

# ELEC-Tronic

AN ELECTION LAW ENFORCEMENT COMMISSION NEWSLETTER

"Furthering the Interests of an Informed Citizenry"

Election Law Enforcement Commission, P.O. Box 185, Trenton, NJ 08625  
[www.elec.state.nj.us](http://www.elec.state.nj.us) (609) 292-8700 - Toll Free Within NJ 1-888-313-ELEC (3532)

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## Comments from the Chairman Ronald DeFilippis

Another election has come and gone. So it's time to recap financial activity undertaken by legislative candidates, the "Big Six" committees, and county party committees during the recent general election and the past year.

During the campaign, the Commission published several analyses of campaign financial activity reported by State Senate and Assembly candidates, the two state party committees, the four legislative leadership committees, and the 42 county party organizations.

So here is what we found.

As reported earlier and published in various media throughout the State, financial activity was down in all three categories from that reported in 2007.

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Comparisons were made with four years ago because that was the last time that both the Senate and Assembly were up for election.

Legislative fund raising, as reported 11-days prior to the election, declined by 8 percent. Fundraising by the "Big Six committees dropped more dramatically by 26 percent and financial activity by county party organizations decreased by a startling 37 percent.

A number of factors have contributed to this decline in financial activity in recent years, foremost among them, the pay-to-play law which has restricted contractor giving.

Other factors include the economy, the growth of independent outside groups, and the exit of two wealthy candidates who contributed generously over the last decade.

Overall, fundraising by State Senate and Assembly candidates amounted to \$36.4 million at the 11-day filing. These same candidates spent \$24.8 million.

Democratic candidates raised \$26.2 million and spent \$19 million. Their Republican counterparts raised \$10.1 million and spent \$5.8 million.

What stood out in this election was the significant gap in financial activity between incumbents and challengers. Incumbents raised 78 percent of funds to 22 percent by challengers. Throughout the years that differential was always more like 60-40.

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## Comments from the Chairman Ronald DeFilippis

*Continued from page 1.*

The State's two major political parties raised \$6.9 million. The New Jersey Republican State Committee, following a pattern typical for the party that holds the governorship, raised \$3.2 million to the Democratic State Committee, which raised \$889,450.

The Democratic legislative leadership committees, on the other hand, outpaced the GOP, \$1.5 million raised to \$1.3 million.

All together the Republican big three raised \$4.5 million and the Democratic big three raised \$2.6 million.

These figures were taken from third quarter reports.

Finally, county political party organizations raised \$4.8 million, with the 21 Democratic Committees raising \$3.1 million to \$1.7 million raised by GOP county organizations.

Spending by the "Big Six" committees and the county organizations was also down. Through September 30, 2011, the "Big Six" spent \$5 million while the county party committees spent \$3.7 million.

Independent, outside groups, in a preliminary analysis, appears to have spent in excess of \$800,000 for legislative candidates. This type of activity is expected to grow as time goes by.

In the coming months, the Commission will continue to bring greater transparency to the process by providing up-to-date analyses of campaign financial activity in New Jersey.

Importantly, the public can obtain further information by accessing the Commission's website at [www.elec.state.nj.us](http://www.elec.state.nj.us) and keying into the Commission's website.

Detailed information involving candidates at all levels of government as well as various political party entities and PACs is available.

## Executive Director's Thoughts Jeff Brindle

Well, it's again the end of the year. By all accounts, 2011, which involved elections for State Senate and Assembly, as well as local races, not only turned out to be one of the busiest in memory but also one of the most successful.

Great credit must go to a staff that continually performs above and beyond expectations. Kudos must also go to the members of the Commission whose support has been invaluable.

Though not possible in this column to mention every staff member who has made significant contributions this year, it is important to note that no one's efforts have been overlooked.

In 2011, the Commission met with a number of challenges in the legal area. Aside from major complaints and final decisions undertaken, the Commission chose to intervene in the Morris County primary election case to defend its jurisdictional rights.

At every turn, Legal Director Carol Hoekje, and her staff—Gail Shanker, Michelle Levy, Amanda Haines, and Theresa Lelinski—handled these challenges effectively and professionally.

A debt of gratitude is owed to Shreve Marshall who took the reins first as Acting Director and then as Director of the Review and Investigation Section. Without missing a beat, he and his small staff of five investigators—Brett Mead, Christopher Gear, Matthew Krinsley, Christopher Mistichelli, and Lovinsky Joseph—did an awesome job in investigating many and varied complaints coming in from all corners of the State.

These complaints involved elections at all levels of government, lobbying, and pay-to-play.

For the first time in its history, the Commission, two years ago, introduced the local contributor data base. This initiative, which compliments the legislative and "Big Six" data bases, continues to be made possible through the efforts of Data Entry Supervisor Brenda Brickhouse, Assistant Supervisor Darlene Kozlowski, and the entire Data Entry support team.

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## Executive Director's Thoughts Jeff Brindle

*Continued from page 2.*

Despite limited resources, the Information Technology (IT) staff has continued to make progress in two vital IT areas. Beginning in February, electronic filing for lobbyist annual reports will be available. Moreover, as we move toward the gubernatorial election in 2013, candidates will be treated to a new, updated version of the gubernatorial electronic filing (GEFS) software.

Thanks to the efforts of IT Director Carol Neiman, Project Managers Anthony Giancarli, Aydan Altan, Ken Colandrea, and Brian Robbins, progress in the computer area continues to be made.

Of course, the mission of the Commission is disclosure. And the key to perfection in this area is the compliance efforts of the Commission. Led by Amy Davis, the Compliance Section, in addition to its day-to-day task of assisting candidates, treasurers, lobbyists, and contractors with complying with the disclosure laws, has been undertaking a number of initiatives designed to enhance compliance.

One such initiative, a new video interactive Treasurer Training Program, will be implemented sometime in the New Year. This effort is headed up by Todd Wojcik, Nancy Fitzpatrick, Titus Kamal, and Danielle Hacker.

An increased effort in the area of training for campaign treasurers, lobbyists, and pay-to-play filers also took place during the year. Linda White, Kim Key, Danielle Hacker, Christine Aquilante, Nancy Fitzpatrick, and Joe Barish, along with the entire Compliance staff deserve credit for bringing the Commission's message to the public.

One of my goals when becoming executive director was to enhance the profile of the agency. Since that time, much progress has been made in this area, progress that could not have been made without the stellar efforts of Deputy Director Joe Donohue.

In addition to the publication of two new white papers, the effort to provide snap-shot analyses of pre-and-post election campaign financial activity by legislative candidates, local candidates, the "Big Six" committees, county party committees, lobbyist, and pay-to-play activity has been incredibly beneficial to the public and to the reputation of the Commission as a vital and productive State agency.

Assisting the efforts of Deputy Director Donohue were: Administrative Assistant Elbia Zeppetelli, Research Associate Steve Kimmelman, Executive Secretary Maureen Tilbury, Compliance Director Amy Davis, IT Director Carol Neiman and her staff, Kim Roman and Maryanne Garcia.

Part and parcel of the effort to get-the-message out about the Commission and its work are the video press releases on YouTube. Credit goes to technical production manager Ken Colandrea; "part-time reporters" and full time staff: Scott Fagerty, Lovinsky Joseph, Matthew Krinsley, Tamiko Flack, and Tamika McCoy. And, let's not forget Betty Michael and Desiree DeVito in scanning in reports and Monica Triplin-Nelson and the clerical staff in preparing reports for the public.

And, of course, none of this would be possible without the assistance of Lou Solimeo and Peter Palaitis who keep the computers running along with the rest of the IT staff.

Certainly, the Commission could not operate effectively without the Finance and Administration team. Headed by Director Steve Dodson, he is assisted by Senior Fiscal Officer Elaine Salit, and Personnel Officer Anita Vaingankar. In these trying fiscal times having top notch budgetary and personnel staff is a real asset.

I would be remiss if I did not mention the Commission's front line, receptionists Debbie Kostival, Irene Comiso, and backups Aracelis Ocasio and Meggan Strigel. They are the face of the Commission and provide that personal touch that distinguishes the Commission from other State agencies.

I know that I have left out many people that deserve mention for their outstanding contributions to the Commission and the public. But suffice it to say, staff at the Commission lived up to the standard of public service as an honorable profession.

So, I would like to thank each and every member of the staff for another great job in 2011 despite sometimes discouraging and uncertain economic times.

And, I would like to thank Commission Chairman Ronald DeFilippis, Vice Chairman Walter F. Timpone, Commissioner Amos C. Saunders, and the late Commissioner Lawrence Weiss for their support of staff this past year.

## In Memory of: Lawrence Weiss

Lawrence Weiss, a member of the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission and retired New Jersey Superior Court judge, died peacefully at home on Nov. 13, 2011.

The 79-year-old Westfield resident was appointed by Gov. Chris Christie in March. He was the 28<sup>th</sup> person to serve on the Commission since its creation in 1973.

"Judge Weiss was a true gentleman and an excellent member of the Commission. He was fair-minded yet resolute. He truly enjoyed his all-too-brief service on the Commission," said Jeff Brindle, ELEC's Executive Director. "He is greatly missed."

At its November meeting, the Commission adopted a resolution honoring Judge Weiss for his "dedicated service to the Commission and to the people of New Jersey."

Born in New York City, his family moved to Elizabeth soon after his birth. He played basketball for both Thomas Jefferson High School and Rutgers University.

He received his bachelors of science degree in education from Rutgers in 1954 and entered the United States Air Force after graduation. He was a navigator on an early warning aircraft and was discharged with the rank of first lieutenant in 1957. He graduated from Rutgers University School of Law in 1960.

Weiss, a Democrat, served two terms as a Westfield council member. He was a Union County District Court Judge before being appointed to the Superior Court in April 1980. He served until his mandatory retirement in July 2002. At the time, he was Acting Assignment Judge and recusal Judge for the Chancery Part.

Judge Weiss achieved national prominence for his work in the field of environmental insurance coverage law, managing a large number of complex cases. He also was a frequent lecturer at national conferences sponsored by the American Bar Association and National Judicial College. He was recognized at Rutgers with its Distinguished Alumnus Award in 1998.

After leaving the bench, Judge Weiss became of counsel to the law firm of Dughi & Hewit PC in Cranford, the governor's former law firm.

## 2012 Training Seminars

One of the many compliance services offered by the Commission to participants in New Jersey's electoral process is treasurer training.

Treasurers of campaign committees, State, county and municipal party committees, and legislative leadership committees can avail themselves of special training that will better enable them to comply with the State's campaign finance rules.

Treasurer training can be accomplished in a number of different ways, including seminar training and online training.

By law, training is mandatory for treasurers of gubernatorial, State Senate, and Assembly campaigns. It is also required of treasurers of legislative leadership committees and State party committees.

While training is optional for treasurers of local campaign committees, county and municipal party committees, and continuing political committees (PACs), it is highly recommended.

Given the complexity of the campaign finance and pay-to-play laws, it is in the best interest of treasurers, candidates, and the public for all treasurers of campaign-related committees to be fully familiar with the requirements of the disclosure law.

Treasurer training is easy, painless, and readily available. As noted above, training can take place from the comfort of one's home, through accessing the Commission's Website, or in-person through seminar training provided by the Commission's highly qualified staff.

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## 2012 Training Seminars

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To attend a seminar, you must reserve a seat. Space will be limited. Fill out the reservation form below and be sure **to circle the date you wish to attend**. Return the entire reservation form to the Commission. You may mail the form back to ELEC, PO Box 185, Trenton, NJ 08625-0185. Or, you may fax the form to ELEC at (609) 633-9854.

The seminars listed below will be held at the Election Law Enforcement Commission, 28 West State Street, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, Trenton, New Jersey at 10:00 a.m.

<b>TREASURER TRAINING FOR CANDIDATES AND JOINT CANDIDATES COMMITTEES</b> <a href="#">Treasurer Training Reservation Form</a>	
Wednesday	March 14, 2012
Tuesday	April 3, 2012
Wednesday	April 11, 2012
Tuesday	April 24, 2012
Tuesday	September 11, 2012
Monday	September 24, 2012
Tuesday	October 2, 2012

<b>TREASURER TRAINING FOR POLITICAL PARTY COMMITTEES AND PACS</b> <a href="#">Treasurer Training Reservation Form</a>	
Monday	March 26, 2012
Wednesday	June 27, 2012
Friday	September 28, 2012
Wednesday	December 12, 2012

<b>R-1 ELECTRONIC FILING SOFTWARE (REFS) TRAINING</b> <a href="#">REFS Training Reservation Form</a>	
Wednesday	March 28, 2012
Thursday	April 12, 2012
Wednesday	April 25, 2012
Wednesday	July 25, 2012
Wednesday	September 19, 2012
Wednesday	October 3, 2012

## 2012 Commission Meeting Schedule

The New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission has announced its meeting schedule for 2012. Unless otherwise indicated in the future, meetings will be held at the Commission's offices at 28 West State Street, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor, in Trenton.

January	17, 11:00 a.m.
February	21, 11:00 a.m.
March	20, 11:00 a.m.
April	17, 11:00 a.m.
May	15, 11:00 a.m.
June	19, 11:00 a.m.
July	17, 11:00 a.m.
August	21, 11:00 a.m. (if necessary)
September	11, 11:00 a.m.
October	16, 11:00 a.m.
November	20, 11:00 a.m.
December	18, 11:00 a.m.

## Brian Robbins "Profile"

### Executive Software Engineer

If the New Jersey Election Law Enforcement Commission (ELEC) has its own version of MacGyver, his name is Brian Robbins.

Robbins is the agency's Executive Software Engineer. A big part of his job is to scour the intricate computer code that enables ELEC to operate in order to find and eliminate bugs- coding errors that are a unavoidable part of any complex software. "It's like working with a Rubik's cube," he said.

Robbins is well-suited for the job because just like MacGyver, the fictional action hero from the 1980s television series, he has always had a knack for taking things apart and reassembling them.

Just ask his father, Lee. When he was a kid, he used to dismantle family lawn tools and rebuild them.

The lifelong Burlington County resident also likes adventure.

While he doesn't encounter many hair-raising moments at ELEC, his personal life is another story.

To obtain a master diver's license in 1987, something that requires training usually achieved only by Navy Seals, he had to crawl across the ocean bottom in Strathmere Inlet in Cape May County while crabs clawed at him and the current pulled hard.

He has dived in subterranean cavern and once dove with a group that included one of Sylvester Stallone's body guard. He has investigated several wrecks off the New Jersey coast, including one 153-foot deep dive to inspect the debris of the Texas Tower 4 radar station that collapsed during Hurricane Donna in 1961, killing 28 people.

As a volunteer for the National Weather Service and ham radio operator, he monitors extreme weather events. As a one-time volunteer fireman, he fought fires.

His greatest passion, however, is for flying.

Robbins, who took his first flying lesson in 1982 and obtained his private pilot's license in 1984, has amassed 1,870 hours of flight-time and is now an instructor. He has flown as far as Oshkosh, Wisconsin and the Bahamas.

He recently passed the FAA test to become an Airline Transport Pilot. At this point, he is cleared for only single engine aircraft. But he still hopes to complete training for multi-engine aircraft. Which technically means he would then be able to fly commercial airliners.

Not that he has any such plans. He didn't want to become a fulltime pilot because entry level wages are very low, and he would be away too often from his wife and two children.

"I like to describe it as a hobby that got out of control," Robbins said.

Robbins discovered his fascination with computers when he attended Burlington County Vocational Technical School. After graduating, he began working for the State in 1983 at the Department of Human Services data center. He moved to the predecessor agency of the Office of Information Technology where he helped rewrite programs to avoid Y2K programs when the new millennium arrived in 2000.

That same year, he came to ELEC, a job he said he truly enjoys. Under the direction of Carol Neiman, longtime Director of Information Technology, the agency's computer staff is encouraged to show initiative and collaborate. "We work well here as a team," he said.

"I like the freedom to come up with creative ideas, to figure out how to solve problems, and to have the freedom to do it once you figure it out," said Robbins.

He admits there is one flying-related hobby he hasn't done and doesn't plan on trying- parachuting.

"I figure why jump out of a perfectly working aircraft unless it is on fire?" he said.

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### 2012 Reporting Dates

ELECTION	48 HOUR START DATE	INCLUSION DATES	ELEC DATE
<b>FIRE COMMISSIONER</b>	2/5/12		2/18/2012
29-day Preelection Reporting Date		Inception of campaign* - 1/17/12	1/20/2012
11-day Preelection Reporting Date		1/18/12 - 2/4/12	2/7/2012
20-day Postelection Reporting Date		2/5/12 - 3/6/12	3/9/2012
<b>SCHOOL BOARD</b>	4/4/12		4/17/2012
29-day Preelection Reporting Date		Inception of campaign* - 3/16/12	3/19/2012
11-day Preelection Reporting Date		3/17/12 - 4/3/12	4/9/2012
20-day Postelection Reporting Date		4/4/12 - 5/4/12	5/7/2012
<b>MAY MUNICIPAL (90 DAY START DATE: 2/8/12)</b>	4/25/12		5/8/2012
29-day Preelection Reporting Date		Inception of campaign* - 4/6/12	4/9/2012
11-day Preelection Reporting Date		4/7/12 - 4/24/12	4/27/2012
20-day Postelection Reporting Date		4/25/12 - 5/25/12	5/29/2012
<b>RUNOFF (JUNE)**</b>	5/30/12		6/12/2012
29-day Preelection Reporting Date		No Report Required for this Period	
11-day Preelection Reporting Date		4/25/12 - 5/29/12	6/1/2012
20-day Postelection Reporting Date		5/30/12-6/29/12	7/2/2012
<b>PRIMARY*** (90 DAY START DATE: 3/7/12)</b>	5/23/12		6/5/2012
29-day Preelection Reporting Date		Inception of campaign* - 5/4/12	5/7/2012
11-day Preelection Reporting Date		5/5/12 - 5/22/12	5/25/2012
20-day Postelection Reporting Date		5/23/12 - 6/22/12	6/25/2012
<b>GENERAL*** (90 DAY START DATE: 8/8/12)</b>	10/24/12		11/6/2012
29-day Preelection Reporting Date		6/23/12 - 10/5/12	10/9/2012
11-day Preelection Reporting Date		10/6/12 - 10/23/12	10/26/2012
20-day Postelection Reporting Date		10/24/12 - 11/23/12	11/26/2012
<b>RUNOFF (DECEMBER)**</b>	11/21/12		12/4/2012
29-day Preelection Reporting Date		No Report Required for this Period	
11-day Preelection Reporting Date		10/24/12 - 11/20/12	11/23/2012
20-day Postelection Reporting Date		11/21/12 - 12/21/12	12/24/2012
<b>PACS, PCFRS &amp; CAMPAIGN QUARTERLY FILERS</b>			
1st Quarter		1/1/12 - 3/31/12	4/16/2012
2nd Quarter****		4/1/12 - 6/30/12	7/16/2012
3rd Quarter		7/1/12 - 9/30/12	10/15/2012
4th Quarter		10/1/12 - 12/31/12	1/15/2013

\* Inception Date of Campaign (first time filers) or from January 1, 2012 (Quarterly filers).

\*\* A candidate committee or joint candidates committee that is filing in a 2012 Runoff election is not required to file a 20-day postelection report for the corresponding prior election (May Municipal or General).

\*\*\* Form PFD-1 is due on April 12, 2012 for Primary Election Candidates and June 15, 2012 for Independent General Election Candidates.

\*\*\*\* A second quarter report is needed by Independent General Election candidates if they started their campaign before 5/9/2012.