

## Mike Silver Returns from Central America



**Mike Silver at U.S. Ambassador's Residence in Panama**

It was a privilege and honor for me to serve as a member of the Indiana Agricultural Trade Mission to Central America earlier this month. Our delegation led by Congressman Dan Burton, Lieutenant Governor Becky Skillman, Indiana State Department of Agriculture Director Andy Miller and other delegates representing Indiana agricultural firms, commodity organizations, government and education traveled to Guatemala, Costa Rica, and Panama January 8-13.



**Indiana Trade Delegation**

Our mission was to explore

international trade opportunities and establish relationships with business and government leaders in the countries visited. Our mission was the first trade mission to Central America since the U.S. ratified the Central America Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA.) Our message was that Indiana's agriculture products hold tremendous value, trade and economic potential for Guatemala, Costa Rica and Panama. We were graciously received in all three countries as we discussed mutually beneficial opportunities with our Central American neighbors. The trade mission was a successful first step as we achieved our primary objectives. Our challenge now is to build upon the relationships established and develop new and expanded agricultural business based upon the needs and issues discussed during our mission. – by Mike Silver, Grain Merchandiser with Kokomo Grain and can be reached at 1.800.666.0613



**Mira Flores Locks on the Panama Canal**