

Now that spring is upon us, we are gearing up for an important election cycle.

I would like to thank all of you who attended the Middlesex County Democratic convention at the Pines Manor. I was impressed with the large turnout and it shows that our party is energized and ready for the campaign.

From top to bottom, I believe our Democratic ticket will fare very well in the fall. Whether it is Senator Hillary Clinton or Senator Barack Obama, a Democrat will once again become president and clean up the eight-year mess left by the Bush administration.

On the U.S. Senate and Congressional side, we have our incumbent representatives, U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg and Congressmen Frank Pallone, Rush Holt and Albio Sires seeking re-election. Also running for Congress this year in the 7th Congressional District is Assemblywoman Linda Stender. I know we will do well in all these races.

I wish Freeholder Director Dave Crabiel all the best as he seeks re-election this year. He truly has made Middlesex County, 'the greatest county in the land.' Also, a note of thanks to Freeholder Camille Fernicola for all she has done for Middlesex County, especially in the area of open space. It will be hard to see her leave the Freeholder Board at the end of year but her contributions will not be forgotten.

My best wishes also go out to John Pulomena. John was a valuable member of the Freeholder Board for nearly a decade, using his knowledge to help with the county budget,



Chairman Joseph Spicuzzo

improve our county college and Vo-Tech schools and champion various health initiatives. I wish him the best of luck in his endeavors.

I want to congratulate Ron Rios, who filled John Pulomena's Freeholder seat. Ron and Freeholder candidate Millie Scott will be a great complement to the Middlesex County ticket with Dave Crabiel as they have distinguished themselves in public service.

As I said at the county convention, I am very proud of our elected officials, chairs and vice-chairs and especially our committee men and women. Your dedication is what makes our party strong year in and year out.

There is plenty to do this year with the presidential race, along with congressional, county and local campaigns. Please urge your friends and neighbors to help volunteer in this very important election year.

Thank you for your continued support.

MIDDLESEX COUNTY DEMOCRAT

NEW FACES ON THE TICKET RIOS, SCOTT JOIN CRABIEL ON FREEHOLDER SLATE

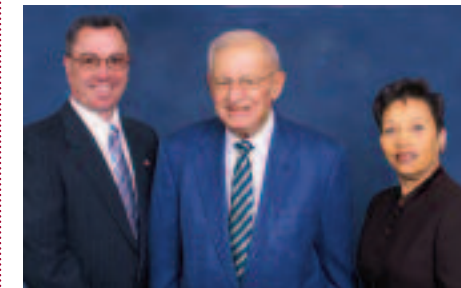
Even though they have been around government for some time in Carteret and Piscataway, respectively, Ron Rios and Millie Scott were the "new kids on the block" at the Middlesex County Democratic convention.

With Freeholder Camille Fernicola announcing that she would not run for re-election and Freeholder John Pulomena stepping down, open spots became available on the Freeholder Board.

Rios and Scott were unanimously endorsed by enthusiastic county Democratic committee members at the Pines Manor. Rios will fill the Freeholder vacancy and run for Pulomena's unexpired term while Scott will run for the three-year seat.

Rios and Scott will join Freeholder Director David Crabiel on the county ticket.

"I am humbled and honored that



The 2008 Middlesex County Candidates. Freeholder Ron Rios, Freeholder Director David Crabiel and Freeholder candidate Millie Scott.

you have placed your faith in me," said Rios.

Scott said she has been speaking with residents throughout the county.

"You have greeted me warmly and with open arms," she said.

Before and after he spoke, Crabiel was given a standing ovation by the crowd. He spoke of objectives that he hopes will be accomplished in the

coming term. This included the development of the 427-acre National Lead site in Sayreville, continued open space acquisition and property tax reduction.

The candidates were praised by state and local Democratic officials during the convention.

Monroe Mayor Richard Pucci said Crabiel exemplifies what it means to be a leader, through his knowledge of county government and someone who is truly committed to the Democratic Party.

Assemblyman John Wisniewski said Rios has a "forward looking vision of government" and county residents are "truly fortunate" to have him serve as Freeholder.

In his remarks, Piscataway Mayor Brian Wahler described Scott as a "quality individual."

"We are definitely reloading the Freeholder Board with Mille Scott and Ron Rios," he added.

PULOMENA, FERNICOLA BID ADIEU

John Pulomena and Camille Fernicola will make 2008 their last year on the county Freeholder Board.

Pulomena announced in early February that he was stepping down to seek the county Administrator position. A few weeks earlier, Fernicola said she would not be seeking re-election this year.

"It has been an honor and a privilege to serve the people of this great county," said Pulomena.

Fernicola said, "I have been so fortunate to work with so many fine public servants who give tirelessly of

their time."

During his tenure, Pulomena created the Tech 2000 program and spearheaded the effort to build a new Academy for Science, Mathematics and Engineering Technology on the campus of Middlesex County College.

Among her many accomplishments, Fernicola initiated the Middlesex County Open Space and Recreation Bicycle Pedestrian Grant Program in 2006 and played an integral role in the passage of the Open Space and Recreation Plan in 2003.



John Pulomena



Camille Fernicola

MIDDLESEX COUNTY DEMOCRAT

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RIOS ASSUMES FREEHOLDER SEAT

A few hours before he was to be sworn in as county Freeholder, Ron Rios was loose and upbeat.

"I am excited," he said. "I am ready to go."

The prospect of moving up to a county seat does not faze Rios at all. Rather, it will give him a different perspective, he said.

"I welcome the challenge of a different level of government," said Rios. "I think I will be able to come in and bring different ideas."

His career in public service began in 1981 when he was elected to the Carteret Borough Council, serving on the governing body until 1984. Rios started his second tenure on the council in January 2001, before stepping down in March to assume the freeholder seat.

Rios said he has always enjoyed being a representative, whether in government or as a union employee. He was employed with Conrail as a Carman

inspector for 30 years, while also serving as a consultant trainer for the AFL-CIO.

Being able to wear these two "hats" will be beneficial to him on the Freeholder Board, Rios said. He explained that as Councilman, he negotiated collective bargaining with local unions and public employees.

"You have to be fair to employees and taxpayers as well," he said.



Freeholder Ron Rios

Over the past several weeks, Rios has been on the campaign trail. He said he has traveled to towns across the county. Residents have discussed their concerns and the problems they face, he said.

"They have been very honest," said Rios.

One common theme that he has found is the respect residents have for the Freeholder Board and the response they have to the needs of the community. That includes open space acquisition and the county paving program.

He has also met with Democratic officials, chairs and committee members. In his discussions with elected officials, Rios said their main concern is budgetary.

"How do you provide the services with less money?" he asked rhetorically. "We have to tighten our belts and understand we have less money to work with."

SCOTT BEGINS RUN FOR FREEHOLDER

Campaigning door-to-door is nothing new for Millie Scott.

As a Piscataway councilwoman, she has interacted with many residents during her election and re-election runs.

"When you go door-to-door, you get to know (the voters) on a one on one basis," she said.

Scott has seen a fair amount of Middlesex County as her county Freeholder campaign has begun in earnest. From her perspective, residents have been "very warm and supportive."

Residents have discussed with her their concerns about traffic, including in Metuchen where the topic of a ramp for Route 287 to divert vehicles around the borough was brought to her attention.

Scott has also seen old acquaintances on her visits. She spoke with a Carteret committeeman who knew her father and a Jamesburg councilwoman who taught Scott's daughter at Holy Trinity School.

Scott's career in public service dates

back to 1968 when she became an officer in the Middlesex County Sheriff's Department. She moved up through the ranks, earning the Chief Sheriff's officer position in 1991. Scott retired in 1995 after 27 years of service.

Scott said her law enforcement background and knowledge of Homeland Security matters will be an asset to the Freeholder Board.

Scott's involvement in her local community included being a recreation softball coach and Girl Scout leader. She added to that in 1996 as she became a Piscataway councilwoman.

During her tenure, improvements were made to the police communication center and area parks were upgraded. Scott said she brings her grandchildren to the parks in the spring and summer and notices plenty of activity.

"I see a lot of parents taking advantage of the park system," she said.

After Freeholder Camille Fericola announced she would not seek re-election,

Scott said she took time to think about running for the seat. The decision became clearer as she thought about her experience in public service.

As she reflected on what it would mean to be a Freeholder, she said she would be "going home" to Middlesex County, a chance to help its residents one more time.



Freeholder candidate Millie Scott

SENATE, CONGRESSIONAL CANDIDATES ENDORSED

Candidates for U.S. Senate and Congress were endorsed at the Middlesex County Democratic Convention at the Pines Manor.

County committee members unanimously backed U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg, Congressmen Frank Pallone, Rush Holt and Albio Sires and Congressional candidate Linda Stender.

"I want to thank the committee members in Middlesex County for your endorsement and look forward to continuing to serve you in the U.S. Senate," said Lautenberg.

Pallone said, "I am grateful to the Middlesex County Democratic Organization and Chairman Joe Spicuzzo for their endorsement as I run for my 11th term in the U.S. House of Representatives."

He added that he is honored to run on the organization line with Senator Lautenberg, Freeholder Director David Crabiel and Freeholder Ron Rios and Freeholder candidate Millie Scott.

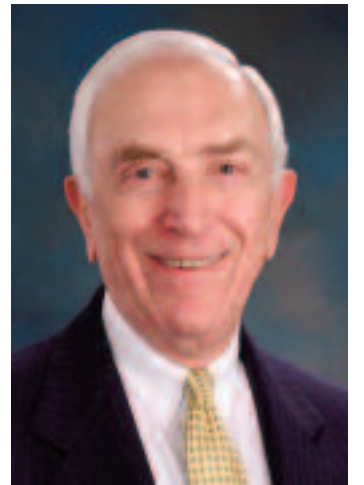
Holt said, "The endorsement by the Middlesex County Democrats launches my campaign to continue to represent the people of the county and the entire 12th Congressional District for my sixth term in Congress."

Sires said he was thankful for the county Democratic endorsement.

"I have been heartened by the support of my Middlesex County constituents in the 13th District during the past two years," he said.

Stender, who was narrowly defeated for the 7th Congressional district in 2006, said, "We are going to do it this time."

Assemblyman Patrick Diegnan said there has never been a more dramatic distinction between the Democratic and Republican agendas in Congress. The congressional delegation of Pallone, Holt and Sires have stood up and proclaimed, "bring our troops home and end this senseless war," he said.



U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg



Congressman Frank Pallone



Congressman Rush Holt



Congressman Albio Sires



Congressional Candidate Linda Stender

READY TO SERVE AGAIN FREEHOLDERS, SURROGATE AND SHERIFF SWORN IN, BEGIN NEW TERM



Freeholder Deputy Director Pete Dalina delivers his remarks at the county Reorganization meeting

With his right hand outstretched, Freeholder Pete Dalina recited the oath of office at the Middlesex County reorganization meeting.

The swearing-in process was then repeated four more times as Freeholders Chris Rafano, and Blanquita Valenti, Surrogate Kevin Hoagland and Sheriff Joseph Spicuzzo took their respective oaths.

The five Democratic county officials began another term which they earned by a comfortable margin in the November election.

"I am proud of our victory," said Spicuzzo. "We have accomplished so much for our county residents during our terms and I am heartened by the results which showed the voters have confidence in us."

Freeholder Director David B. Crabiel, who served as campaign manager for the county candidates, said the election "again confirmed the public preference for the Democratic Party and for the competence of the candidates we offer."