

# The Bogotian

Vol. 2

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No. 2

## Democrats Councilmen Jackson and Lyons Vote to Approve \$110,000 Salary *Ignoring Overflow Crowd of Residents*

Councilmen Tito Jackson and John Lyons joined with their fellow Democrats and voted to approve a \$110,000 Borough Administrator/Chief Financial Officer salary on October 16, 2008, ignoring the wishes of an overflow crowd that packed the Bogota Mayor and Council chambers and the hallway outside. Many residents passionately but rationally voiced their objections to an ordinance that pays this annual \$110,000 salary to a former Bogota resident and mayor, Leonard Nicolosi. Nicolosi will be paid that unaffordable salary as the Borough Administrator and Chief Financial officer, although the two employees who held those jobs before him were paid only \$68,447 combined.

The five Democrats on the Council -- Lyons, Jackson, Tara Sharp, Jessie Frias, and Judy Pesce -- all voted for the salary increase, which Mayor Pat McHale also supported. The Democrats on the Mayor and Council appointed Nicolosi in January 2008 as the Borough's part time chief financial officer, at an annual salary of \$5,617. The ordinance also increases the part-time chief financial officer's part of salary from \$5,617 to \$90,000.

Numerous residents spoke out against the salary. Not one spoke in favor of it. Republican Council Candidate Andrew Fede stated that the administrator/chief financial officer salary of \$110,000 is more than the combined salaries of the

former full time borough administrator and part time chief financial officer who served under the last Republican administration; their combined salaries were only \$68,447.

Fede stated that the Mayor and Council should have given the administrator and chief financial officer the same percentage salary increase as the Borough's other employees, and nothing more.

Fede also said that he would have advertised the job opening, and that one person should not hold both jobs. McHale admitted that the Borough did not advertise for applicants, and that Nicolosi was the only person interviewed.

At one point in the meeting, as resident after resident spoke

in opposition to the ordinance, Mayor McHale stated his annoyance at having to sit through such a long meeting. Fede immediately objected, noting that the Mayor and Council members were required to listen to the views of the public.

Among those who spoke against the ordinance was a resident who identified herself as a Democrat who helped get the Democrat Mayor and Council members elected. She stated how disappointed she was in her fellow Democrats, and strongly urged the Council not to adopt the ordinance.

Several regular and auxiliary police officers were assigned to the meeting. The

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## Councilman Jackson Attacks First Aid Squad and Calls for its Termination

At the Mayor and Council's August 7, 2008 meeting, Councilman Antero "Tito" Jackson called upon Bogota's Mayor and Council to abolish Bogota's First Aid Squad and put it under the control of the Borough's Rescue Squad, and in the process attacked the First Aid Squad's members and leadership, stating that the First Aid Squad had a history of "critical failures."

Jackson, at the July 3 Mayor and Council meeting, also criticized our First Aid Squad.

When Councilman Jackson again raised the same issue at the August 21 meeting, the Borough attorney immediately shut him down, and suggested that the matter was either an internal First Aid Squad issue or one that should be discussed by the Mayor and Council in closed session.

Other First Aid Squad members who were present at the July 3, August 7, and August 21 meetings disputed Jackson's accusations. During the August 7 meeting, it was disclosed that Councilman Jackson is a member of both the First Aid and Rescue Squads. He failed in each of the

two past years to win election as a First Aid Squad officer. This July, he was found by the First Aid Squad to have violated that Squad's by-laws and was disciplined, after responding to the notice of disciplinary charges with a letter threatening to sue his fellow First Aid Squad members.

Also during the August 7 meeting, a member of the public stated that he saw Councilman Jackson using a red light while driving his vehicle in response to a First Aid Squad call, which Councilman Jackson did not deny. This is a violation of the New Jersey motor vehicle regulations, which permit only certain First Aid Squad officers to use a red light while responding to an emergency; non-officers are to use blue lights.

Bogotians who attended these meetings are asking if Councilman Jackson wants to abolish the First Aid Squad to get control over it through the Rescue Squad, and get his own personal revenge on the First Aid Squad members, who did not elect him to an officer's position and disciplined him. A Bogota

*Continued on Page 4 "Attacks"*

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FOR LOWER  
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SERVICES**



**Rick Gil de Leon**

## ***The Record* Says Dark Cloud Hangs Over Bergen Democrat Machine**

A Federal Grand Jury indicted Bergen County Democrat Boss Joseph Ferriero and Bergen County Democrat Lawyer Dennis Oury, on September 9, 2008, charging them with "concealing their interest in a grants consulting company while exercising considerable influence with state, county and local officials to generate tens of thousands of dollars in business for the firm from towns in Bergen County", according to *The Record*.

We are not alone in our view that we need major reform here in Bergen County, and the same holds true for Bogota's BCDO Democrat machine dominated municipal government. Here is what *The Record* said:

"Bergen County Democrats need an emergency warning signal to alert them when the FBI is about to burst on the scene.... Last week, the FBI dug

deeper into the sanctum of Bergen County politics, hauling away 18 boxes of documents from the offices of [Joe] Ferriero and [Dennis] Oury. Federal Investigators are probing a consulting firm in which Ferriero, Oury, and two other men were partners.... [Ferriero and Oury have not been convicted of any crime], [but Ferriero's most dedicated critic, State Senator Loretta Weinberg, is correct in noting the dark cloud hanging above the party....

Hardly a Democratic candidate makes it on the ballot in Bergen County without a nod from Ferriero....

Contemporary politics is not driven by ideology as much as it is by cash. The Bergen County Democratic Organization has no statewide reputation as a champion of social policy. It's known for its bank account and its ability to elect Democrats loyal to 'the machine' -- a euphemism for ATM...

Weinberg's weather report is prescient: There is a large storm cloud hanging over Democrats." From "Gray Skies Aren't Going to Clear Up," by Alfred Doblin, *The Record*, August 29, 2008.

## ***The Record* Calls County and Bogota DPW merger plan a "snow job" and "shell game"**

Bergen County Executive Dennis McNerney and Bogota Mayor Patrick McHale held a press conference at our DPW garage on July 2, 2008. *The Record* of the following day reported that "Bergen County and Bogota have agreed to share their public works departments."

The article states that McNerney and McHale "said they agreed to create a joint Commission of Public Works that would unite the staffs and equipment of the county's and borough's public works departments." The agreement creates a "joint venture," or a "new entity" with a "board of commissioners and its own budget and dedicated staff." McNerney told *The Record* that the new authority would "be its own separate entity -- just like the improvement authority, just like the college."

We are not alone in our view that this proposal creating a new level of government is not the right way to combine services. Here is some of what *The Record's* editorial said about this scheme:

"Bergen County needs another public authority like Hackensack needs more flooding during a rainstorm. Utility and improvement authorities have reputations for serving as patronage mills.

The proposed consolidation would result in no staff cuts. However, it will require a board of commissioners, in addition to having an independent budget and staff.

Not surprisingly, county Republicans are not applauding

what appears to be an expansion of Democratic power in a county run by Democrats.

What's the probability that the new board of commissioners will be balanced by equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans? What's the probability that the new independent staff will not grow?

Even more ominous is McNerney's comment that he hopes the joint agreement could last 40 years. That sounds almost biblical. If an agreement on a new public authority is reached, it should be carefully monitored -- and dissolved if the promised savings are as elusive as the promised land....

But consolidation to save money and increase efficiencies is different from a consolidation of Democratic power derived from doling out county jobs.

New Jerseyans would be better off with fewer public authorities -- entities that have proliferated like municipalities and school districts. There are nearly 500 local authorities in New Jersey. Do we need more?

We continue to encourage municipalities to consider consolidating services. With 566 municipalities and 616 school districts, there is a vital need for New Jersey to move past its history of home rule. However, reducing these entities while creating new ones is merely a shell game.

If Bogota and the county can save money by a sharing a single public works department, bravo. But if the sharing results in new administrative positions instead of fewer jobs, we withhold our applause.

Public works departments are charged with removing snow, not creating it. The calendar reads July, but we know a snow job when we see one." From "Snow the plow: County doesn't need another public authority," *The Record*, July 9, 2008.

## **Democratic Blunder Blotter and Lame Blame Game**

<b>June 2006</b>	Democrats gain control of Bogota Council.
<b>Throughout 2007</b>	Democrat Council approves numerous purchases for goods and/or services without proper backup, and blames "prior administration".
<b>Throughout 2007</b>	Democrat Council approves \$67,143 in payment for tree services in excess of bid threshold, and blames "prior administration".
<b>August 2007</b>	Democrat Council approves 2007 budget with 9.7% tax increase, and blames "prior administration".
<b>Dec. 6, 2007</b>	Democrat Council awards \$148,100 contract for revaluation without appropriation in 2007 budget.
<b>May 15, 2008</b>	Democrat Mayor and Council approves bond ordinance that includes \$18,000 for "a new telephone system for use in Borough Hall"; new system does not work, and then blames "prior administration".
<b>May 2008</b>	Democrat's Bogota Quarterly contains error, Bogotians put garbage out on Memorial Day, DPW picks up garbage on parade route, at what overtime cost to the taxpayers?
<b>June 2008</b>	First time Mayor and Council meet with grants developer appointed in January 2008, and are advised they missed this year's grant cycle.
<b>July 17, 2008</b>	Democrat Mayor and Council approves 2008 budget with 10% municipal tax increase, and blames "prior administration".

### **How are the Democrats spending our 10% tax increase?**

#### **Not with improved service!**



Roads constantly flooded. Signs are permanent fixtures.



Trees blocking brook and endangering motorists.



Roadways in disrepair for too long.



## Editorial

# The Fede & Gil de Leon Approach to a Better Bogota

*The Official Voice of the Bogota Republican Organization*

The Bogota United team pledges to promote our common interests as Bogota residents and taxpayers. We will put Bogota's interests first. We will not have to answer to any partisan political party bosses, such as Bergen Democrat Machine Boss Joe Ferriero and his counsel Dennis Oury. The proof is in our pledge to advance a pay-to-play, campaign finance reform ordinance, which both Ferriero and Oury opposed in published reports last year.

This ordinance is part of our four point plan for Bogota's future:

**First**, we will work to put an end to the Democrat tax increases of 2007 and 2008, by limiting spending and searching for alternate revenue; thus restoring the truly stable taxes we had under the Republican administration from 1996 to 2006. The anti-pay-to-play ordinance is one component of this effort.

**Second**, we intend to project to others a positive attitude about our community, its people, and its facilities,

such as our Borough Hall, First Aid/Rescue building, parks, schools, and the Main Street and Palisade Avenue streetscapes, all of which were renovated during the last Republican administration, as well as our shade trees, hundreds of which were planted during the Republican administration. We all need to do our part in maintaining and keeping these facilities clean.

**Third**, we will challenge our residents to do more than just complain about things that they do not like about Bogota; we need to work together to find ways to improve our community. Nevertheless, we will tell you the truth about the Democrat bungling of Bogota's government since they got control of the Council in June 2006, so you can decide if you have had enough yet.

**Fourth**, we believe that people can disagree on issues without being disagreeable, and without personal attacks that are not based on facts. We are not afraid of and truly welcome the opportunity to have an honest, courteous, and

civil debate about the issues that will affect Bogota's future.

You do not have to be a supporter of Senator John McCain to agree with his vision of a civil public debate, as expressed in his July 6, 2008 article in *Parade* magazine. Senator McCain explained how Thomas Jefferson and John Adams went from being friends, to bitter political rivals, to friends again in their later years. They died on the same day, July 4, 1826, 50 years after they signed our nation's Declaration of Independence.

Senator McCain put the criticisms of today's politics in its proper context when he wrote: "Today politics is derided for its self-interest, combativeness, duplicity, and triviality. But such failings are not unique to our age. Both Adams and Jefferson lamented them in their own time." The greatness of our system of government that Adams, Jefferson, and the other founders established is that "it accounts for the vices of human nature as much as it hopes for our virtues. This blessed country remains a

place of limitless horizons, a country where ideals, where a love of liberty and self-reliance still check the excesses of both government and man."

On political debates, the Senator wrote: "We should, by all means, argue with each other, as did Adams and Jefferson, about the policies of government and the history that we hope to make tomorrow. But it should be an argument among friends, who agree more than they disagree, each of us united in a cause larger than our individual interests, honestly debating the best means to serve that cause, and intent on finding some common ground upon which to overcome together the many challenges before us."

Remember, however, when you read political literature in this or any other campaign to look for which side backs up its claims with facts, and which does not. That is how to separate political facts from fiction.

## *Non-Profit Group Says*

### New Jersey Taxes Again Highest in the Nation

If you want stable taxes you should not vote for the Democrats, and this is true not just for Bogota. If you don't believe us here is the proof; New Jersey, for the third consecutive year, "won" a prize no one wants – we are the state with the highest per-capita state and local tax burden in the nation. The Tax Foundation, a non-profit research group in Washington, recently reported that we pay 11.8 % of our income in state and local taxes, edging out New York and Connecticut. New York held the top spot from the 1970s through 2005. By comparison, the national average is 9.8%. Alaskans and Nevadans, at the bottom of the scale, pay 6.4% and 6.6%, respectively. According to *The New York Times*, New Jersey section of August 17, 2008, Patrick O'Keefe, director of research at a New Jersey accounting and consulting firm,

stated that high taxes put our state at a "competitive disadvantage." He said that taxes are "basically a surcharge placed on all activity in the region."

New Jersey earned this dubious "honor" only a few years after the tax and spend Democrats regained total control of our state government in 2001. Here in Bogota, our property taxes have gone up 18.5% since 2006, when the Democrats got full control of our town, county, and state governments. These property tax hikes come instead of the 20% property tax cut promised in 2006 by Democrat Governor Corzine and the Democrat-controlled New Jersey State legislature, and they are in addition to the 16.67% increase in the state's sales tax that we all have been paying since July 2006. Instead of property tax reform, the state legislature and governor's office slashed regular municipal aid to

Bogota in 2008 by \$234,589, a 21% reduction, when our neighbors saw their aid reduced much less: Hackensack 8.6%, Teaneck 9.1%, Ridgely Park 10.11%, and Little Ferry 10.94%. "These aid cuts will mean higher property taxes, which we are paying on top of higher state taxes," said Council candidate Andrew Fede.

#### Had Enough Yet?

Vote for

- ✓ Balance
- ✓ Experience
- ✓ Integrity

Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>

Vote Republican

Vote for

**Andy Fede**

&

**Rick Gil de Leon**

#### **How to Vote by Absentee Ballot**

Because of recent changes in the election laws, it now is easier than ever to vote by absentee ballot. You still must apply for an absentee ballot, but you no longer need to state a reason for your request. You first need to obtain and fill out a Civilian Absentee Ballot Application. You can get an application by mailing a request to Kathleen A. Donovan, Bergen County Clerk, One Bergen Plaza, Room 130, Hackensack, NJ 07601, or you can contact the Bogota United Team by sending us an e-mail at our website [Bogotaunited.com](http://Bogotaunited.com). Once you get the application, you fill it out and you can mail it to the County Clerk up to seven days before the November 4, 2008 election. The County Clerk's office will process your application and mail your absentee ballot to you. All you have to do is fill out the ballot and mail it back to the County Clerk according to the instructions on the ballot. **Or you can apply for the absentee ballot in person and fill out your ballot at the County Clerk's office until 3:00 p.m. on the day BEFORE the election.** Once you apply for an absentee ballot, however, you may not change your mind and vote in person at the polls for that election. If you have any questions about the absentee ballot process or voting in general, you can call the County Clerk's Election Division office, 201-336-7020, or e-mail the Bogota United Team or call us at 201-745-5814 and we will help you. Remember every vote counts!

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**“Salary” Continued from Page 1**

Mayor and Council even attempted to have the police eject from the meeting a Bogota resident who insisted that someone on the Council answer the questions that he asked during the public hearing. The crowd loudly objected to this show of force, and several residents walked out in protest. The resident remained in his seat, asking if he was being arrested. The police said no, and the Mayor and Council and police backed down.

The Democrat Mayor and Council members, including Councilmen and candidates Lyons and Jackson, did not get the message on October 16, 2008. Maybe they will get the message if you vote for Andrew Fede and Richard Gil de Leon on November 4, 2008.

**Nicolosi the Tax Raiser is Back Again**

Nicolosi was Bogota’s Mayor during the years 1988 to 1995, the last time Democrats controlled our borough’s government. The Democrats increased municipal spending from \$4,154,710 in 1989 to \$6,043,000 in 1995, causing our property taxes to skyrocket while they also increased our Borough’s debt. This tax and spend approach of today’s Bogota Democrats comes as no surprise to those who remember those years.

In both 2007 and 2008 the Democrats increased what had been stable property taxes. A Bogota resident with a home assessed at \$230,000 will pay property taxes of \$9,269 in 2008. This is \$1,449 more

than the 2006 property taxes of \$7,820, an increase of 18.5% in the first two full years of Democrat control.

In 2008 alone, the portion of Bogota property tax bills that pays for the Borough’s municipal government went up 10%. “We Republicans oppose these property tax increases at more than the rate of inflation because they hurt senior citizens and others on fixed incomes the most,” Gil de Leon said.

**Don’t be Fooled by Double-Talk**

Don’t be fooled by the Democrat double-talk and feeble excuses; between 1996 and 2006, when the Republicans controlled our Borough Hall government, our local property taxes were stable and our municipal debt was under control. When the Republicans gained control of the Borough’s government in 1996 they actually cut the Nicolosi-Democrat budget for four years in a row, down to \$5,722,890 in 1999, while improving our municipal services, buildings, parks, vehicles, and equipment.

This fine fiscal record continued; between 2000 and 2006, Bogota had the fourth best property tax record out of all Bergen County municipalities, according to *The Star Ledger*. The Republicans adopted the revolutionary Taxpayer Protection Ordinance, to keep property taxes in line with inflation, which the Democrats have ignored.

“We pledge to do all that we can to get Bogota’s spending back under control to stop these annual tax increases,” Fede and Gil de Leon said.

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**“Attacks” Continued from Page 1**

who attended the August 7 meeting stated publicly her respect for all of our emergency service volunteers, and she called on them to stop fighting with each other. Republican Council candidate Andrew Fede repeated those words at the August 21 meeting.

“We Republicans support all of our volunteers, including those on the First Aid and Rescue Squads,” said Fede. “At the August 21 meeting, I publicly thanked all of our emergency service volunteers for their service to the community, and, without taking sides in this matter, I asked them to try to find ways to resolve their differences and work together. I believe that Councilman Jackson has a right to voice his complaints about any issue in this Borough, but here he did it the wrong way. A Councilmember should not use his position to criticize in public our emergency service volunteers,” Fede added.

“It also was not clear if Councilman Jackson was speaking as a Councilman, a Rescue Squad member, or First Aid Squad member, or all three. I believe that he should have put his complaints, and any facts supporting them, in writing to the Mayor and Council and the First Aid and Rescue Squads. Those complaints could then rationally be discussed by all concerned. I do not believe that he should have made a public ambush on other emergency service volunteers at a Mayor and Council meeting,” Fede stated.

Jackson also attended a September 2<sup>nd</sup> First Aid Squad meeting and persuaded the squad to drop the discipline on a legal technicality that the Borough Attorney raised. He attended the squad meeting representing who-- the Borough or Jackson? And at whose expense?

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**Bogota Democrats on Mayor and Council Breach Teamwork Promise**

In last November’s Bogota mayor and council campaign, the Democrat candidates promised to bring to the residents of Bogota teamwork, integrity, and respect. Their literature was peppered with “team” photographs showing the four smiling candidates. This team has already reneged on the promises that got them elected. Their definition of teamwork is: “I am with you 100%, win or tie.”

They had the opportunity to fill a vacancy on the council, which was created when Pat Mc Hale became mayor, with their running mate Joseph Shuler, who lost by only two votes to Republican Councilwoman Anne Marie Mitchell in the November balloting. Shuler’s name was one of three nominated by the Democrat County Committee to fill the council vacancy. At the January 17, 2008 public meeting, the mayor and council voted to fill the vacancy. Without any public discussion about the qualities or qualifications of the nominees, both of Shuler’s teammates, Councilpersons Judy Pesce and John Lyons, joined with Councilwoman Tara Sharp to vote in Tito Jackson for the vacant seat. Councilpersons Mitchell and Jesse Frias voted ‘no’ on Jackson’s nomination.

Mr. Shuler and his wife were present at the meeting. They appeared crushed by the obvious slight, and left the meeting immediately after the vote. Mr. Shuler returned to the meeting later.

Mr. Schuler was quoted in *The Record* of January 21, 2008 stating

that he was “deeply disappointed” that two of his running mates supported Jackson. “They were my running mates and I went door-to-door helping them to get elected,” Shuler said of Pesce and Lyons. Shuler also said that Pesce “indicated to him that she would support his candidacy.” According to the January 25, 2008 *Bogota Bulletin*, Shuler “indicated that he felt the council had ‘promised’ him a seat on the governing body.” He said: “I felt like I had a shoe in, but instead I was shooed out.”

Lyons was quoted in *The Record* stating that one reason why he voted for Jackson was that he thought that Jackson would make a “strong running mate” for him in this year’s election. “Lyons must have amnesia; in the 2007 election he won a seat on the council running on a team with Shuler,” said Republican council candidate Andrew Fede. “Political calculations like that should never play a role when the council votes to select from among nominees to fill a vacancy; that selection should be based on what is best for the community as a whole, and not just the Bogota Democrat party,” Fede added.

Mr. Shuler’s own teammates apparently did not tell him that they were going to vote for Jackson, and even lead him to believe that he was going to be elected to the Council. If these Democrats will not treat their own teammate with teamwork, integrity, and respect, then what confidence can we have that they will do the right thing for our town?

**Vote November 4**  
**Bogota United Republican Team**  
**Fede & Gil de Leon**  
*Balance, Integrity, Experience*