

the **POWER** **LIST** 2014



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Editor's Note

Welcome to *PolitickerNJ's* 2014 Power List, another excursion into that raucous political universe tapped like a barrel at both ends, in the words of Ben Franklin, who would have likely shuddered at the invocation of his name in the context of this decidedly New Jersey enterprise.

As always, the list does not include elected officials, judges or past governors.

In keeping with past tradition, too, it promises to stir plenty of dismay, outrage, hurt feelings, and public tantrums at the annual League of Municipalities.

We welcome it all in the spirit of more finely honing this conglomerate in progress and in the name, of course, of defending what we have wrought out of the political collisions of this most interesting year.

Several plotlines weave through the list of 101 names below.

First, the fallout from the George Washington Bridge scandal gave Gov. Chris Christie and those around him a power haircut. Obviously, you'll see the likes of former Port Authority of New York and New Jersey Chairman David Samson skydiving out of the top tier.

You might be scandalized by the fact that he doesn't altogether disappear, reasoning disclosed.

Atlantic City's troubles have the casino gaming industry in a state of flux and consequently New Jersey on high alert as the state wrestles with the next stage of the storied Southern city's history.

That narrative punctuates the list.

Looking back on the scrums we covered, the rise of independent expenditure spending altered the battlefield and the in-fighting in several key campaigns and elections this year, most notably Bayonne and Newark.

As outlined below, that decision also directly impacts Christie's strategic designs on the presidency.

Finally, and most critically, those municipal, county and federal elections – from Newark to Paterson to Elizabeth – determined the rise and fall of those players either backhanded off the board for the moment or proudly – or barely – among those still standing...

Cover photograph By Arman Dzidzovic

FIGHTING FOR NEW JERSEY



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The 2014 PolitickerNJ Power List



1.

Paul Fishman

U.S. Attorney for New Jersey

While the pick is somewhat obvious, his decisions can shake up the entire structure of the names below. That is true power. As long as there is an ongoing investigation into the George Washington Bridge scandal by his office and the administration of Gov. Chris Christie leading up to those infamous lane closures, the investigating Fishman – as mild-mannered and self-effacing in public as Christie was bullish about attention when he held the same job – must be treated as the person in this state who right now possesses the most power. It's no exaggeration to say that Christie's presidential ambitions are bottled up in the U.S. Attorney's Office, tasked with sorting through testimonials of all the Bridgegate principals, including David Wildstein, Bridget Anne Kelly, Bill Stepien, Bill Baroni and David Samson.

**“THANK YOU AND CONGRATULATIONS
TO MO BUTLER, MARK MATZEN,
AND ALL THOSE ALSO RECOGNIZED,
WHO DO SO MUCH TO MOVE
NEW JERSEY FORWARD.”**



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2. Independent Expenditures

From President of the United States to the Mayor of Newark to the Mayor of Bayonne to the Elizabeth Board of Education, independent expenditure PACs have replaced human beings and party organizations as the prime movers of politics post Citizens United. The controversial Supreme Court decision opened up the possibility for Gov. Christie's allies, for example, to raise money toward his presidential bid without violating state laws pertaining to gubernatorial self-promotion. They also enabled the forces of Newark Mayor Ras Baraka to fight back against the incursion of a PAC associated with No. 3 on this list – and for the little-known Jimmy Davis to ride PAC dollars to a shocking win in Bayonne. On Nov. 4th, a giant fell in the City of Elizabeth, when Rafael Fajardo and his forces – who had controlled the board since 1996 – lost to the Committee for Economic Growth and Social Justice, the PAC affiliated with state Sen. Ray Lesniak (D-20) and run by executive director Sean Caddle. From top to bottom, IEs have rearranged the landscape of politics.

Hudson and South Jersey, until the north can repair its fractures, Norcross will continue to be a dominant statewide force – now with his little brother occupying the congressional seat in the First District. It can be argued that James Tedesco's victory on Nov. 4th strengthened the north by empowering Bergen County Democratic Chairman Lou Stellato, who now holds sway over the executive and legislative bodies. Whether that power will translate into a strengthening of relations among northern counties and weaken Norcross' chokehold is a developing story.

4. George Gilmore

*Ocean County
Republican Chairman*

Easily the most powerful GOP chair in the state, ruler of New Jersey's biggest and most important Republican county and simultaneously a principal at 1868, one of the state's most potent government affairs firms, Gilmore has put together an impressive winning streak focused on executive offices. He was a primary financial backer of the mayoral campaigns of Don Guardian in Atlantic City (2013) and Jose "Joey" Torres in Paterson earlier this year. He also racked up a strategic win with the stemming of movement conservative Steve Lonegan in the CD3 GOP Primary and the convincing general election victory of Republican Tom MacArthur. One thing is clear: any Republican running for statewide office must go through Ocean. Incidentally, there's already talk in Republican circles of MacArthur as a 2017 gubernatorial contender.



3. George Norcross

*South Jersey Democratic
Power Broker*

Control of the biggest legislative bloc of Trenton lawmakers means every other county or region still has to go through South Jersey. Whether it's Essex and South Jersey or





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5.

Shawn Boburg

Bergen Record reporter
The unknown Port
Authority of New York
and New Jersey beat

writer broke Bridgegate, the biggest story of the year and a significant threat to the power consolidated by Gov. Christie. In a sputtering era for newspapers, Boburg demonstrated better than anyone else this year the raw power of the pen. It was a very strong year for the Record and brother/sister team Stephen and Jennifer Borg, respectively the paper's chief legal counsel and publisher, and editor Martin Gottlieb. By taking on tough fights and backing Boburg, the paper showed how a mid-sized daily newspaper survives and thrives: as a vital engine of the public interest of its regional readers.

6.

Jamie Fox

*New Jersey Commissioner
of Transportation*

When he wanted a politically savvy expert to repair the state's broken Transportation Trust Fund (TTF), Christie enlisted Fox, one of the state's premiere operatives and the former chief of staff of U.S. Sen. Robert "The Torch" Torricelli and former commissioner and COS to Gov. Jim McGreevey. Fox's high ranking reflects the trust both parties placed in him this year going forward to tackle what once was a problem – that has now morphed into a crisis.



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7.

Lou Stellato

Chairman of the Bergen County Democratic Committee

A funeral director by trade, Stellato doesn't owe anyone anything or have any business ties to the Trenton government apparatus. That separates him from other county chairs in key counties. All in with Bergen County Executive-elect James Tedesco, Stellato would have been off this list had Tedesco bought it on Nov. 4th. Instead, as his candidates retained control of the freeholder board in the state's most complex county and Tedesco surprised the state, proud grandfather Stellato jumps into the top ten as a major influencer and power player. The former mayor of Lyndhurst derives his power in part from the fact that Bergen is composed of a sufficient number of highly independent personages (Senate Majority Leader Loretta Weinberg, Senator Paul Sarlo and Senator Robert Gordon) to make it difficult for any one of them (or their surrogates) to command the chairmanship. Bottom line: with nearly everyone else in his party on a government or lobbying payroll, he's a wildcard. He also accomplished the oddball feat of consolidating power at a time when independent expenditures threaten to diminish county party operations and the will of chairmen, and against the grain of a national GOP onslaught.



8.

Leroy Jones

Essex Democratic Committee Chairman

A partner at 1868 Public Affairs, Jones occupies the political leadership position in the most lethal Democratic Party county in the state. His decision – made in concert with close friend and ally Essex County Executive Joe DiVincenzo – about whom will get the line in Essex could be the single biggest determinant about who will be the state's next governor.

Menendez and Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop. Based in Bergen County with offices in NYC and Washington DC, Scarinci Hollenbeck is ranked by the NJ Law Journal as one of the 40 largest law firms in the state. Joe Biden's former Deputy Chief of staff runs the D.C. office, and in his homestate, Scarinci's firm represents two of the three largest development projects in New Jersey.



9.

Donald Scarinci

Attorney

The childhood chum of U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez (D-NJ) took control of the legal contract in West New York and took over prime legal work in Jersey City owing to the deepening closeness between

10.

Mo Butler

Chief of Staff, N.J. Office, U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ)

As it was in Newark when he served as then-Mayor Booker's chief of staff, the veteran Butler occupies a high position on this list by virtue of his boss' style, which often puts Booker in demand around the country, leaving Butler at the New Jersey control panel.



12.

Mike DuHaime

Partner, Mercury Public Affairs, LLC

As Christie amps up a 2016 presidential bid, he will lean on his old standby DuHaime nationwide for strategic insight. The savvy Passaic County-reared political operative who managed national races for John McCain and Rudy Giuliani will help the governor navigate all presidential pratfalls as Christie attempts to muscle out the competition in the Republican Primary and potentially beyond. Republican Governors Association wins by Christie (from 29 to 31 seats) strengthen the New Jersey governor's argument for presidential traction – and strengthen DuHaime nationally.



11.

Carl Ichan

Casino Mogul

What will happen with the Taj Mahal? Ichan will ultimately make that determination. He also holds the debt on his own property and the lawsuit he just won could change the daily operational costs of the casino as Atlantic City stands at a crossroads.

14.

Bill Palatucci

Confidant, Gov. Chris Christie

Wherever Christie plays, you will find veteran Republican operative Palatucci, an attorney at Gibbons who has a GOP donor contact list going back at least as far as the Christie Todd Whitman era.



13.

Bill Mullen

President, NJ Building and Construction Trades Council

The president stands at the apex of the state's 15 international trades organizations. Amid the notorious warring egos that make up the back drama of labor, Mullen holds the entire operation together.



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15. **Mike Capelli**
*Executive Secretary
Treasurer, Carpenters*
In terms of mobilizing manpower and resources, you can't argue with Capelli, who has 30,000 active members on the roster and can, at a moment's notice, deploy 3,000 to 6,000 bodies to any election battlefield. Reliant on supremely well-prepared political adviser Assemblyman Troy Singleton (D-7), Capelli last year went all in with his support for legislative candidates, getting a leg up on his rival Ray Pocino, who made the decision to back a now-wobbly Gov. Chris Christie. While Pocino edged the Carpenters in the Newark mayor's race, Capelli's guys backed James Tedesco in the all-important Bergen County Executive's race, defeating the Laborers behind incumbent Republican Kathe Donovan. He was also instrumental in the re-election of popular GOP Burlington County Freeholder Director Bruce Garganio, a fellow carpenter, in another big contest.

16. **Ray Pocino**
*Vice President and
Eastern Regional
Manager, LIUNA*
Talk to men and women in the labor movement and the high court of power contains two ferocious competitors: Capelli and Pocino. In the short term given the Bridgegate fiasco, the latter suffers somewhat his decision to back Christie's re-election. He also occupies a Christie-appointed chair on the embattled Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. But the bottom line is everyone covets a Laborers endorsements. Any doubts? Look at rock-solid progressive Bonnie Watson Coleman embracing Pocino's support in her successful CD12 bid. And look at the success of Laborers-backed Ras Baraka in Newark, one of the biggest contests of the year.



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17.

John Degnan

Chairman of the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey

He inherits a mess, of course, all the fallout from the George Washington Bridge scandal. How Degnan implements and manages reforms will require Herculean managerial and political skill to reverse what the public sees now as a patronage train wreck. A weakening of the role of deputy executive director of the port following the Bridgegate resignation of Bill Baroni and ascent to that job from within the administration of Deborah Gramiccioni further illustrates Degnan's command position.



18.

Dale Florio

Principal, Princeton Public Affairs

The chief of one of the state's most powerful government affairs firms has his team in a forward position on Atlantic City as the South Jersey pleasure capital overhauls in the aftermath of several casino closings.

20.

Paul Brubaker

State Director, U.S. Sen. Bob Menendez (D-N.J.)

The former reporter started in that well-worn breeding ground for power: the congressional office of Bill Pascrell, before heading to work for Menendez in 2012 as the senator's press spokesman. Now he runs the offices of one of the most powerful senators in the country and a future potential candidate for Secretary of State if Hillary Clinton lands the 2016 presidential nomination. It should be noted, too, that while past senators (infamously the late Frank Lautenberg and Bob Torricelli) and their staffs viciously feuded, Menendez is very close to fellow New Jersey Senator and continuing national rising star Cory Booker.



19.

John Currie

Chairman of the Democratic State Committee

Firmly rooted in Passaic County where he remains chairman of the party in addition to his statewide duties, the veteran Democratic leader turns every organizational gathering into a special event.



27. **Mike Kempner** *CEO, MWW* As Hillary Clinton ramps up her 2016 presidential

ambitions, look for Kempner on the fundraising frontlines in New Jersey. The longstanding Clinton ally and top fundraiser heads one of the most successful PR firms in the country.



21. **Roger Bodman** *Lobbyist* The veteran Republican with close ties to Christie heads

up Public Strategies Impact, one of the most potent lobbying firms in the state, and has significant connective political tissue with the Republican Governor's Association (RGA).

24. **John Hoffman** *Attorney General for the State of New Jersey*

The most powerful person in New Jersey politics with the word "acting" in front of his name, Hoffman has put together a solid body of work as the state's leading lawman and successor to Jeff Chiesa.



22. **Jon Hanson** *Chairman, New Jersey Gaming, Sports and Entertainment*

Advisory Commission
As Atlantic City attempts to get back in the game, Hanson has the ear of the governor on all statewide development issues.

25. **Angelo Genova** *Attorney* Genova shows up

in court with the most fearsome preparation of any other attorney on the landscape.



23. **Mary Pat Christie** *First Lady of New Jersey* The monetary

drawing card in the family, Mary Pat will obviously play a key role in the governor's decision-making and strategy when he formally undertakes his presidential run.

26. **Todd Christie** *First Brother* From the beginning of the

governor's career in politics, Christie's younger brother has been his chief champion. Christie's big night nationally on Nov. 4th put Todd on the frontlines of presidential politics.



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The background of the entire page is a photograph of the New Mexico State Capitol dome, viewed from a low angle looking up. The dome is white with a gold-leafed top. The words "PUBLIC STRATEGIES" are faintly visible in a serif font across the middle of the dome. Overlaid on the dome is the large, bold logo "PSI". The "P" and "S" are dark blue with white outlines, and the "I" is solid red. The letters are positioned horizontally across the center of the image.

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28.

Bill Castner

*Attorney, Gibbons
Braniac Castner is
one of the handful
of truly literate*

people in New Jersey politics. He serves as the chief political and legal adviser to George Norcross III and is Gibbons' point man in Trenton.

environment, an analytical fact gatherer who draws unbiased conclusions. The front office will need to lean on his veteran presence more than ever in the coming months and years.

30.

Tommy Bertoli

*Chief Political
Confidant,
Jersey City*



Mayor Steven Fulop

Working closely with his fast-rising confidant Jason Solowsky, the veteran political operative from North Bergen helped get Ras Baraka elected mayor in Newark, and led Fulop's relationship-building efforts statewide, notably in the City of Paterson and Bergen County.



29.

Charles McKenna

*Commissioner of
the Department of
Community Affairs,*

Gov. Chris Christie

The former state director of Homeland Security who worked his way through law school nights as a janitor has the trust and respect of the governor. Insiders describe him as a calming influence in a hyperactive

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31. Sean Kennedy
*Associate Executive
Director at NJ Senate
Democrats
Senate President*

Steve Sweeney's (D-3) competitive senior advisor – an attorney and coach – is his boss' fiercest advocate and protector.

34. Steve Adubato, Jr.
*NJTV Host
The veteran
broadcaster*

with the fine political pedigree brings institutional knowledge and a finely honed intellect to every political interview.



**32. Joe DeCotiis/
Michael DeCotiis**
*Attorneys
The deep-reach*

law firm has key contracts around North Jersey and is close to powerful Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop. Political mainstays, the younger generation of the family has moved up into positions of power within the firm.



35. Patrick Murray
*Pollster,
Monmouth
University*

The veteran pollster and political commentator has built a record that makes all of his polls required reading for anyone interested in what's going on in campaigns and elections in this state – and beyond.



33. Larry Weitzner
*CEO, Jamestown
Associates*

If you want to run a hard-hitting Republican campaign in New Jersey – or elsewhere – the presence of Jamestown in your corner lends your candidacy instant authenticity. Charlie Baker learned that this past general election cycle when he brought in Weitzner's team and bumped off Democrat Martha Coakley in the Massachusetts governor's race. An impressive win for Jamestown.



36. Mark Matzen
*Democratic Party
Political Operative*

There are only a handful of others – Ed Farmer comes to mind in Passaic – who get as deep into the numbers as Matzen, who advises U.S. Sen. Cory Booker (D-NJ). On Election Day, the stealth-like Matzen shared Campaign Manager Brendan Gill's happiness in Booker's 14-point margin of victory over Republican challenger Jeff Bell.



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38. **Charles Stile** *Columnist, The Bergen Record*

There are other columnists in the State of New Jersey who have greater reach – but none has the pinpoint focus of the veteran Stile, who must have at least a trilogy of great political novels about New Jersey stored away and ready to unleash. Here's a typical insightful passage about Christie from the maestro: "The self-described straight talker - the one who isn't afraid to tackle the 'big issues' - adamantly refuses to offer any insights on immigration reform, even though he's a short plane ride away from the epicenter of the crisis, the U.S. border with Mexico. His excuse: immigration is a federal problem for President Obama and Congress to fix. He's just a lowly, garden-variety governor who is powerless to do anything about it."



37. **Michael Aron** *Chief Political Correspondent, NJTV*

He was gone for two months – and the state almost fell apart without him. There is no one in New Jersey politics reporting with more gravitas – or attention to detail.

40. **Mark Albiez** *Chief of Staff to Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop*

The highly respected Albiez has something in addition to his intellect and right hook-uppercut combination that could make him vulnerable statewide: a heart. Schooled on the streets of Union City with Mayor (and state Senator) Brian P. Stack, he actually truly cares.



39. **Analilia Mejia** *Executive Director of the Working Families*

With more than a dozen affiliates statewide, Mejia's activist group made a strong statement this year, in particular on two fronts. First, the executive director took a frontline role in the Newark Mayor's race, helping to propel Ras Baraka to victory in the election of the year. Second, she secured paid sick leave for full- and part-time employees in six NJ municipalities.

41. **Steve DeMicco and Brad Lawrence** *Political Consultants*

Owners of Message and Media, the veteran Democratic operatives are backing Phil Murphy as the former U.S. Ambassador to Germany revs up his gubernatorial operations ahead of 2017.





42. **Hetty Rosenstein** *New Jersey Director, CWA Senate*

President Sweeney's strenuous efforts to make right his relations with public workers demonstrate the activist power of Rosenstein, the hell-raiser labor leader who's not beyond throwing the occasional sharp elbow.

campaign provides public affairs and government relations counsel to a variety of Cammarano, Layton and Bombardieri firm clients. Close to Norcross, Capelli and Assemblyman Troy Singleton (D-7).

44. **Wendell Steinhauer** *President, NJEA* *The labor organization*

representing over 200,000 school employees has real muscle. It's so strong that whoever occupies the top position finds him or herself in a strong spot on this list. The education association uses its PAC as well as Garden State Forward (its super PAC) to advocate for candidates supported by their membership.



43. **Trish Mueller** *Political Operative* The political director of the Northeast Regional Council of Carpenters and the state director for Barack Obama's 2008 general election

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49. **Phil Alagia** *Chief of Staff, Essex County Executive Joe DiVincenzo*

The tactical outfitter from Newark's North Ward - with strong ties to the East - helped put together the vote totals that Shavar Jeffries' recorded against Ras Baraka. DiVincenzo just won re-election in a landslide over a propped-up GOP candidate, and there's already murmuring about him gearing up for a fifth term in 2018. Alagia and the boss maintain close ties to U.S. Rep. Donald Payne, Jr. (D-10), Newark, and possess the presence of a true rising star - state Senator M. Teresa Ruiz (D-29) - in their inner political circle.



45. **Kevin Drennan** *Chief of Staff, Senate President Steve Sweeney*

(D-3)

Drennan has deep ties in both public and private arenas and is an integral part of Sweeney's formidable political team.



46. **Mike Drewniak** *Press Secretary, Gov. Chris Christie*

As Christie shifts his operations nationally, Drewniak has less to say and fewer daily fistfights with the press but he still commands respect by virtue of his veteran status and attention to detail.

47. **Tom Bracken** *President and CEO of the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce*

If the business of New Jersey is politics, Bracken at least musters sufficient gravitas to make a counter argument. The chamber executive is also one of the leading voices on transportation funding and chairs Forward NJ.





48. **Joey Muniz**
*Hudson County
Political
Operative*
A dedicated creature of Sacco World, the North Bergenite has consolidated organizational power as the trusted adviser of Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto (D-32), Secaucus.

51. **Michele Brown**
*Chief Executive,
Economic
Development
Authority*
A holdover from Christie's U.S. Attorney years, Brown is never far from the governor's inner sanctum.



50. **Kevin Hagan**
*Democratic
Party Political
Operative*
A close adviser to Senate President Sweeney, Hagan is also a political resource at Princeton Public Affairs. The highly respected Hagan has institutional reach going back to Frank Lautenberg and James McGreevey.

52. **Eric Shuffler**
*Lobbyist, River
Crossing Strategy
Group*
With Jamie Fox moving back to government, the renamed – but still powerful – firm will look to Shuffler's leadership in the next epoch.



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57. Adam Silverstein
Political Operative
Silverstein enters the list as a consequence of his resigning from a local board of education seat, but more importantly, for picking up the biggest win of his career this year with the win of Bergen County Executive-elect James Tedesco. The Bergen County message-maker – close to Stellato – must be viewed as a significant player at this point for anyone who wants to play in battleground Bergen County – the Florida of New Jersey.



53. Amiri "Middy" Baraka, Jr.
Chief of Staff, Newark Mayor

Ras Baraka
Others in a small circle of influencers whisper in the mayor's ear, but ultimately Baraka listens closest to his brother in the state's biggest city.

Layton and George Gilmore to truncate Steve Lonegan's CD3 candidacy with the recruitment of Tom MacArthur.

55. Adam Geller
Pollster
The top-notch pollster can always be found in unlikely places – like a Paterson Mayoral election, for example. His work is highly valued.



54. Glenn Paulsen
Attorney
The super intense former Burlington County Republican chairman maintains strong ties to the organization and is generally recognized internally as Burlington's organizer emeritus. Paulsen worked closely with Chairman Bill

56. Bob Sommer
Political Operative
The close adviser to Mayor Fulop has statewide contacts and good relations with the media.





58. **Maggie Moran** *President and CEO, M Public Affairs*

The state has only one “Maggie” in the political universe. Smarter than most of the other people on this list, with a broad client base stretching from transportation to education, Moran will occupy a key position as a New Jersey contact for the 2016 Hillary Clinton Presidential Campaign.

Republican State Party Chairman Tom Wilson and Democrat Jeannine Frisby LaRue enhance Kaufman Zita’s power projection platform. The group played a significant role in driving marriage equality.

62. **Charles Wowkanech** *President, NJ AFL-CIO*

Veteran labor leader Wowkanech technically stands at the top of New Jersey labor, as both public and private labor organizations fold into the million-man strong AFL-CIO. Wowkanech is in a similar position as Mullen, in the sense that the competing interests of labor – the Laborers endorsing the re-election of Christie, for example, while the CWA and NJEA worked against him, and the Carpenters remained neutral – make for a challenging leadership role for anyone at the top of the umbrella. The organization is coming off of a year when they absorbed the fractures caused by the governor’s contest by championing a raising of the state’s minimum wage and spending over \$1 million on elections.



59. **Bill Layton** *Chairman of the Burlington County Republican Committee*

Layton was instrumental in putting together the deal with Gilmore to back MacArthur in CD3 and shut down the GOP Primary challenge of Steve Lonegan. Faced with a better-financed Democratic Party challenge to GOP power this year, the veteran Layton mobilized strong alliances and battled back with two convincing wins to ensure the concentration of county freeholder power in Republican hands.

63. **The Grahams** *Insurance Providers*

Father and son team John and Ryan Graham are both political animals who this year successfully backed the mayoral election of Tony Vauss in Irvington. Close to Fulop and Speaker Vincent Prieto.



64. **Idida Rodriguez** *Political Operative*

The campaign manager for Jose “Joey” Torres’ winning Paterson mayoral campaign, the unflappable Rodriguez has some other powerful friends, namely her partners at 1868: Gilmore and Jones.



60. **Steve Ayscue** *Democratic Political Operative*

Having helped U.S. Rep. Donald Norcross (D-1)-rack up strong numbers in the general election, watch for the veteran Ayscue to play an important part in positioning Assemblyman Vince Mazzeo and Assemblyman Robert Andrzejczak for 2015 re-election runs in the battleground 2nd and 1st districts respectively.



61. **Adam Kaufman/ Patricia Zita** *Lobbyists*

Schooled by Assembly Speaker Joe Doria, Kaufman and Zita have carved out one of the most successful lobbying firms in the state. The presence on the team of former

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69.

Chris Russell

Political Operative

Never far from the action in any campaign cycle, the veteran GOP power player was instrumental in Tom MacArthur's CD3 win over Aimee Belgard. He was also an impact player for successful Republican candidates in Burlington, Monmouth, Somerset and Salem counties. A meticulous detective whose opposition research often has the heft of an advanced degree thesis paper (you almost find yourself looking for footnotes), Russell is the ultimate old-school Republican operative.



65.

Bill Pascrell III

Attorney and Lobbyist

The Princeton

Public Affairs lobbyist has played a key frontline role in the development of internet gaming. He also obviously has close ties to one of the most respected elected officials in the state: his father, U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-9), Jr.

67.

James Gee

Political Operative

The veteran Democratic operative with roots going back

to the McGreevey era had a very good year, with wins in the Trenton mayor's race and the CD12 race (Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman).



66.

Mike Muller

Executive Director at the NJ Democratic Assembly Campaign Committee

Muller will get back in the battlezone next year as South Jersey looks to hold onto seats in LD1 and 2. Look for battleground Muller engaged – as always – also in LD14, 18 and 38.

68.

Milly Silva

Executive Vice President, SEIU 1199

Since running unsuccessfully for lieutenant governor in 2013 on the Buono ticket, Silva has played a strong street role as a leader of the labor outfit that this year took on for-profit care centers.





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70. **Kevin McCabe**
*Chairman of the
Middlesex County
Democratic Party*
Schooled by John
Lynch and James McGreevey, McCabe will
continue to play a key leadership role in the
rebirth of Middlesex in the lead up to the
2017 gubernatorial elections.

71. **Alan Zegas/
Michael Critchley**
Attorneys
Respectively
representing
Bridgegate-embattled former Port
Authority of New York and New Jersey
operative David Wildstein and former
Deputy Chief of Staff Bridget Kelly, Zegas
and Critchley both have reps as first-rate
defense layers.

72.

Phil Murphy
*Former U.S.
Ambassador to
Germany, Founder
of New Start New*

Jersey

The 2017 gubernatorial prospect is getting
around the state and distributing money
to Democratic candidates. He routinely
attends events in all the key Democratic
Party building-block counties with the
exception of Hudson – home to his rival
Steve Fulop.



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73. **Augie Torres** *Jersey Journal* columnist Hudson County's "Political Insider"

pens bi-weekly pieces that are equal parts Groucho Marx, Don Rickles, Damon Runyan and Herodotus. The frontline observer and chronicler of Fulop has turned into the honorary, unspoken uber-boss of the "HCDeadO."

75. **Harold Hodes/Bill Maer** *Lobbyists* The Public

Strategies Impact team has good Democratic Party contacts, especially in Essex, Bergen and Passaic counties.



74. **Ed Deutsch** *Attorney* In command of one of the largest law firms in the state, the

Morris County lawyer and chairman of the Board of Directors of Somerset Hills Bank, Deutsch chaired Christie's Department of Banking and Insurance transition subcommittee.

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76.

Ann Twomey
President, Health Professionals and Allied Employees
One word:

pioneer. The founder of HPAE almost 40 years ago at Englewood Hospital never changed her original focus of advocating for nurses and healthcare workers. Peers of Twomey's uniformly praise the labor leader for her principled leadership and rootedness in a lifelong cause.

helped get James Tedesco elected county executive in the surprise outcome of the year. The no-nonsense Akbar was a big part of the success story – a solid win for the regenerative Pascrell.

79.

Mark Sheridan
Attorney
The GOP operative

continues to play an instrumental role on the legal end of party politics as counsel for the Bridgegate-embroiled Republican State Committee.



78.

Assad Akhter
Deputy Chief of Staff, U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell (D-9)

Pascrell got beat up in Paterson this year, that's true. But the operation stretched and strengthened its tentacles into South Bergen, and


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Harry Hurley,
Founder & Chairman





80.

Mike Soliman
Managing Director, Mercury

Menendez's silky smooth former state director was a crucial behind-the-scenes player in turning the Bayonne Mayor's election in Jimmy Davis' favor.

82.

Tai Cooper
Policy Director for Newark Mayor Ras Baraka.
Schooled in

the office of the late U.S. Sen. Frank Lautenberg, the veteran operative proved her considerable communications abilities on the campaign trail as the "never let them see you sweat" spokeswoman of the winning Baraka Campaign.



81.

Nick Menas
Attorney, Fox Rothschild

The Republican has close ties to Christie, powerful Atlantic County Executive Dennis Levinson, Christie confidant Sen. Joe Kyrillos, and the BurlCo GOP, and has emerged as a strong party fundraiser from South Jersey.



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Kudos to our friend, client, and newest member of the New Jersey Republican delegation, Congressman-Elect Tom MacArthur.

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Vice-Chair Lizette Delgado Polanco
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Congressman Frank Pallone
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Congressman Donald Payne
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Bergen County Executive Elect James Tedesco
Essex County Executive: Joseph DiVincenzo, Jr.

Union County Sheriff Elect Joseph Cryan
Cumberland County Sheriff Robert Austino
Mercer County Sheriff Jack Kemler

Cumberland County Clerk Elect Celeste Riley
Camden County Clerk Joseph Ripa

Hudson County Surrogate: Joseph Ryglicki
Union County Surrogate James L Corte
Essex County Register Elect Dana Rone

Bergen County Freeholders: David Ganz and Joan Voss

Camden County Freeholders: Louis Cappelli, Jr. and Scott McCray

Cumberland County Freeholder: Carol Musso

Essex County Freeholders: At-Large Brendan Gill, Rufus Johnson, Lebby Jones, Patricia Sebold District 1-Rolando Bobadilla, District 2-Wayne Richardson, District 3-Britnee Timberlake, District 4-Leonard Luciano, District 5-Cynthia Toro

Gloucester County Freeholders: Lyman Barnes, Heather Simmons, Adam Taliaferro

Hudson County Freeholders District 1-Kenneth Kopacz, District 2-William O'Dea, District 3-Gerard Balmir, District 4-E. Junior Maldonado, District 5-Anthony Romano, District 6-Tilo Rivas, District 7-Caridad Rodriguez, District 8-Anthony Vainieri, Jr, District 9-Albert Cifelli

Mercer County Freeholders: John Cimino and Lucille Walter

Middlesex County Freeholders: Carol Barrett and Charles Tomaro

Passaic County Freeholders: Theodore "TJ" Best, Jr. and Bruce James

Union County Freeholders: Angel Estrada, Christopher Hudak, and Vernell Wright

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83. **Jeannine Frisby LaRue** *Government Affairs Specialist, Kaufmann Zita*

Like her friend James Gee, the well-connected LaRue of Mercer County had back-to-back wins in the CD12 Democratic Primary (Bonnie Watson Coleman) and the Trenton Mayor's Race (Eric Jackson).

85. **Keith Furlong** *Political Operative* The Passaic County-schooled Furlong is State

Democratic Chairman John Currie's most trusted political adviser.



HONORARY MENTION

Eddie the Pig

Political Operative

Eddie's PR team pushed aggressively (Danny DeVito almost made that phone call, we are told) - and he almost made the list. Although he has his detractors, Eddie continues to play a robust role ahead of the 2016 prez race, as Democrats prod an Iowa-dazzled Christie to defy the pork lobby and sign an anti pig-confinement bill.



84. **Chris Paladino** *President of New Brunswick Development Corp.*

He has played a major role in transforming the city in the last 15 years. This September he had the governor, the mayor and the president of Rutgers all at a transformational groundbreaking. And he's now lending some expertise to help Atlantic City given his experience at rough transitions.

Jamestown Associates is proud to congratulate the next Governor of Massachusetts, **Charlie Baker**, on his victory in Tuesday's election.

We're proud to have worked with another group of good campaigns and strong candidates who will bring good government in 2015 with our new Republican majority.

Congratulations to the leader of the Republican Governors Association, New Jersey Governor **Chris Christie**, on his successful record of electing so many outstanding gubernatorial candidates.

Jamestown congratulates all our clients who achieved victory on Tuesday.

Governor-elect Charlie Baker

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Rep. Tim Walberg MI-7
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Rep. Richard Hanna NY-22
Rep. Mark Sanford SC-1
Rep. Sam Johnson TX-3
Rep. Roger Williams TX-25
Brian Babbin TX-36
Dan Newhouse WA-4
Jody Hice GA-10
Barry Loudermilk GA-11

George P. Bush - Texas Land Commissioner

Joni Ernst - IE
Thom Tillis - IE
Cory Gardner - IE
Tom Cotton - IE
Bill Cassidy - IE
Ben Sasse - IE
Scott Walker - IE
Pete Ricketts - IE
John Katko - IE

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Rep. Mark Johnson R-OR
Rep. Mike La Rosa R-FL
Rep. Kenneth Sheets R-TX
Brooks Landgraf R-TX
Will Metcalf R-TX
Terri Bryant R-IL
Christine Winger R-IL
Alabama Federation for Children
Vote No on Amendment 2 - FL

Joseph H. Vicari - Ocean County Board of Freeholders

Mayor Tim Donohue - Middle Township

Councilman Tom Conrad,
Councilman Erik Simonsen,
Dave Perry - Lower Township

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86. **Lizette Delgado-Polanco** *Vice President of the AFL-CIO/*

Vice chair of the State Democratic Party
The executive director of the Service Employees International Union New Jersey State Council now has a sturdy leg in both labor and party politics.

87. **Michael Murphy and James Inglesino** *Impact New Jersey*

A former gubernatorial candidate, Murphy is the son of a governor, brother of powerful Mercer County Executive Brian Hughes and one of the most insightful people in Trenton about New Jersey politics. An attorney in private practice and former

Morris County GOP freeholder, Inglesino puts Impact NJ in close contact with Gov. Christie, one of Inglesino's best friends.

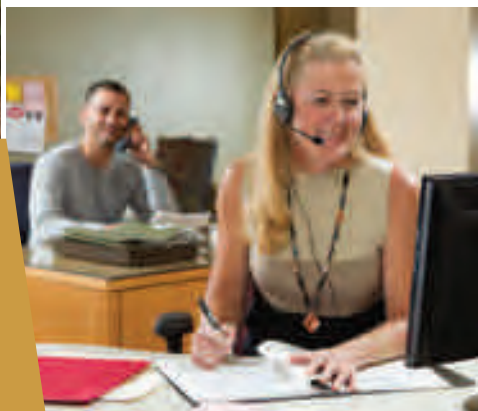
88. **Steven Goldstein** *Founder and Former Director of Garden State Equality*

On the one-year anniversary of same-sex marriage in New Jersey, Goldstein is New Jersey's activist emeritus.



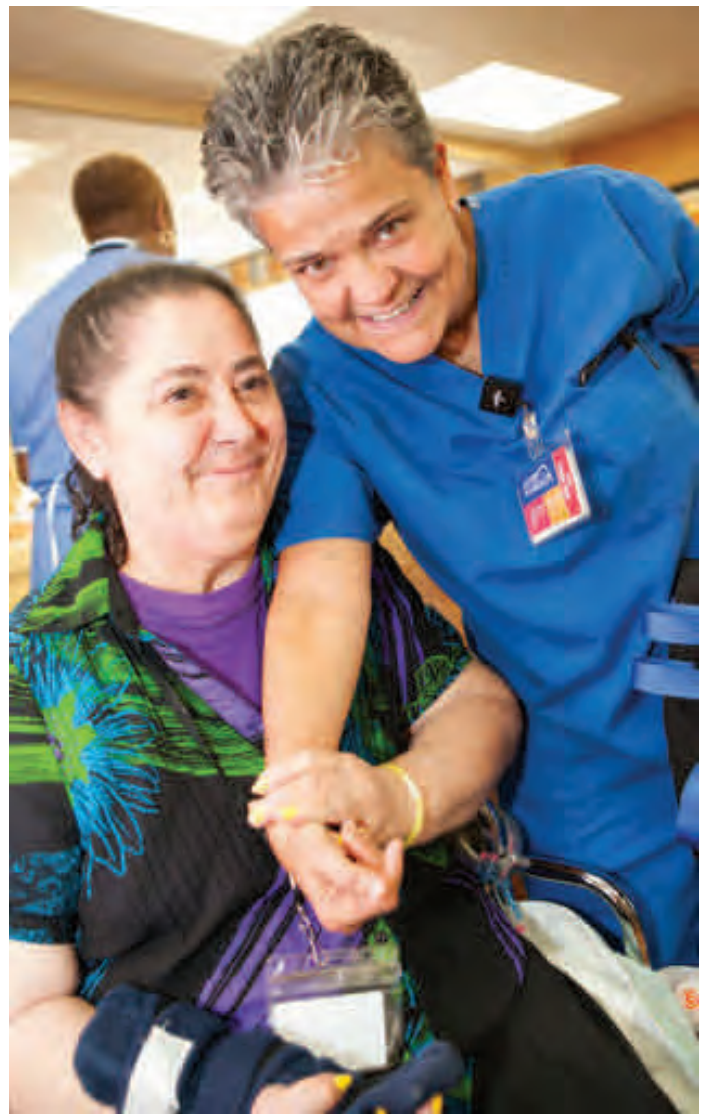
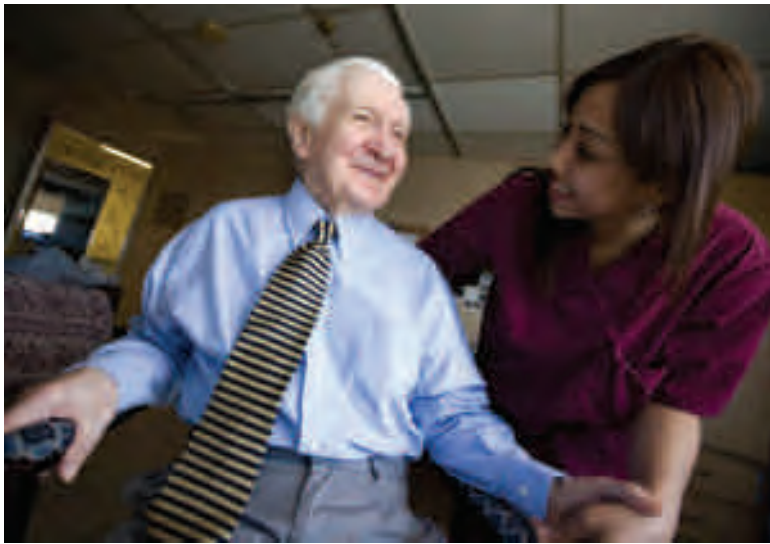
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Executive Vice President



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89.

Harry Hurley
*Radio Host, Hurley
in the Morning*

The always energized Hurley routinely supplements his morning programming with breaking political news.

91.

Liz Muoio
*Mercer County
Democratic Chair*
The winning party chair in this year's

CD12 duel between Mercer's Assemblywoman Bonnie Watson Coleman (D-15) and Middlesex's state Sen. Linda Greenstein (D-14), Muoio may be making her first and last appearance on this list. If Mercer and Trenton can resolve a political logjam, the chair will likely succeed Watson Coleman in the Assembly when the veteran legislator vacates her seat in LD15.



90.

Jerry Speziale
*Paterson Police
Director*

Torres shook up the Passaic County political establishment when he appointed Bruce Springsteen with a badge – a former county sheriff back from Alabama and with the wounds still not healed from his fight with the Passaic Democratic Party – to lead the embattled northern post-industrial city's police department.



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92.

Sean Darcy
Principal, Round World Consulting
The veteran political operative

and media consultant showed how the job is done with the June Democratic Primary victory in CD12 by U.S. Rep.-elect Bonnie Watson Coleman.

94.

Jeff Brindle
ELEC Director
No other person has articulated the Brave New World

of independent expenditure PAC spending – and used his government role in more activist fashion – than this campaigns and elections finance expert.



93.

David Cruz
NJTV Reporter
The master builder of sources and veteran New

Jersey newsman with deep Hudson roots was a major get for NJTV. His news reports are the TV equivalent of Chopin's sonatas.

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95.

Rahaman Muhammad
*Political
Confidant of
Newark Mayor*

Baraka

The former SEIU leader and political activist now occupies Baraka's inner circle as one of the most powerful City Hall players in Newark politics.



96.

David Tepper
*Founder,
Appaloosa
Management*

The hedge fund billionaire from Livingston with a passion for school reform got gonged in several elections this year, notably in Newark, where he backed

loser Shavar Jeffries against former teammate Jersey City Mayor Steven Fulop, a Ras Baraka ally, but he's still in the mix and capable of making an impact.

97.

**Bruno Tedeschi/
Jonathan Jaffe**
Political Operatives

The message-makers from North Jersey have close ties to the North Ward. Former Star-Ledger editor Bruno Tedeschi in particular has close quarters contact with powerful Newark North Ward Councilman Anibal Ramos.



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98.

Jennifer Holdsworth
*Democratic State
Political Director*
A protégé

of former Bergen County Freeholder Bernadette McPherson, the classy Holdsworth ran the coordinated campaign for Democrats, which helped Booker garner a 14-point Election Day victory this year.

the Hudson River and still in limbo land as the U.S. Attorney sifts through the details of Bridgegate. But Samson's still on the list by virtue of his CEO status at one of the state's most powerful law firms. Also, like Wildstein, Kelley and others, whatever he coughs up to Fishman could skyrocket him up to the top of the list by virtue of damage he does to the current power structure.



99.

David Samson
*Former Chairman
of the Port
Authority of New*

York and New Jersey

The disgraced ex Port chief took a major tumble down to the bottom of this list, mangled by headlines exposing all manner of malfeasance at the patronage trough on

100.

Alfred Koeppe
*President
and CEO
of Newark*

Alliance and former head of PSE&G

He served as a member of the transition teams of both Gov. Chris Christie and Newark Mayor Ras Baraka. Now that's power.



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*Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr.,
Essex County Executive*

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for Essex County Executive, Inc.*



101. The George Washington Bridge

Throughout the ebbs and flows of the biggest political news story of the year, the bridge itself took on a mournful human quality – and cried out for the likes of somebody like Hart Crane to give voice to its symbolic power – or at least Uncle Floyd. This much is true. If Floyd's 2009 bid for governor had succeeded, there would have been no Bridgegate. In 2009, the write-in candidate wanted to pave over the Hudson River as a solution to the stalled ARC tunnel development and New York-New Jersey traffic jams. "Make it a straight shot for everyone," the entertainer from Paterson told PolitickerNJ. Oh, what might have been...



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The Trembling Pillars of Power

It seems unfortunate to mar the crass impurity of New Jersey with a reference to Soren Kierkegaard of all people. Yet it was that Danish master who coined the term “Concluding Unscientific Postscript,” a useful phrase as we try to put an exclamation point on this always controversial post-Election Day power screed.

First a word about Chris Christie, whose very presence in New Jersey makes him synonymous with power. There’s a subtle point there, namely the fact that Christie’s out-of-state adventures as chairman of the Republican Governors Association (RGA) and national candidate in advance of the 2016 presidential election keep him increasingly on the other side of the state line.

Christie’s deft handling of power means he can always count on sticking a boardwalk landing after a week’s absence, slap someone silly – usually a reporter if a teacher isn’t handy, or some other such social homunculus by Christie’s standards – and then head for the nearest airport and again another week’s evacuation from the sordid swamps of his home state.

But the polls began dragging on Christie in the closing weeks of campaign season, the hard luck narratives of the George Washington Bridge scandal, the downgrading of the state’s credit ratings, and the quickening presumption that he’s spending more time trying to figure out how to navigate Iowa pig crates than the Garden State Parkway, began loosening the governor’s Robocop grip on power here.

Some of that began happening last year, accelerated in 2014 by everything already mentioned in addition to that national trend-bucking GOP loss earlier this month by incumbent County Executive Kathe Donovan in Bergen County.

It looks a little like this...

Democrats get busted up nationally and Christie’s well positioned as RGA chairman (Teddy Roosevelt comparison coming up) to stand like the deerskin-clad hunter complete with blunderbuss over that humiliating political carcass named Barack Obama, even as New Jersey’s biggest battleground county gets...

...swallowed up by Lou Stellato and the Democrats.

Christie doesn’t care. He’s already moved on. Bergen’s an afterthought.

Appropriately, it was Lieutenant Governor Kim Guadagno left to gape in bewilderment over Donovan’s demise.

But that image of Guadagno squeezed in between U.S. Rep.-elect Tom MacArthur and powerful Ocean County GOP Chairman George Gilmore told the story of Christie’s political power in his home state.

Never afraid of power, Christie no longer has that agile grasp on the state because his vision now lingers elsewhere.

So you can see on the list an accompanying slip among his confidants. They’re still there. Just a little lower.

When a Republican governor has to enlist the aid of Democrat Jamie Fox to fix the state’s insolvent Transportation

Trust Fund (TTF), that’s an exceedingly artful way of admitting that the bench has gone bone dry.

That Bergen Executive’s race, incidentally, caused another no less profound reverberation through the corridors of state power, duly noted on the list, made manifest in ways probably only visible to insiders: namely the strengthening of northern party power.

Outnumbered, the South Jersey machine manned by George Norcross III maintains its statewide leverage by building superior organization. While Essex County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo and state Senator Dick Codey (D-27) clash in a barbaric backroom war of political egos, GN3 runs a party organization that has more in common with SWAT than what passes for canvassing in Kentucky.

But even as that organization on November 4th celebrated what on its face looked like the apex of its political history with the election of GN3’s brother, Donald, to the United States Congress in CD1, Stellato’s win and concentration of power in the state’s most complex county complicated future designs for Southern statewide dominance.

The lockstep South thrives according to the missteps of a thousand wriggling Northern egos each with their own agendas, each with an ill-considered pathway.

Stellato concentrated power on his terms. This was not, for example, the Shavar Jeffries for Newark mayor campaign, heavily funded by PACs with South Jersey tentacles. This was Stellato – aided, yes, by a broad spectrum of outside entities and players, Steve Sweeney of South Jersey and some labor left among them – ultimately taking control of a campaign that no one outside his own inner circle believed had anything other than a puncher’s chance.

That victory belongs to James Tedesco, the candidate, and to Lou Stellato, the chairman who masterminded his win – and to North Jersey, fashioned amid the ongoing game – sometimes tug-of-war, sometimes footsy, sometimes spin-the-bottle, sometimes chess and never ballet – with South Jersey.

Norcross still has an organizational edge.

But the sheer numbers that some combination of Bergen, Hudson and Passaic represent could play havoc the next time the boss tries to get out of South Jersey.

We could be wrong. It’s early yet, and we haven’t yet discussed Middlesex, Union and Essex.

Maybe Stellato will become merely one more player subdued by the South Jersey vortex.

One can never see the totality of controlling connective tissue until a person acts, even against his own best regional interest, for the sake of some larger perceived power.

It’s difficult to read completely, of course, when politics, in the words of that inimitable Old Gringo, Ambrose Bierce, consists of “a strife of interests masquerading as a contest of principles. The conduct of public affairs for private advantage.”

But that’s what we see right this instant in the aftermath of Election Day.



Ten Tales of Power



Thomas Kean Sr.

ARTHUR PAXTON

New Jersey and power, imperfect together. No one has better demonstrated this tortured Taming of the Shrew tale than the state's enduring leading man, Gov. Chris Christie.

When a heckler upended by Hurricane Sandy went to a Christie press conference to exercise his first amendment right to free speech, the governor – perhaps tired from a lot of out-of-state travel – yelled angrily, “Sit down and shut up!”

An entrenched figure backed up by title and the state police unleashing on a nameless constituent.

It was a perfect snapshot of our great state's very own definition of the wise and deliberate exercise of power.

Here are ten more instances of power and how to use it, New Jersey style!

10 *Christie's takeover of Atlantic City*
Thank God the State's in Town! When Gov. Chris Christie – breathlessly back in New Jersey after gallivanting around the country - announced the state's takeover of Atlantic City to a roomful of insiders at the second Atlantic City summit, a chorus of true believers, convinced of the eminently sagacious and judicious rule of the State of New Jersey and the “adult-in-the-room” presence of the governor – issued a loud and hearty chorus of “Amen!”

9 *"I was reading Rousseau and reflecting on the philosophical underpinnings of the French Revolution," I swear.*

Just as Tip O'Neill said - it's all about remaining local, with one's feet firmly planted on the ground. So Ray Lesniak, the veteran senator from the 20th District, celebrated the victory of his local school board ticket with a champagne toast to the victors... from Paris, France. Asked if he hadn't gone a little too far with the Marie Antoinette motif, Lesniak said emphatically, "No. We took out the most corrupt political organization that has certainly existed in my time. There are teachers and employees who are afraid to do anything other than what [veteran Board of Education leader Rafael] Fajardo tells them to do. This was a fine moment to straighten out that corruption. I was in Paris because I was receiving an award from the New Jersey State Bar Association, and anyway they have everything under control there, they don't want me around." Well, at least it wasn't on the golf course in Paris!

8 *Bogota Mayor Tito Trinidad... er... Jackson*

The 49-year old Bernard Hopkins made history earlier this month when he jumped into an Atlantic City boxing ring with a man 20 years his junior. That's nothing. On the day of the Democratic Primary earlier this year, Mayor Jackson had to fend off an opponent who had 30 years on him. A judge convicted that man of simple assault. The message? Don't mess with Tito - unless your name is Councilman Christopher Kelemen, who beat the mayor - by 26 votes - on Election Day.

7 *Two-hundred and Twenty-Six Years a Knave*

Stomped on and scorned nationally because of Bridgegate, barrel tapped at both ends moviegoers prayed that a movie about New Jersey corruption could at least somewhat soothe the humiliation caused by real corruption. But it was not to be, as 12 Years a Slave outdueled the Camden-centric American Hustle as the year's best picture. Adding insult to injury, even Camden Mayor Dana Redd said she was not inclined to see Hustle.

6 *"Time for some traffic problems in Fort Lee"*

Ah, those officious-looking people with their BlackBerrys and fast-striding power walks and no time for anyone but the power at the top of the food chain. It's a trip, until you're the one under the bus. This remains the unsolved power mystery of the decade, as the world tries to ascertain whether Christie Deputy Chief of Staff Bridget Anne Kelly's ominous order to Port Authority of New York and New Jersey operative David Wildstein was the consequence of her own power surge - or orders from



JEFFREY GREENBERG/UG VIA GETTY IMAGES

Paterson.

on high. We may never know the answer to that question. But we do know one thing. Whatever it was, it was done in the best interest of the people of New Jersey.

5 *It's called a reversal*

Shavar Jeffries was the good guy, Ras Baraka the bad guy. That was what the establishment wanted the world to believe. You could feel it escalating. It was a street campaign see-sawing back and forth and the results kept uglier and uglier. Then it happened. Someone torched

the campaign bus of the Ras Baraka Campaign. When cops nabbed the culprit, Baraka named him as a cohort of Carl Sharif, the chief political strategist of rival mayoral candidate Shavar Jeffries. What apparently started as a desperate tough guy act to equalize the war on the street had turned into a tomahawk – right in the back of the Jeffries campaign.

4 *Hopatcong Loch Ness Bust*
Here's a tip. If you feel you need a power mascot, you're probably not powerful. North Jersey's preposterous attempt to mimic the South Jersey Pinelands with its own boogiemer and get in the heads of the rest of the state went terribly, laughably wrong when campfire horror stories of a green anaconda never materialized in reality – and even prompted locals to take running dives off the Lake Hopatcong docks in gleeful defiance of what turned out to be a Matawan 1916 bust.

3 *The Power Stare*
Vladimir Putin scared the world this year when Russia invaded Ukraine and the GOP jeered at Wimp-in-Chief Barack Obama. President George W. Bush

once said he looked into Putin's soul and saw a nice guy, a recounted encounter that U.S. Rep. Bill Pascrell only too happily dredged up when Chris Christie said he'd know how to handle Putin, unlike Bush... er... Obama.

2 *Mercer is on the Move!*
After Mercer County defeated Middlesex County in the congressional primary of the year, the little county that could immediately stepped up – and went to war with itself. In a small-bore duplication of that tug of war between Newark and Essex County, Trenton and the county at-large threatened to implode over the replacement for U.S. Rep.-elect Bonnie Watson Coleman and give an edge to defeated – but still unified – Middlesex.

1 *The Ultimate Power Outage*
In Paterson, Rigo Rodriguez grew tired of seeing his name in print accompanied by the tag line “indicted elected official.” A judge went busily to work on that headache when he issued a ruling in the Rodriguez ballot fraud case. The judge kept the word “indicted” but decided to ban Rodriguez from ever again being an elected official. Problem solved!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE 2014 POWER LIST

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