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recap



Candidates take final
shots at each other

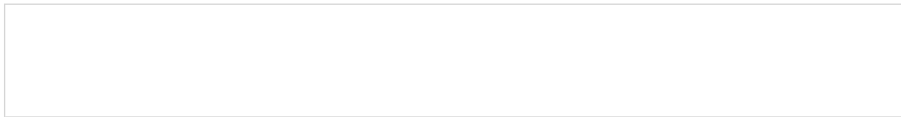


New Jerseyans still
coping with Hurricane
Irene



By Carly O. Romalino/Gloucester County Times

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"If they came out and said, 'This is our economy, and this is what I intend to do.' ... we need people who are for the people," said O'Connor, a grandmother whose husband is a 27-year union carpenter who recently spent months searching for work.

If she planned to vote, it would be for independent candidates, she said. She's lost trust in the Democrat and Republican parties.

Dennis Galvez, 22, said he's also turned cynical about politicians and skeptical that an office-holder will accomplish what was promised during the election campaign.

"I know I'm still young, but in my lifetime no politician has stood up and done what they said they would do," said Galvez, of Washington Township in the Fourth District. "Unless it was a politician I knew, I wouldn't vote."

Galvez said he does not know who is running in the Fourth District race, despite mailers and ads for Senate candidates Giancarlo D'Orazio, a Republican, and incumbent Democrat Sen. Fred Madden, both of Washington Township. Democrat Assemblyman Paul Moriarty, also of Washington Township, is running for another term alongside newcomer Gabriela Mosquera. The pair are challenged by Republicans Shelley Lovett and Patricia Fratticcioli.

"I'm really not into politics that much," Galvez said, and he thinks young people in his age demographic share his view.

Despite the push to get 20-somethings to vote, Galvez thinks his one vote doesn't really matter in the big picture.

"It's a shame because local elections are in some way more important than national elections – it's stuff happening in your back yard," Redlawsk said.

While the voter turnout predictions aren't dazzling, what the Eagleton poll revealed about the reasons why half of the voters actually will show up has little to do with who is on the ballot, and everything to do with Gov. Chris Christie.

"Half said they are motivated by the governor, either for him or against him," said Redlawsk, whose organization polled 903 New Jersey adults in October.

About 51 percent of voters said any votes cast would be with Christie in mind, with 28 percent set to demonstrate support for the governor by voting for Republicans in their legislative district.

Almost as many intend to vote against the governor's team.

"The Republicans who vote will want to make it easy for Christie to get his programs through. ... A lot of this is because the governor is the one statewide person they actually know. They may not know their own legislative candidates," Redlawsk said. "For the most part, people who are not Democrats or Republicans – they are likely to sit this election out entirely."

But Redlawsk said no one expects the Legislature to shift, considering three key factors: The polling numbers are split down the middle; the legislative district map has recently been redrawn to favor incumbents; and there are very few competitive races.

Plus, Republicans have a very slim chance of dethroning state Senate President Stephen Sweeney in the Third District, Redlawsk said.

Sweeney maintains a 12 percentage-point lead on his Republican challenger, Michael Mulligan, according to poll results released Thursday by the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey's Hughes Center for Public Policy.


At the Assembly level, the race is closer with three incumbents and a newcomer facing off for two open seats.

Democrat incumbent Assemblyman John Burzichelli is ahead, with 42 percent of likely voters choosing the Paulsboro mayor to serve in the Legislature again.

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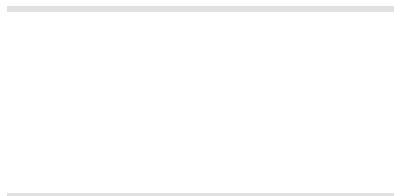
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Incumbent Assemblywoman Celeste Riley, a Democrat, comes in 4 percentage points ahead of the Republican candidates, incumbent Assemblyman Domenick DiCicco and GOP newcomer Dr. Robert Villare, according to the Hughes Center poll.

DiCicco, who currently serves in the Fourth District, was moved to the Third District as a result of statewide redistricting that shifted his hometown.

The Hughes Poll has almost 38 percent of likely voters choosing Riley, with DiCicco and Villare each coming in at 34 percent.

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