

Once again, we have enjoyed a major success at the polls and, in fact, our Freeholder candidates set a new, modern day record. Freeholders James Polos and John Pulomena won, on average, 64.4% of the vote. This beat the record we set last year when our county candidates won 61.4% of the vote, an improvement of 3%. We also won in every one of our 25 communities.

I express sincere thanks to Freeholder Director David Crabiel, who once again, served as Campaign Manager for his colleagues and I also thank John Lecky who served as David's assistant.

The Election Day results included several particularly significant events. We elected or re-elected seven Democratic Mayors, including John McCormac of Woodbridge, James Cahill of New Brunswick, Frank Gambatese of South Brunswick, John O'Leary of South Amboy, Charles Butrico of South Plainfield, Dan Reiman of Carteret and Gerald D'Angelo of Middlesex Borough.

We also won in most other local government races include our one vote victory for a council seat in South River.

All told, it was a very successful campaign that included a double-digit win for U.S. Senator Bob Menendez.

Next year, we will have five county candidates on the ballot. The seats of Freeholders Pete Dalina, Chris Rafano and Blanquita Valenti will be on the ballot along with Surrogate



Chairman Joseph Spicuzzo

Kevin Hoagland. I also plan to seek re-election as Sheriff.

Several others played major roles in our political success this year. The list includes Senator Bob Smith, who stepped forward to lead our fundraising efforts while working with our Policy and Planning Committee.

And so, 2006 is drawing to a close. It has been an eventful year for Middlesex County Democrats, highlighted by another significant election where the people again endorsed Democratic party leadership.

I hope all of you have a very happy and safe Holiday season and I will continue to extend my sincere thanks for your support and your best wishes.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY DEMOCRAT

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# MIDDLESEX COUNTY DEMOCRAT

Winter 2006

## COUNTY VOTERS FAVOR DEMOCRATS

Another year, another festive Election Night at the Pines Manor for the Middlesex County Democratic Organization.

Supporters cheered as it became apparent that Freeholders H. James Polos and John Pulomena would coast to an easy victory. The two freeholders are set to begin their fourth term in January.

"It's been a great campaign," Polos said.

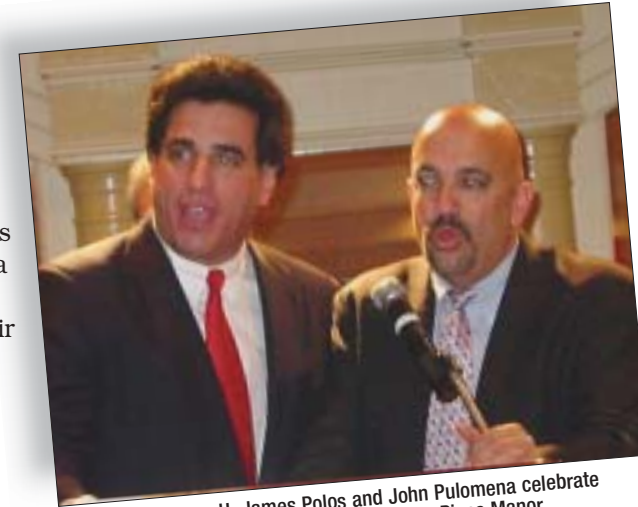
He said he was pleased with the endorsement of the Home News Tribune.

"We must be doing something right," said Polos.

When Pulomena addressed the audience, he said, "I am so glad to be a Democrat tonight."

He added, "It's a special night for me."

The "Dynamic Duo", as Freeholder Director David B. Crabiel dubbed them, ran an effective campaign based on their extensive list of accomplishments.



Freeholders H. James Polos and John Pulomena celebrate their re-election victories at the Pines Manor.

Polos received praise from the press for the creation of the Middlesex County Showroom of Environmental Technology (MCSET) program. The initiative promotes energy efficiency and green technology to benefit county buildings, municipal and school facilities.

He also was the driving force behind the Middlesex County on Patrol (MCOP) program and the creation of a task force to address school violence issues and develop a county response plan.

Pulomena spearheaded the effort to build a new Academy for Science, Mathematics and Engineering Technology on the campus of Middlesex County College.

Also, he began the Tech 2000 program, which ensured a computer would be placed in every classroom in Middlesex County. The program was recently expanded to deploy defibrillators in county schools.

As was the case in last year's county campaign, there were many methods employed to get the message out to voters.

The candidates had the benefit of a complete campaign that featured excellent direct mail, lawn signs, palm cards, several weeks of television commercials and the innovative use of the freeholder campaign website.

The site had sections which included the freeholders' biography and list of accomplishments, a local events calendar, news clips and volunteer opportunities.

It also allowed voters to listen to Polos and Pulomena on podcasts. Polos discussed the importance of shared services while

Pulomena explained the partnership between Middlesex County College and Raritan Bay Medical Center to establish a world-class nursing program.

"Middlesex County will continue to be on the leading edge and play a major role in providing health care resources for the health care industry," Pulomena said.

Polos said voters provided him with positive feedback about the website.

"The website and e-mail campaign was extremely effective," he said.



Freeholder H. James Polos spends some time with friends during the MCDO Pre-Election Breakfast Rally.



Freeholder John Pulomena and Assemblyman Patrick Diegnan take a moment for the camera at the MCDO Pre-Election Breakfast Rally.

## SUCCESS AT THE TOP OF THE TICKET SENATE, CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES WIN AT THE POLLS

It was a joyous evening for the “top of the ticket” United States Senate and Congressional candidates.

U.S. Senator Robert Menendez tallied a solid majority of votes in Middlesex County which paved the way to victory.

The major issue in the race was the war in Iraq. Menendez said his Senate win was “rooted in the simple idea that faith trumps fear.”

“Tonight we have chosen here in New Jersey to set our nation on a new and different course,” he said.

Following his victory, Menendez was tapped to join the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. He said after billions in “national treasure spent,” thousands of American troops wounded and over 2,800 lives lost, “it is now clear that we must transition



U.S. Senator Robert Menendez

our troops out of Iraq.”

“The American people spoke in a loud, unequivocal voice on America’s foreign policy and specifically on the war in Iraq—we urgently need a course correction,” Menendez said.

In the Congressional races, U.S. Rep. Frank Pallone and U.S. Rep. Rush Holt had no trouble winning re-election.

Pallone lauded the Middlesex County Democratic Organization for playing a key role in Sen. Menendez’s victory.

“This is the best organization in the state,” he said. “The results show that.”

In the 12th Congressional District, Holt defeated his Republican challenger by just under a 2-to-1 margin in Middlesex County.



U.S. Representative Frank Pallone

“It is a privilege to represent New Jersey’s 12th District in Congress, and I look forward to working on a bipartisan basis under a Democratic majority for a change in course,” Holt said. “This election was not only great for Democrats—it was great for anyone who values making America safer and more secure, restoring fiscal responsibility and helping our middle-class get ahead.”

Albio Sires became the newest New Jersey Congressman with a win in the 13th Congressional District.

Assemblywoman Linda Stender put up a valiant fight to unseat incumbent Michael Ferguson but came up short.

Stender, however, had a great showing in Middlesex County, topping Ferguson by nearly 5,000 votes in this region of the 7th Congressional District.



U.S. Representative Rush Holt

## DEMOCRATIC MAYORS WIN EASILY

Democrats were a perfect 7-for-7 in Middlesex County mayoral races as each won by comfortable margins.

John McCormac realized his boyhood dream as he was elected mayor of Woodbridge Township by a 2-to-1 margin.

On Election Night, he said the victory was a vote of confidence to continue the leadership of former Mayor Frank Pelzman and interim Mayors,

Senator Joe Vitale and Councilwoman Pat Osborne.

Elsewhere in Middlesex County, there were impressive mayoral victories in Carteret and New Brunswick. Mayor Dan Reiman defeated his opponent by over 3,000 votes to earn a second term while Mayor James Cahill collected a roughly 2,500 vote margin of victory to secure his fifth term in the Hub City.

South Brunswick Mayor Frank

Gambatese won by a nearly 2-to-1 margin to gain a second term. In South Amboy, Mayor John T. O’Leary captured a sixth term with a “resounding” victory. South Plainfield heralded in a new mayor as Charles Butrico earned the nod, succeeding Dan Gallagher, who did not seek re-election.

Middlesex Borough Mayor Gerald D’Angelo had the easiest path to victory as he ran unopposed.

## LOCAL DEMOCRATS SAVOR VICTORIES

For the most part, Democrats in local council and committee races fared as well as their national and county brethren.

The most exciting news for local Democrats came in Sayreville as the party gained total control of the Borough Council for the first time in 22 years.

Incumbent Stanley Drwal and his running mate, Kathy Makowski were brimming with joy following their victory.

“It is always good to be on a winning team,” said Drwal.

Makowski said, “I’m such a lucky gal. I’ve got a great team here.”

Total Democratic control of the council was also achieved in East Brunswick. Incumbents Catherine Diem and David Stahl were easily re-elected while newcomer Edward

Luster won by a close margin.

“We were delighted that we were successful in re-electing Catherine Diem and David Stahl and electing Ed Luster to his first term,” said East Brunswick chairman Shawn Taylor. “The election was a team effort by the mayor, candidates and Democratic committee. We look forward to continuing to work with Mayor Neary to move East Brunswick forward.”

In the area’s closest race, Anthony Razzano won a nail-biter in South River, besting his opponent by a mere one vote.

Piscataway Democrats rejoiced as they registered a clean sweep in their council race as Mark Hardenburg, Loretta Keimel, Steven Cahn and newcomer Michele Lombardi won their respective wards.

Chris Kilmurray picked up an

impressive win in South Brunswick while Raymond Petronko and Joseph Scudato were victorious in South Plainfield.

Easy council victories were registered in Carteret (Ronald Rios and Joseph Sitarz), Metuchen (Richard Dyas and Richard Weber), North Brunswick (Carlo Socio and Rhonda Lyles), New Brunswick (Joseph Egan and Blanquita Valenti), South Amboy (Joseph Connors and Fred Henry) and Cranbury (Thomas Panconi and Pari Stave).

Candidates in Highland Park (Gary Minkoff and Jeffrey Morris), Jamesburg (Joseph Jennings and Brian Grimes), Middlesex Borough (Robert Gorr and Michael Venuto) and Plainsboro (Ginger Gold Schnitzer and Neil Lewis) cruised to victories in uncontested races.

## DEMOCRATIC WOMEN’S CAUCUS FORMED GROUP FOCUSES ON INCREASING ROLE OF WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT

Recently, much has been written about the lack of women in government at all levels.

The numbers tell the story as no women serve in the state’s 15-member Congressional delegation. New Jersey ranks 31st nationally in the proportion of women serving in its legislature. Locally, there are only three women mayors in the county’s 25 municipalities.

Seeing these statistics, Middlesex County Democratic Vice-Chair Helen Gottlieb formed a group consisting of local Democratic women officials who would explore ways to increase the role of women in government.

In October, the Middlesex County Democratic Elected Women’s Caucus held its inaugural meeting. Gottlieb said the group established goals to seek, mentor and support qualified women to serve at various levels of government.

“The first meeting was exciting and very well received by the elected officials who attended,” she said. “We are committed to the women running



Members of the Middlesex County Democratic Elected Women’s Caucus met for its first meeting at MCDO headquarters earlier this fall.

on the Democratic line and to mentor them to victory.”

Gottlieb said some ways for women to begin their entry into the political arena include applying for a seat on their local Planning Board, Board of Adjustment, Board of Education as well as community committees.

Senator Barbara Buono said, “I believe that we are entering a new political era now that Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi is poised to become the first woman ever to hold the gavel as Speaker of the House of Representatives. The Democratic Women’s Caucus is an extension of

this movement which will endeavor to help more women run and win elected offices.”

Assemblywoman Linda Greenstein said she felt that along with helping women get elected, they also have to “feel part of the power structure in the party.”

At the meeting, the group endorsed Assemblywoman Linda Stender in her bid for the 7th Congressional District seat.

Although she lost the race, Stender gave her Republican incumbent opponent all he could handle.

“We are all so proud of her. Nobody could have done it better,” Greenstein said. “She came so close.”

There was good news in the local races as Kathy Makowski and Michele Lombardi earned their first council terms in Sayreville and Piscataway, respectively. Gottlieb said she was delighted with their victory and stated the Caucus will help them “in any way possible.”

She said the group’s next meeting will be held after the holidays.