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## 2018 RETROSPECTIVE



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## pol·i·tics

/ˈpələˌtiks/

*noun*

*A strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles.  
The conduct of public affairs for private advantage.*

– Ambrose Bierce

It was that kind of year if you love politics: strife packaged as principle, private vendettas projected as the public good, and South Jersey dutifully filling that vacuum caused by the rest of the state’s collective warring hydra heads. We can’t remember another set of seasons over the course of the past decade quite as packed as 2018.

Not only did we have all the local contests in some of New Jersey’s most populous municipalities, among them Newark, Paterson, and Trenton; we had real organizational clashes in Hudson, Morris, and Union counties. We witnessed the politically challenging first year in office of Governor Phil Murphy, beloved by the people and disrespected in the halls of Trenton. And, of course, we had the federal elections, where New Jerseyans expressed outrage over the presidency of Donald J. Trump, and dealt a dreadful blow to the Republican Party. We saw the survival of an embattled and veteran U.S. Senator, and the infusion of new

blood to the ranks of the state’s congressional delegation. We observed the emergence and expression of the #MeToo Movement and the hardening of the will of women and independent voters, who powered the candidacies of Mikie Sherrill, Tom Malinowski, and Andy Kim.

The basic dynamics stayed the same. There was revolution in the streets, and the political establishment remained – or even strengthened, augmented by those borrowed emotional soft spots exposed by the movement. As the era of Chris Christie dimmed, and with it his particular brand of bullying egocentrism, the legislature - nurtured by a herd mentality centralized in South Jersey - began to assume a greater comfort level with punishing the state’s chief executive, safe in the knowledge that the neophyte governor could not (or would not) retaliate. Having perfected law enforcement as that platform for his high priestly

*Continued on Page 5*



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ritual of human sacrifice, Christie struck fear in the hearts of his fellow state elected officials, who also, however, from within their cell-blocks of individuated ego and ambition, basically related to the Republican's underlying driving motivation: his own self-interest.

Coming into the job with a vision for the state and no accompanying muscle, Murphy unwittingly left himself open for all the backed-up resentments and self-loathing from a legislature long-squirming under Christie's big toe. Having routinely been beaten up by Christie, the legislature now swung away with abandon at Murphy, like a child released back onto the playground after eight straight years of detention. While the GOP sat in gloomy irrelevance, paunches distending, girth growing in proportion to their dwindling influence, and their state political plight worsened by Trump's unrelenting temper tantrums: a decided attitude emerged for legislative Democrats. As they worked over party leader Murphy, moralized, and kept the state mildly in the throes of perpetual dysfunction and stagnation, they could quietly affirm in a single adult voice: One party rule gets nothing done, but it sure as hell is fun!

Then a strange thing happened. Republicans and progressives and those new blood types who haven't yet been reduced to the ashes of compromised conscience, got together and blocked a legislative leadership redistricting proposal specifically aimed at weakening Murphy and Murphy's state party chairman John Currie. It was a single win, but it was a win, and perhaps a suggestion of new and intriguing alliances to come. The bully finished the year climbing off the canvas.

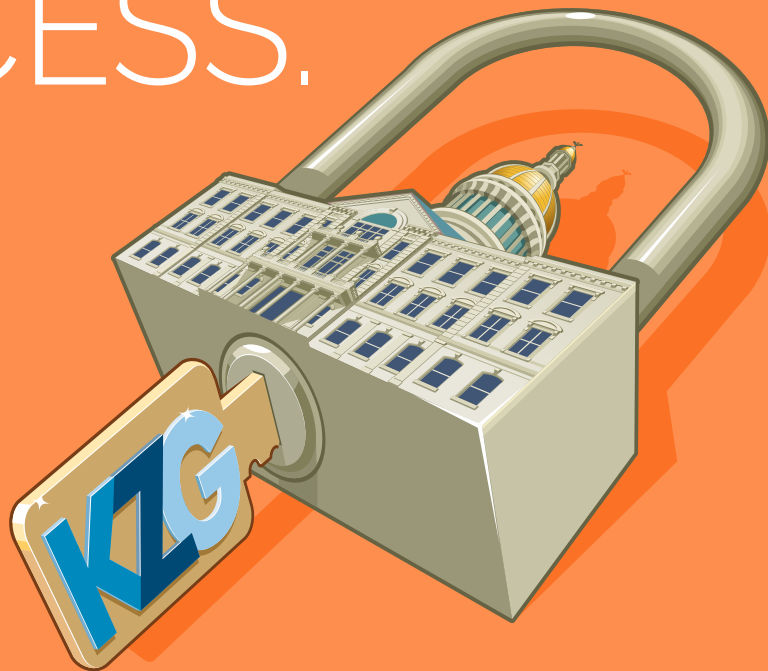
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*Max Pizarro*

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**WINNER OF THE YEAR:  
MIKIE SHERRILL**

The Congresswoman-elect from the 11th District proved her campaign leadership skills as she recorded intimidating numbers in the Democratic Primary and then crushed Assemblyman Jay Webber (R-26) (56.2-42.7%) in a previously longtime Republican district. Chased into retirement by President Donald J. Trump, U.S. Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen (R-11) relinquished his seat to a congresswoman-elect empowered by women and independents eager to make a statement against the President and his undisciplined leadership style. In Sherrill they found a retired Navy helicopter pilot, former federal prosecutor and monster fundraiser who seemed less ideological and emotional than pragmatic and, in the words of state Senator M. Teresa Ruiz (D-29), badass.









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**WINNER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
TOM MALINOWSKI**

The Democratic Congressman-elect from the 7th District snatched Somerset County away from incumbent U.S. Rep. Leonard Lance (R-7) to win the Central Jersey suburban 7th District (52-47%). A former Obama Administration assistant secretary of state, Malinowski proved a disciplined candidate, first wrenching the Democratic Primary away from banker Linda Weber, then shredding Lance in both the air war and the ground war, making the mild-mannered incumbent Republican own a Republican Party largely disabled in New Jersey by Trump.



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**WINNER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
JEFF VAN DREW**

When incumbent U.S. Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-2) announced his retirement, Van Drew declared his intentions to pursue the 2nd District seat. A conservative Democrat, the state senator used his always considerable organization, constituent-service based politics to weather the primary, then – in a Republican district – got by movement conservative Trumpite Seth Grossman to win LoBiondo’s seat.





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**WINNER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
BOB MENENDEZ**

Indicted on corruption charges, the senior Senator from New Jersey survived the trial in 2017 and this year won reelection. He didn't always make it look easy. Polling showed a close contest with former Celgene executive Bob Hugin, but Trump outrage carried Menendez, who in any other year might have been in real trouble, who defeated Hugin by nearly ten points.



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**WINNER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
ANDY KIM**

The Congressman-elect from the 3rd District arguably had the heaviest lift in the Republican-leaning 3rd District, but the former Obama Administration official ran up the score to 11 for 12 D's over R's when he knocked off incumbent U.S. Rep. Tom MacArthur (R-3) in the closest contest of the season.



# THE EQUALITY BALL

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**WINNER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
JIMMY DAVIS**

The Bayonne mayor convincingly held off a serious challenge by former Assemblyman Jason O'Donnell (D-31) to win his second term in office in the peninsular maritime Hudson County city. On the larger Hudson County political canvas, the win proved critical for the coming Hudson County Democratic Organization (HCDO) showdown between Brian P. Stack and Amy DeGise, with the reupped mayor delivering 100 county committee votes to DeGise and helping to propel her to victory.





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## **LOSER OF THE YEAR: THE NJGOP**



It's a shame that the political carnage occurred on the watch of NJGOP Chairman Doug Steinhardt, who did as good a job as could be expected under the circumstances.

Regardless of what Steinhardt or anyone else did, the trouble for Republicans was always going to be President Trump, perceived in New Jersey as eager to appease a racist and intolerant base, and antagonist to the Garden State's interests, with a budget that contained the elimination of state and local property tax deductions for Jersey homeowners, and resistance to funding for the Gateway Tunnel.

Look at that dreadful ratio.

11-1.

That's the number of Democratic congresspeople to Republicans in New Jersey in the Trump era.

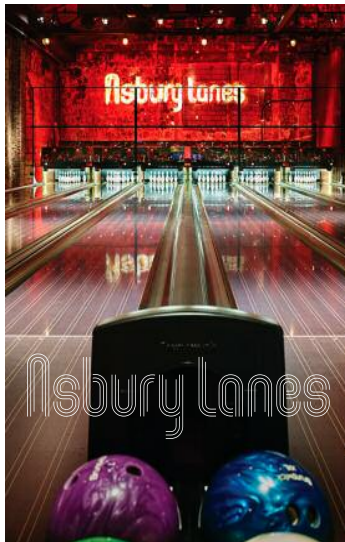
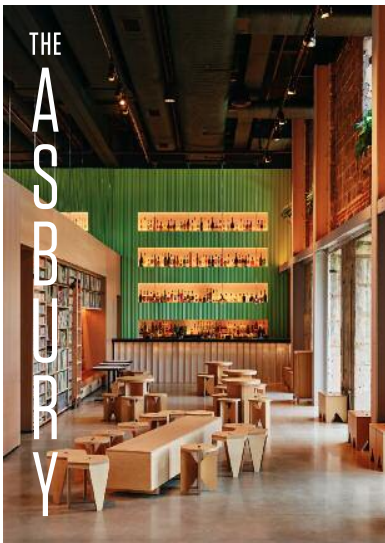
Only U.S. Rep. Chris Smith (R-3) survived the backlash.

The results from the general election accelerated trend lines long favoring Democrats over Republicans in New Jersey, where D's control all the arms of state government and spend more time squabbling with one another than worrying about the intentions of their GOP rivals.



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## **LOSER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP: BOB HUGIN**



The Republican nominee for United States Senate spent nearly \$40 million (and outspent Menendez 2-1 in attack ads) and still lost by 354,299 votes. It wasn't that Hugin was horrible. With his senatorial looks and Marine Corps bearing, at times he even looked like he might prevail. But ultimately his only goal in life seemed to be to muddy the already badly scuffed Menendez, and it just wasn't a substantial enough argument with voters fearful of a Trump Trojan Horse incursion into Jersey.





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## **LOSER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP: AL ALVAREZ**



The former Latino outreach director for the Murphy Campaign and former chief-of-staff for the Schools Development Authority, left his government job after fellow Murphy ally Katie Brennan charged him with rape. It was a bad story all the way around, as men everywhere already feeling routed by Trump's unraveling in the White House and Judge Kavanaugh's Senate hearings meltdown, sought a reanimation of gender-purpose and respect. Barely coming off his condemnation of bad behavior on the heels of Kavanaugh's confirmation, Murphy found himself saddled by an Alvarez albatross.





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**LOSER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
STEVE FULOP**

The Mayor of Jersey City teamed with state Senator Brian P. Stack to try to take out Tom DeGise, ended up on the losing side, and largely alienated politically in Hudson County. The one-time rising star who looked like a sure-shot to spring-board into Drumthwacket suddenly radiated negative Machiavellian energy, and seemed like a political encumbrance to anyone hungry for grounded gravitas.





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**LOSER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
ALEX MENDEZ**

The former at-large Paterson councilman took an anti-establishment run for mayor and suffered a crushing defeat at the hands of Mayor Andre Sayegh. If Mendez has his designs on a comeback by challenging old rival Councilman Bill McKoy in the 3rd Ward, he may have to go through McKoy and Sayegh, who look to be teamed up in the interest of ensuring that Mendez does not make a 2019 return to City Hall.





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## **LOSER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP: TOM MACARTHUR**



To paraphrase Gabriel Byrne in *The Usual Suspects*, he tried. In the end, the 3rd District Republican Congressman couldn't hold amid Trump backlash and lost to Andy Kim by more than 3,000 votes. This wasn't supposed to happen. Remember, MacArthur was a self-funder revving up his statewide political career in the third. Even Chris Christie routinely told political revelers that T-Mac was the future of the party. But like others caught in the horrific Trump undertow, MacArthur faced a complicated political future at best after tacking toward the president on key issues. If he couldn't win in the Republican 3rd, how could he ever hope now to win New Jersey?



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**LOSER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
LEONARD LANCE**

Hopeful of convincing voters that his problem solvers' caucus credentials stood him in good stead in the Trump era, the 7th Congressional District rep. stuck around when fellow veterans Frelinghuysen and LoBiondo ran for cover. But he couldn't hang on in the general, losing to Malinowski in a close contest defined by Trump backlash.



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**LOSER OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP:  
JAY WEBBER**

For years he looked like the congressman-in waiting. But the bright, Harvard-educated attorney, lawmaker and family man could not hold back the rain in the 11th District, forced to lip lock with Trump for cash, fancy mongering with Nancy Pelosi messaging, and going down in defeat by double digits to Sherrill.



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## Politicians of the Year

**Tom DeGise and Amy DeGise**



The father-daughter tag team withstood a challenge to their power base by state Senator Brian P. Stack and Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop, and augmented their political influence in the key North Jersey county.



When Stack and Fulop made a move on the elder DeGise, notifying him that they would not back his reelection, the Hudson County executive fortified himself – and went on offense. DeGise and allies – including state Senator Nick Sacco (D-32) - fielded DeGise’s daughter, a high school teacher and Jersey City Board of Education member, to challenge Stack’s claim to the chairmanship of the Hudson County Democratic Organization (HCDO).

The younger DeGise defeated Stack in June to make history as the only elected woman chair of the organization once headed by Frank “I am the Law” Hague. The victory all-but assured DeGise’s reelection next year to the throne of county leadership.

Never a bullying personality, the elder DeGise proved a key political lesson to those who doubted his power: sometimes alliance-building and goodwill among colleagues is the strongest form of political power.

It also doesn’t hurt to have a next-generation ally, a blood-relative, who paid attention when her elders practiced politics, and learned the family trade in case a fight ever went down.



## Legislator of the Year

**Nick Scutari**



Following the death of Assemblyman Jerry Green of Plainfield, the 20th District state senator, chair of the Senate Judiciary Committee, went after the Union County Democratic Committee chairmanship and won in a countywide duel against Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr.



## Legislator of the Year Runner-up

**Frank Pallone**



When the Democrats retook the U.S. House of Representatives, the 6th District Democratic Congressman ascended to the chairmanship of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.




## Operative of the Year

**Middy Baraka**



The campaign manager of the reelection bid of his brother, Newark Mayor Ras Baraka, helped position the incumbent to destroy challenger Gayle Chaneyfield Jenkins.





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**Operative of the Year Runner-up:  
Colston Reid**



Universally hailed as a vital part of the campaign, Malinowski's campaign manager now heads to Washington, D.C. as the congressman-elect's chief-of-staff.

**Operative of the Year Runner-up:  
Adam Silverstein**



The Silver Strategies shark from Bergen County took full advantage of Trump horror to get incumbent U.S. Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-5) reelected in a walkover.

**Operative of the Year Runner-up:  
Mitch Seim**



The highly respected veteran operative served as campaign manager for John Pallone's successful mayoral campaign in Long Branch.

**Operative of the Year Runner-up:  
Mollie Binotto and Hilary Badger**



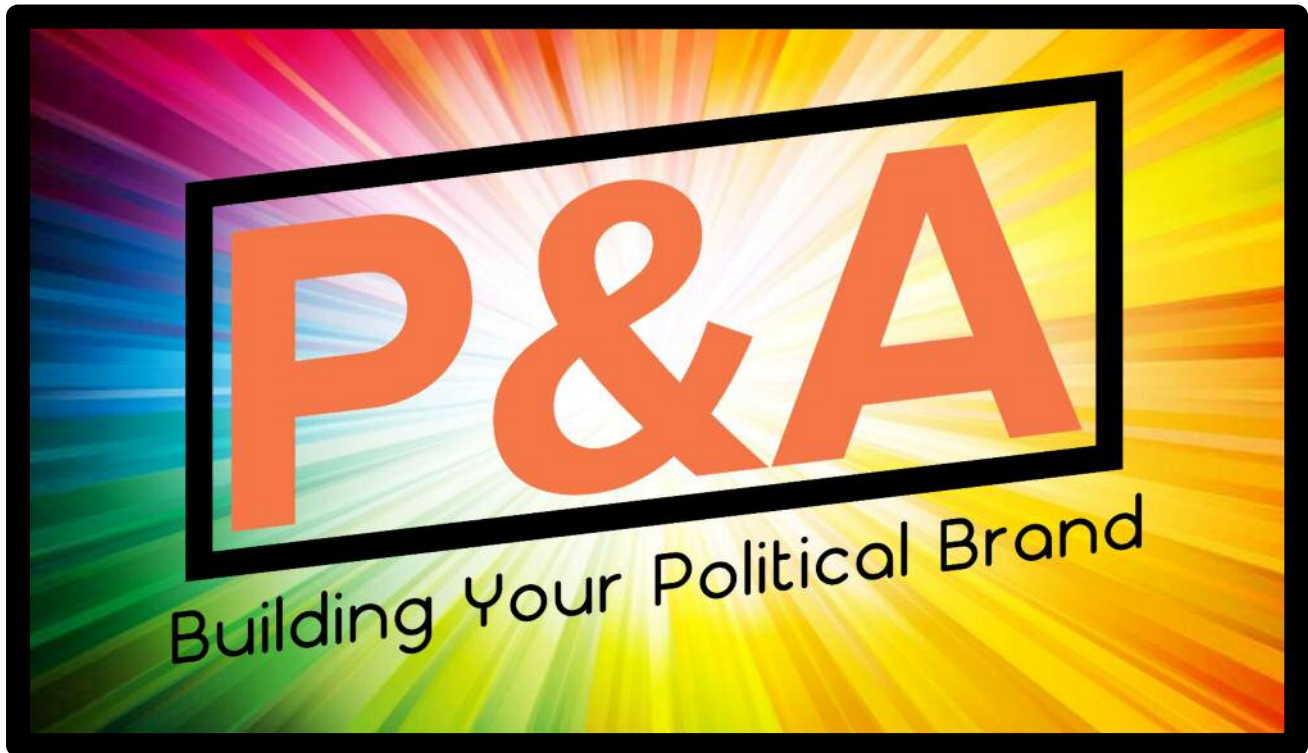
Sherrill for Congress' campaign manager and fundraising kingpin respectively impressed as they got their candidate to the U.S. House of Representatives.

**The Second Act Award:  
Reed Gusciora**



When the long-serving 15th District Assemblyman took a run at Trenton City Hall, few gave the redistricted gay white guy much of a chance. But most of the rest of the field fragmented itself, and Gusciora proved indefatigable and ethically unimpeachable in the runoff against Paul Perez. Not only the capital city, but the state at large, celebrated the victory of a survivor, a person who cultivated friendships and relationships, who proved himself an original, experienced, and knowledgeable presence. The first openly gay member of the New Jersey Legislature, an intellect, prosecutor by trade, and a Catholic conscience, Gusciora never ran from who he was, and, craving authenticity after years of dysfunctional, failed, or corrupt government, the voters embraced him. What looked like the hail Mary end of his legislative career turned into the beginning of Gusciora's chance to exert his particular positive contributions on a desperate state capital.





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**Comeback of the Year:**  
**Andre Sayegh**



The Mayor of Paterson won the citywide nonpartisan contest this past May in his third try for the job, succeeding the jailed Jose “Joey” Torres, who had received more votes than Sayegh in 2010 and 2014. In Sayegh, the city finally had a youthful, well-educated, experienced, and exuberant personality who sincerely loved Silk City, and had demonstrable political skills. A natural wit and wordsmith, he is also one of New Jersey’s best orators.



**The Little Brother Award:**  
**John Pallone**



The younger sibling of U.S. Rep. Pallone defeated incumbent Adam Schneider in the Long Branch mayor’s race.

**The Taking Care of Business Award:**  
**Josh Gottheimer**



Based on his 2016 edging of a Republican incumbent in a GOP district, the Bergen-based Democratic congressman was supposed to be in the 2018 dogfight of the year. But on the strength of his own record, hands-on campaign acumen, fundraising prowess, Trump horror, and NJGOP missteps, he coolly handled an utterly hapless John McCann.



**The Non-Event Award:**  
**Ras Baraka**



The Newark mayoral election is supposed to be a big deal, and it still is, just non-competitive. Seeking his second four-year term, incumbent Baraka blew out Central Ward Councilwoman Gayle Chaneyfield Jenkins to tighten his grip on City Hall.



**The Last Republican Standing Award:**  
**Chris Smith**



The 4th District Republican Congressman defeated Democratic challenger Josh Welle to earn the unenviable distinction of being the only victorious Republican running for Congress in New Jersey in 2018.



**Hoboken West Award:**  
**Julia Fahl**



The former Murphy Campaign ally bumped off 28-year incumbent Dave Del Vecchio to land the mayoralty of hip Hunterdon County river town Lambertville.



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## Trenton Makes and the World Takes Award: Allison Murphy



Having cut her teeth at the Statehouse of New Jersey's capital city, the chief of staff to retiring state Senator (and U.S. Rep.-elect) Jeff Van Drew (D-2) advances alongside her boss to Washington, D.C.



## Fights of the Year: The Year's Best Rivalries, Collisions and Feuds

### Phil Murphy versus Steve Sweeney



The Senate President's hunger for the governorship, combined with Murphy's lack of experience in government, put the Governor – relegated to temporary digs up the street from the Sweeney-operational Statehouse – even further on politically wobbly legs throughout the year.

The cold, precision techniques of Team Sweeney made the collision look less like an even contest and more like that scene in 2001: a Space Odyssey when Bowman appeals – in vain – to get HAL to let him back aboard the space ship. It will be interesting to see how Murphy Chief of Staff Peter Cammarano's departure from the administration impacts the inside game. Cammarano was a longtime ally of former Governor Dick Codey, a longtime bitter enemy of South Jersey, Sweeney's home base. But throughout 2018, his presence only added to the antagonism between the two camps, as Murphy and Sweeney tangled over the budget and almost shut down state government. Acrimony persisted all year long, but when the legislature's Select Committee on Investigations opened up an inquiry into hiring practices within the administration, the feud looked just about full-blown.

## Fights of the Year: Katie Brennan versus Murphy World



The chief of staff of the NJ Housing and Mortgage Finance Agency (and former Murphy Campaign worker) detailed her efforts to notify Governor Phil Murphy about his administration's hiring of a man who allegedly raped Brennan, testifying that Justin Braz, Peter Cammarano, Matt Platkin and the Governor and First Lady Tammy Murphy all failed to act to bring Schools Development Authority Chief of Staff Al Alvarez to justice.

## Fights of the Year: Tom DeGise versus Steven Fulop



Initially, the Hudson County Executive's nice guy demeanor made him look like a certain victim of a scheme hatched by the Jersey City Mayor and state Senator Brian P. Stack (D-33) to get rid of him. But DeGise's unerring ability to build relationships and friendships outpaced Fulop's coldly calculating and Machiavellian style, which ultimately appeared to alienate Fulop. even as happy warrior DeGise prevailed.

## Fights of the Year: Ronald Rice versus Nick Scutari



The state Senator from Newark became the most visible opponent of the Senator from Linden's plan to legalize recreational marijuana. Rice put forward a bill to decriminalize the drug but consistently opposed the Scutari-Murphy plan for full legalization.



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**Fights of the Year:**  
**Nick Scutari versus Joe Cryan**



When Scutari defeated Fanwood Mayor Colleen Mahr for the chairmanship of the Union County Democratic Committee, he also dealt a loss to his fellow Union County senator, Cryan, who'd backed Mahr for the job.

**Fights of the Year:**  
**Peter Cammarano versus Matt Platkin**



The bifurcation of Murphy's inner circle started with bad blood between the chief of staff and the Governor's chief counsel. In the end, Cammarano took the walk, and Platkin – after taking some year-end days off for paternity leave – remained.

**Fights of the Year:**  
**John McCann versus Steve Longan**



The soul for the Republican Party in the 5th District featured a hateful has-been against a hapless won't happen. It was an ugly – and ultimately meaningless - GOP Primary, as former Mayor of Bogota Longan – facing an obviously flawed, poorly funded and ideologically opaque opponent - sank in a self-made miasma of bigotry and hate-speech. When a former councilman stepped forward to detail Longan's verbal abuse of him in Bogota, McCann took control of the contest, winning to only ultimately get run over by U.S. Rep. Josh Gottheimer (D-5) in the general election.

**Fights of the Year:**  
**Bob Menendez versus Lisa McCormick**



McCormick, a no-money, nameless and paperless progressive candidate running in the Democratic Primary for United States Senate, embarrassed the senior Senator when she posted a 40-60% loss against him, signaling that he likely wouldn't be able to expect an easy general election contest.

**Fights of the Year:**  
**Seth Grossman versus Diversity**



A dedicated Trump fan, the Republican nominee for Congress in the 2nd District defeated a large field of Republican opponents only to inveigh against society's pluralism, infamously declaring that “diversity is a bunch of crap.” While Grossman did better than expected against Van Dew, he still lost, and made it look much harder along the way than it needed to be.

**Fights of the Year:**  
**Bob Menendez versus Bob Hugin**



In the end it didn't add up to much, with Menendez riding anti-Trump fervor to another six years in office, but along the way, former Celgene executive Hugin ran one of the most negative campaigns in memory, making the case that the incumbent Democrat – who last year survived a corruption trial - was unfit for office.



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## Boss Land Examined



It proved a particularly significant year for the state's party bosses. One of them died, one of the moved on to another opportunity, and one retired after a bruising year. Fracture in both parties – including the GOP's divided processing of the presidency of Donald J. Trump, and the South Jersey establishment's divergence from Governor Phil Murphy – provided other occasions for political upheaval, tomfoolery, and war.

Significantly, Union County had to reassess its political future following the death early in the year of Assemblyman (and Union County Democratic Committee Chairman) Jerry Green. Amid competing influences, Mr. Green had attempted to straddle several aggressively competing egos, succeeding in keeping the county pulled together with gravitas and calm. What happens now under the rule of his successor, Chairman

(and Senator) Nick Scutari, hinges on peace with Senator Joe Cryan. By year's end, that remained a significant question mark.

In Hudson County, Senator Brian P. Stack decided to try to take by force a chairmanship that a respectful establishment had appeared eager to serve up to him on a silver platter. Some people are wired for war, and skeptical of peace, sometimes simply another word for the complacent backroom atmosphere of fat cats. But Stack's decision to rumble brought about his countywide demise, perhaps a signal of the all-politics-is-local sturgeon's own underlying discomfort with political expansion as habitat fragmentation. In any event, Hudson County Democratic Organization Chairman Amy DeGise emerged as the new leader of the party, and promptly found herself trying to live within a structure occupied by that very old guard Stack never wanted in cozy proximity.

*Continued on Page 47*

**Insurance costs will soar under pending bills**

**'Bad faith' insurance bill will yield costly, frivolous lawsuits**

**'Bad faith' bill endangers NJ insurance market**

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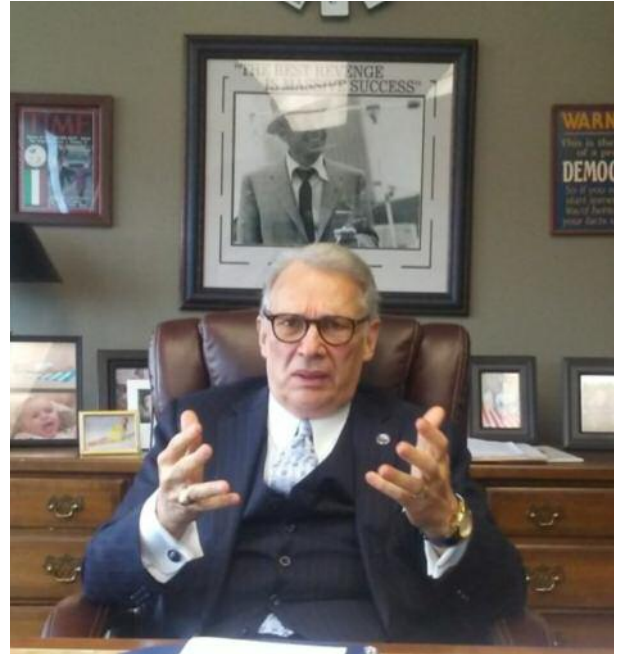
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## Boss Land Examined Continued

Then there was Burlington. Decade-long veteran GOP boss Bill Layton finally decided to retire following a transition of county power from Republicans to Democrats, and the loss of incumbent U.S. Rep. Tom MacArthur (R-3) to newcomer Democrat, U.S. Rep.-elect Andy Kim. Sources around the chairman said he hung on a year too long, but then again, a bloody sunset better befits a warrior than one rosy hued with wars avoided.

The statewide political game mostly involved Democratic State Party Chairman John Currie suffering South Jersey's constant roughing-up efforts, the consequence of Currie's close alliance to Governor Murphy. If Currie could finish the year as collateral damage of the Democratic establishment's demotion job on Murphy, they wouldn't have to resort to incremental procedures like the redistricting overhaul that failed, and gave Currie – who loses the inside game most of the time to Trenton – another win, this one more unlikely than the one he notched as overlord of a party that went 11-1 in congressional contests. As for his counterpart in the GOP, Republican pooh-bah Doug Steinhardt endured the torments of trying to keep his party marching in unison behind the divisive and – some among them in unguarded moments, said crazy – presidency of Donald Trump. Steinhardt opted to be pro-Trump, which pitted him most visibly against Assembly Republican Leader Jon Bramnick, and perhaps complicated the late-Trump evacuation maneuvers of unsuccessful U.S. Senate candidate Bob Hugin – once a proud backer of the President – who finished the race in schizophrenic tatters on the Trump front.



There were also changes – and momentous decisions – in Bergen. Having been soundly whopped in a senate contest by Kristin Corrado, Paul DiGaetano surrendered the chairmanship of a badly mauled Bergen County Republican Organization (BCRO). Former Hackensack Mayor Jack Zisa took on the job, as former BCRO Chairman Bob Yudin - fearing for his country under the leadership of President Trump - announced his support for Democrats Bob Menendez and Josh Gottheimer. For his part, veteran Bergen County Democratic Committee Chairman Lou Stellato handled a crisis in his own party caused when a recording surfaced of Sheriff Mike Saudino making racist statements. Stellato got behind Bergen NAACP Chapter head Anthony Cureton, who replaced the disgraced Saudino.

Finally, in Morris County, accountant Ron DeFilippis defeated financial planner Rob Zwigard by four votes to become chairman of a badly fractured and disorganized Morris County GOP. The organization – such as it is – maintained full control of the county freeholder board, but lost a congressional seat with the retirement of Rodney Frelinghysen.



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## POLITICAL STORY OF THE YEAR

### Runners'-Up

Donald Trump Lays Waste to the Republican Party in New Jersey

The Katie Brennan-Al Alvarez Fiasco

The State Budget Crisis

The War for the Hudson County Democratic Organization Chairmanship

The War for the Union County Democratic Committee Chairmanship

Andy Kim upsets Tom MacArthur in CD3

The Murphy Administration struggles to find its footing

The public debate over the legalization of recreational marijuana

The public debate over a \$15 minimum wage

The Democrats' legislative leaders try to gain more control with a controversial redistricting plan



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**POLITICAL STORY OF THE YEAR****The Emergence of Mikie Sherrill in New Jersey Politics**

When another Goldman Sachs retiree plunged into politics and landed the governorship of New Jersey, nothing about the storyline conjured thoughts of the Founding Fathers' vision for the country. U.S. Senator Bob Menendez's (D-NJ) comeback story likewise failed to stir an "ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country" vibe.

Given the backdrop, it seemed like an oxymoron to have an inspiring and substantive individual with a real public service record step forward to run for office in New Jersey. But the retired Navy lieutenant commander's entrance into the stagnant and shallow pool of paltry Jersey politics reanimated the state and hinted at something more than a dystopian future.

In January, Sherrill will assume the oath of office to succeed Rodney Frelinghuysen as the congressperson in the 11th District, embodying precisely that elegant, intelligent, and public service-grounded individual who (if there was any life left in the system) would have to emerge in the infantile, towel-snapping Trump years as a counterweight, offering too arguably that most significant quality of resistance: womanhood.



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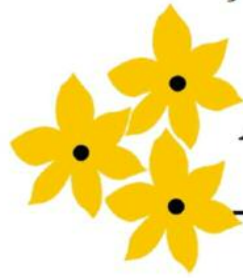


“Pleased to meet you, John. Some of my best friends went to Harvard.”



“I’m actually the guy who discovered Mikie Sherrill.”

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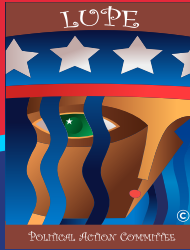
And to mis hermanos y hermanas tuning in from Florida this morning, I see you, I hear you, and from the bottom of un corazon grande de la comunidad Latina de Miami, I know we all agree that Bob Menendez is once again a GREAT candidate for U.S. Senate."



"Next I'd like to introduce Congressman Don Payne, Jr., who can personally attest to the fact that Steve Sweeney and I are close personal friends."



"And as our very special guest tonight, folks, we have former Governor Chris Christie."



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# Jerry Green: In Memoriam



*No one's indispensable. Eisenhower said that once and lived it. But it just hasn't been the same without 20th District Assemblyman (and Union County Democratic Committee Chairman) Jerry Green. He died in April of this year at the age of 79, and we miss him.*

*We used to go down to Plainfield and see him at his office when it was on Park Avenue. He never stood on ceremony. He liked to talk about politics. He'd lived long enough and been in enough scrapes and scraps to be real. And while he had been in his share of political wars, most of the time he had the demeanor of someone who could have played a peaceful elder on the old Kung Fu TV series. During the last few years all he wanted was to be part of the process of picking the next governor.*

*"Then I can ride into the sunset," he said with a smile.*

*He lived long enough to be part of that, maybe not quite in the way he would have wanted. But that's the way it was. He was a man, Green, who related to people, and endeared himself to his political enemies in the end, and always sought a way to extend a hand in friendship with that inimitable, easygoing style, which in a rushed and wisecracking world of pal, and buddy, and bub, had no equal.*

*Only Green in New Jersey politics liked to address you as "partner," and when he said it you got the feeling that he meant it; and friendship, such as it is in politics, is no mean thing.*