

NASW-NYS Political Post

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Tilt A Whirl - Ughhh, is anyone else feeling a bit dizzy? The beginning of the 2008 legislative session began like any other...the Governor delivered his State of the State address outlining his vision for the upcoming year, Senate Majority Leader Bruno was throwing jabs at the Governor's "State of the Upstate" address and Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver was urging "cooperation" amongst the governing bodies. Fast forward six months and we have a new Governor, a new Senate Majority Leader and an electoral attack aimed at the third man in the room, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver. (See http://www.nydailynews.com/news/2008/06/25/2008-06-25_exstaffer_says_top_shelly_aide_raped_her.html) for complete story). Oh and there's the Senator who was reportedly close to a fist fight at the Capitol around the same time Joe Bruno announced to stunned colleagues that he was retiring.

Fun House - Chatter regarding Joseph Bruno's resignation and speculation regarding the reason(s) kept the capitol halls buzzing this week and though Bruno himself gave little indication regarding the impetus behind his 32 year career ending decision, press and capitol dwellers alike bounced theories off one another that included potential health problems (we certainly hope not), FBI investigations and the possibility that the Senate Republicans will lose their long held majority. Regardless of the reason, reality leaves us with intense interest in what lies ahead as the new Senate Majority Leader, Dean Skelos (R- Nassau) takes the reins and ushers in a new, albeit uncertain era for Senate republicans and upstate NY's (see <http://www.theithacajournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080625/NEWS01/806250329/1002>) .

Merry Go Round - The Assembly shut down for the legislative session two days late (well, technically, since they gavelled out at 12:21am on Wednesday) while the Senate closed its doors late Tuesday evening, however, speculation abounded that a return for each house was imminent.

Bumper Cars - Unfortunately, two of NASW's legislative initiatives hit a few bumps in this last week of session. The amendment to Timothy's Law including extended coverage of PTSD died at the hands of the Assembly when it got caught up in a power struggle between Chairs. Meanwhile our joint effort with the NYC Chapter to reopen the social work licensure grand-parenting provisions had a difficult time gaining traction so late in the session.

Campaign Chatter - Senator Obama called on his fundraisers to assist Senator Hillary Clinton in paying down her campaign debt, while a McCain advisor drew ire over a remark he made suggesting another terrorist attack on American soil would help McCain's numbers.