

# Fundraising makes grade



DAN JANISON

Given the ability of political money to talk, swear and wail, the credibility of Republican Joe Lhota's mayoral campaign cleared a big hurdle this week by reporting that he raised \$730,000 in the two months since he announced his candidacy.

Lhota's ex-boss Rudy Giuliani contributed, along with several of his former aides who have been out of the public eye for years — names from the City Hall past such as Howard Wilson, John Gross and Dennison Young. There were still other names, from ex-Gov. George Pataki's former administration, including former aides John Cahill and Charles Gargano. Big business and real-estate donors included Mitchell Modell of Modell's Sporting Goods and



Joseph Lhota has yet to decide whether to opt for matching public funds for his campaign.

New York Mets chief operating officer Jeffrey Wilpon. Lhota also tapped family and friends.

Now Lhota, the former MTA chairman and executive with Madison Square Garden and Cablevision, amNewYork's parent company, faces a new funding crossroads. He must decide by June whether to accept matching public funds under the city's strictest-in-the-nation

finance rules, and in doing so agree to cap his overall spending. Campaign aides say that if he signed on to the program, the matching funds would add some \$270,000 to the \$730,000.

Regardless of whether a candidate chooses to apply for matching funds, the rules limit contributions to a total of \$4,930 per donor in both the primary and the general election, and to only \$400 for those who do

business with the city.

But in a crucial twist, another GOP mayoral candidate, George McDonald, is suing to void those contribution caps so candidates can accept the state's much-higher maximum contributions — \$19,700 per donor for the primary and \$41,100 for the general election. So far, a state judge has ruled McDonald, founder of the nonprofit Doe Fund for the

homeless, may raise the money but cannot spend it pending the case's outcome.

Lhota advisers say that outcome could determine the next phase of Lhota's fundraising strategy. If McDonald succeeds in court, it could help Lhota — by allowing both of them to draw more from their field of contributors.

An important part of the funding scenario: A third Republican candidate, billionaire John Catsimatidis, plans to shun spending limits, as did Mayor Michael Bloomberg. Catsimatidis aides say he has put \$1 million of his own into the race, and contend Lhota's fundraising can only be assessed in light of how he spends it and what it gets him. "Can he sustain that level of fundraising? It takes a lot of energy and time. John can write a check whenever he needs to," said one.

Dan Janison is a Newsday columnist.

## Sheen seeks kid's justice

Charlie Sheen issued a "legitimate call to arms" against the school where his daughter was allegedly bullied, asking Twitter followers to deliver feces and rotten eggs to the campus.

A classmate allegedly bullied Sam, Sheen and Denise Richards' 9-year-old daughter,

Sheen

while attending Viewpoint School in Calabasas, Calif., sources told TMZ.com. A 9-year-old named Victoria allegedly teased Sam about her skin, looks and Sheen's firing in 2011 from "Two and a Half Men." Richards met with the school three times and in a meeting last May, Victoria's parents said Sam was lying, TMZ reported. Sheen's rep was unable to comment.

(ANNA SANDERS)



## Pope delivers first, humble Mass

In his first public Mass, Pope Francis urged the Catholic Church on Thursday to stick to its Gospel roots and shun modern temptations, warning that it would become just another charitable group if it forgot its true mission.

In a heartfelt, simple homily, the Argentine pope laid out a clear moral path for the 1.2-billion-member Church, which is beset by scandals, intrigue and strife.

Addressing cardinals in the frescoed Sistine Chapel the day after his election there, the pope said the Church should be more focused on the Gospels of Jesus Christ.

"We can walk all we want, we can build many things, but if we don't proclaim Jesus Christ, something is wrong. We would become a compassionate NGO and not a Church, which is the bride of



Pope Francis spoke in parish priest's tone, focused on faith.

### Francis will meet with Benedict

The new pontiff has postponed for a few days a trip to the papal summer retreat south of Rome to meet Pope Emeritus Benedict.

(REUTERS)

Christ," he said, speaking in Italian without notes.

The first non-European

pope in 1,300 years, Pope Francis' initial steps suggested he would bring a new style to the papacy, favoring humility and simplicity over pomp, grandeur and ambition among its top officials.

Whereas his predecessor, Pope Benedict, delivered his first homily in Latin, laying out his broad vision for the Church, Francis adopted the tone of a parish priest, focusing on faith.

(REUTERS)



## HEIDI'S 'NEW BALANCE'

Model Heidi Klum launched her new exercise-wear collection "Heidi Klum for New Balance" at Lady Foot Locker on Thursday in California.

## 5M 'stops' for NYPD?

The New York City Civil Liberties Union said the city is set to mark a controversial milestone, as the police conducted its 5 millionth "stop and frisk" under the Bloomberg administration.

Donna Lieberman, the NYCLU's executive director, said that according to the data her group compiled from the NYPD, 4.4 million of the stops yielded no arrests or summons. The majority of those stopped were minorities, she said.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg and NYPD Commissioner Raymond Kelly have defended the practice, saying that it helps keep illegal guns off the streets. (IVAN PEREIRA)