



# PRESS

WEDNESDAY

MAY 12, 2010

TODAY'S WEATHER



Showers likely  
High: 57,  
Low: 44

75 CENTS

APP.COM

OCEAN COUNTY  
EDITION

## Jackson voters re-elect Reina team

### Mayor wins by more than 800; Martin, Updegrave margins smaller

By KEITH RUSCITTI  
TOMS RIVER BUREAU



**JACKSON** — Though these can be perilous times for incumbents running for re-election, township residents gave officeholders here a rousing vote of confidence Tuesday.

Michael Reina easily won re-election as mayor while running mates Scott Martin

and Ann Updegrave retained seats on the Township Council.

"I'm in shock," said Reina, who won a special election for mayor in November. "We went against two strong opponents, but we won a good, clean, strong campaign. It says the residents of Jackson believe in what we're doing."

In the three-way election, Reina won 3,489 votes, pulling in more than 45 percent of the votes cast. Council President Michael Kafton had 2,666 votes in the mayor's race and Councilman Kenneth Bressi collected 1,552 votes.

Though officially a non-partisan election, Reina, 51, was backed by the local Re-

publican club while Kafton, 45, had the support of the Democrats.

Reina's platform consisted of promoting open government and a pledge to lobby the state government to eliminate unfunded mandates that affect municipalities — such as affordable housing obligations.

"The first call I'm going to

make tomorrow is to the governor," said Reina, who campaigned in the fall with Gov. Chris Christie.

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**MORE INSIDE:** For complete results of Tuesday's elections in towns with nonpartisan government, see PAGE B1

### NATION & WORLD

#### BRITAIN'S BROWN STEPS DOWN

Gordon Brown (above) resigned as prime minister, ending 13 years of Labour government.

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#### FAMILIES SORT THROUGH DEBRIS

Tornadoes in Oklahoma, Kansas leave five dead, homes destroyed.

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### LOCAL

#### ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S DAYS ARE NUMBERED

Board votes to send Seaside Park students to Toms River.

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### STATE

#### LEWD VIDEOS LEAD TO COP'S ARREST

Madison police detective charged with exposing himself on a webcam to a person he believed to be a 13-year-old girl.

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### BUSINESS

#### CREDIT-CARD OFFERS ON THE RISE

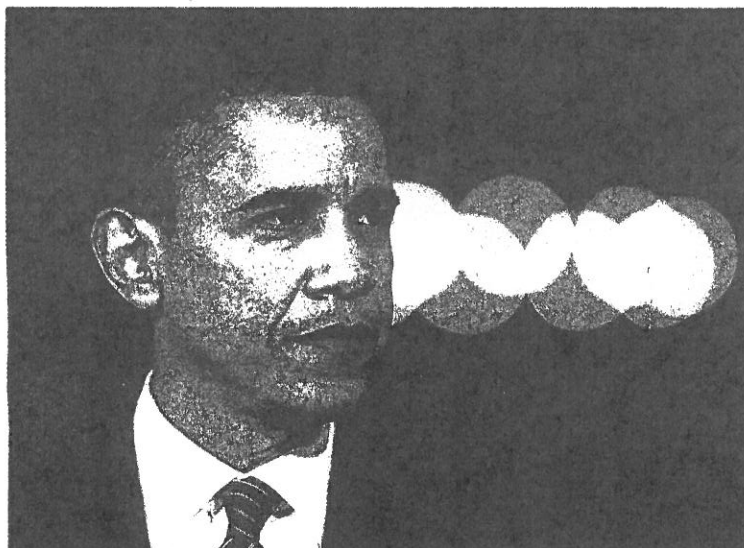
The pitches come with fewer perks than they did at the height of the credit bubble.

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# BIG actions, reactions



AP FILE PHOTO

"It's perfectly sensible that (people) are holding out an overall assessment (of the administration) until they see changes in their own lives," said President Barack Obama.

15 months into Obama's presidency, he has pushed through a health care overhaul, an automaker bailout and a massive stimulus program, all moves that have energized Republican opposition.

By SUSAN PAGE and NIMI HALL  
USA TODAY

**B**ig problems. Big achievements. Big costs. Historians say President Barack Obama's legislative record during a crisis-ridden presidency already puts him in a league with such consequential presidents as Lyndon Johnson and Franklin Roosevelt. But polls show voters

Obama's ambitions are on display again this week as he prods the Senate toward passage of the most sweeping financial regulatory change since the aftermath of the Great Depression, a bill that aims to curtail the Wall Street risk-taking that fed the meltdown in 2008. The bill follows a string of laws and regulations that have reshaped the American landscape in fundamental ways: Overhauling the health-care system, res-

There are conflicting opinions about the president's ambitions and achievements.

## VAN PELT ON STAND: \$10,000 in cash called a retainer

By ERIK LARSEN  
STAFF WRITER

**TRENTON** — Taking the witness stand in his federal corruption trial Tuesday, former state Assemblyman Daniel M. Van Pelt sought to portray himself as an uncomplicated and at times naive man who is now the victim of a terrible misunderstanding.

In a soft but assured voice, Van Pelt testified how in December 2008 he had been introduced to a wealthy land developer from New York calling himself David Esenbach, at the behest of Ocean County Republican Chairman George R. Gilmore.

Esenbach actually was corrupt real estate mogul Solomon Dwek, working undercover for the FBI as a cooperating witness. But Van Pelt did not recognize him. On the stand Tuesday, Van Pelt continued to refer to him as "Mr. Esenbach."

Dwek as Esenbach was interested in Ocean Township (Waretown). He had a piece of wetlands he wanted to develop for high-density residential use. The municipality — where Van Pelt served on the Township Committee — and the state would not allow that, and so the phony developer was soliciting local political help for a change in zoning.

"What did you tell him?" defense attorney Robert Fuggi asked.

"In a nice way, 'No,'" Van Pelt answered.