

## Top 10 Stories of 2006

by Gotham Gazette Staff  
Monday, December 18, 2006 12:00 AM

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The biggest news story in New York, as in the rest of the country in 2006, was really the war in Iraq. The war had specific effects here, as New Yorkers died in battle; those at home debated what the United States should do; and New York politicians saw their influence increase on Capitol Hill as Democrats gained control of Congress, partly because of voters' opposition to Bush administration policies in Iraq.

A furor arose nationally over Dubai Ports World's plan to run port facilities in New York and other ports in the country. This takeover of port facilities was one of the big stories that did not happen in 2006. (For others, see [The Big Stories That Did Not Happen in 2006](#) .)

But 2006 was not just the year of national and international news. In New York, it was the year of Eliot Spitzer. His election as governor rarely seemed in doubt, despite two qualified and articulate opponents. Democrats and Republicans alike seemed to believe that the man who once took on Wall Street could manage to clean up the "mess in Albany."

Here are the top 10 New York stories of 2006 – and the big stories that did not happen.

### 1. Democrats Sweep State Elections

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Led by gubernatorial candidate Eliot Spitzer, Democrats [captured](#) the four statewide offices on Election Day, giving them control of all the positions for the first time since 1942.

Election Day brought the state its first black lieutenant governor, David Paterson of Manhattan. In the contest for Spitzer's old job of [state attorney general](#), Andrew Cuomo, son of the former governor, won a convincing victory against former Westchester District Attorney Jeanine Pirro following a campaign marked more by revelations about Pirro's marriage than any policy debates.

But one winning Democrat was not invited to the ticket's election night parties: State Comptroller Alan Hevesi. Long considered a shoo-in for reelection, Hevesi [seemed](#) in jeopardy after it became known that he had used a state employee as a chauffeur and companion for his ailing wife. The news provided a boost for the little known Republican candidate, former Saratoga County Treasurer

[Chris Callaghan](#)

. But despite the charges "bolstered by Hevesi's apology, reimbursement payments to the state and a scathing report by a state ethics panel" the comptroller held on to

[win](#)

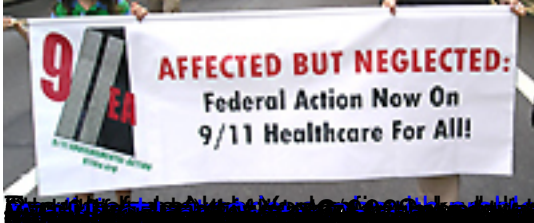
, getting 57 percent of the vote. Hevesi's future remains in doubt, though, as the Albany district attorney is investigating the case and Spitzer seems likely to seek his removal from office early in 2007.

On other matters, Spitzer vowed to bring change to Albany from "day 1." During the transition he implemented [new ethics rules](#) for himself and those advising him and said he would limit the size of campaign contributions that he would accept. He had also set forth an ambitious agenda, particularly in health care and education.

## 2. New Yorkers Gain Clout on Capitol Hill

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