

## **Cape May County Page**

### **PERFECT 10'S – Will the 2010's be the Decade of the Woman in Cape May County Politics?**

The second decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century is about to begin – the 10's. Each decade develops its own personality in pop culture, in fashion and in politics. The 00's were dominated by George W. Bush nationally and Jeff Van Drew locally. So what will the 10's bring us?

Well, it is shaping up to be the decade of the woman in Cape May County politics. Over the past several years women have established themselves as full partners in local politics. In Avalon, Dr. Nancy Hudanich has been a member of Council for years and has built a reputation for thoughtful management of the public trust. In Stone Harbor, Suzanne Walters is in her third term as Mayor and has developed contacts and influence throughout the state. Last year, Joanne Vaul joined her on the Stone Harbor governing body. Pam Kaithern is the Mayor of West Cape May. She came in and stabilized a local government that was gravitating toward dissolution. Joyce Gould has developed political gravity in Wildwood Crest, to the point where, as a Democrat, she ran on a ticket with her Republican commission-mates on a Unity platform. In North Wildwood, Kellyann Tolomeo serves with distinction. In Middle Township, Suzanne DeLanzo is approaching the end of her first term holding one-third of the political power in that important keystone community. Sue Sheppard in Ocean City is an influential member of the governing body, the Council President with a broad reach. She is joined by Karen Bergman on Ocean City's governing body. Mary Tighe is a member of the new government in Sea Isle City. In Cape May, Linda Steenrod and Terri Swain make up more than two-thirds of the governing body. In Cape May Point, Anita vanHeeswyk is an active and influential Borough commissioner.

And the ranks are about to grow. In January, Stone Harbor will add two new women to its governing body, Judy Davies-Dunhour and Joan Kramer. Both are independent thinkers who will move the governing body to a 4-3 female majority. In Upper Township, Kristine Gabor will be sworn in to a seat previously occupied by Barbara Camp. Kristine is young, smart and energetic with a bright political future in and beyond the influential Township of Upper.

The 10's will see this influence grow. In this next decade we will no doubt see women ascend to the Freeholder board and run for, and perhaps win, seats in the State Legislature. It is practically assured that if Chris Christie can win a second term in 2013, Kim Guadagno will be in the best position to run for the Republican nomination for Governor in 2017.

It appears that the "Good 'Ol Boy" network, if it ever existed, is already a thing of the past given the number of women who hold elective office in Cape May County. No doubt, the Perfect 10's will see this influence build and grow higher.

## *The New Jersey Page*



### **AFTER 73 YEARS, WILL THE GRAVY TRAIN REALLY BE DERAILED?**

For 73 years the New Jersey Chamber of Commerce has been running an annual train trip to Washington. It is a rolling lobby. And in any lobby, you find lobbyists. This trip has always been billed as the ultimate insider opportunity. On the train, lobbyists find the politicians whose influence they so desperately crave, trapped with nowhere to go. Mix in a little booze and filet mignon, and the opportunity to convince a legislator to vote for your bill grows exponentially.

Chris Christie has decried the gravy train excursion, saying through his campaign manager last January, "Former U.S. Attorney Chris Christie wants to bring real change to Trenton and that comes with ending politics as usual, which this trip has become a symbol of." Steve Lonegan went further, "I call it the tax-and-spend express" he said. And, then-Candidate Rick Merkt dug even deeper, saying, "I

realized what really an unsavory situation it creates. This is about special interests having special access to legislators."

Now, Chris Christie is the Governor-elect with great influence over not only his own people, but scores of elected and appointed officials who want to be on the right side of history. If Christie is successful in writing that history, the Schmooze-Cruise will be a thing of the past. And those who continue to answer the "All Aboard!" call of business-as-usual may find themselves on the blunt end of swinging public opinion.

## *National Page*



## **LIONS AND TIGERS AND TIGERS AND TIGERS AND TIGERS AND TIGERS.....OH MY!**

What is it that makes us, as a Nation, obsess over a celebrities failings. No one in American was paying any attention to the Whitewater investigation in the 1990's, until Monica Lewinsky turned over the (not so) little blue dress to Ken Starr. That investigation had resulted in dozens of indictments, the ends of many political careers and led to the suicide of a major White House insider. But the country only started paying attention when it learned of Bill and Monica's special meetings in the Oval Office anterooms.

In the past couple of weeks, Barak Obama accepted his ill-awarded Nobel Peace Prize and gave a war speech. He also had a personal letter hand-delivered to the dictator of North Korea. The commanders in Afghanistan have predicted a surge in violence as 30,000 more troops prepare to deploy. The Iranians launched an upgraded missile capable of reaching all of Israel and parts of Europe, including many U.S. military bases.

But the news is Tiger Woods. With every woman Tiger ever looked at now claiming to be long-term lovers, the Tiger story is bigger than Monica. It is bigger than Michael Jackson. It is bigger than Elliot Spitzer. Why? Are we so obsessed with sexual indiscretion that everything else is just noise? Is it that we all bought into the myth that Tiger was different? That he was really a guy who just played golf (better than anyone else, ever) and went home to the wife and kids every night.

I don't think so. I think we are looking for something to get all the other things off our minds. We have been at war now for over eight years. We are living in the midst of the not-so-Great Depression. And its getting cold and gray outside. The Tiger story is escapism pure and simple. Like watching a soap opera and getting caught up in the nonreality of a place like Port Charles, the tiger story takes people away to a land of celebrity and sexual intrigue. Money everywhere. Sexting on cell phones. Desperate voice mails to trick the wife. Who has time for wars or jihadist missiles with all of this going on?

Sadly for Tiger, he was a fool. And it appears his foolishness is going to be revealed layer by devastating layer. But we may all be pegged for fools if the Tiger story is interrupted for breaking news of an Iranian missile attack on Tel Aviv or news of a major Taliban victory in Southeastern Afghanistan. We can only hope that we are moving toward a day when the Tiger story is REALLY the big news we want it to be.