can be purchased online at www.indianachamber.com/specialevents or by calling (800) 824-6885.