

## NJ FRATERNAL ORDER OF POLICE ENDORSES HALLETT FOR SHERIFF

The growing gang presence in the Cape May County Jail should be used to law enforcement's benefit. "The intelligence you can gather from these inmates is something the department needs to be better at," says George Hallett, who wants to "get that information out to local police" by becoming the county sheriff.

A former Secret Service agent and retired prosecutor's detective, Hallett says he has the kind of law enforcement and management experience needed for the job. He is the democratic candidate in November's general election. He also has been endorsed by the New Jersey FOP.

Gangs, drugs, excessive lawsuits and security lapses at the courthouse and jail are the primary issues, he says.

Hallett, 61, was unopposed in the primary election but faces a tough race in November. His opponent is Republican Gary Schaffer, director of the Cape May County Public Safety Training Center and a retired Ocean City police officer.

"The last time there was a democratic sheriff in Cape May County was 1940," said Hallett. "I believe if people look at my qualifications, they'll see I have what it takes to be sheriff -- the law enforcement experience and the management experience."

A Cape May County native Hallett served three years with the Army in Vietnam before embarking on a law enforcement career. He earned a B.A. in administration of justice from American University and worked for the CIA before going to the Secret Service. There, he had a four-year White House detail protecting Presidents Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford.

When he moved to the Inspector General's Office, he became a white collar crime investigator and by 1988, had risen through the ranks to become regional inspector. In that position, he was overseer of a \$1 million budget covering a five-state region, and worked out of Philadelphia.

After 28 years with the federal government, Hallett returned to Cape May County in

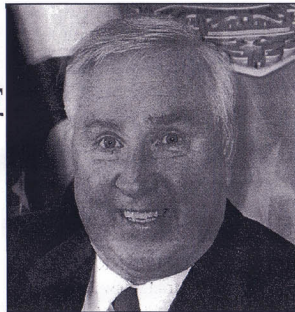
1999 and took a job with the County Prosecutor's Office investigating insurance fraud.

He lives in North Wildwood but maintains membership in South Jersey Lodge #56. During much of his federal service, he resided in Medford and joined Lodge #56. He is a life member and continues traveling to their meetings.

Hallett is so primed to be sheriff that he quit his job with the prosecutor's office in March so he could devote more time to campaigning. It is his first political foray since his work always prevented him from running for office.

He envisions major changes in the sheriff's department, which currently employs 200 people.

He promises to use "proper management to reduce lawsuits filed against the department." When the county has inmates filing suit for falling out of bed, "We need to examine the circumstances and not just settle," he said. "We've got to be more aggressive and more thorough." He advocates taking more cases



Lodge #56 member George Hallett is a candidate for sheriff of Cape May County. He has been endorsed by the New Jersey FOP.

all the way to the court, rather than settling, to demonstrate strength and deter further suits.

The recent case of a local corrections officer found guilty of having sex with two female inmates was a matter of poor management, he said. "It could have been avoided."

"There's no way that officer should have been left with two women for an eight-hour shift. Put a female in there. If you can't do that, rotate male officers, so no one is there becoming comfortable with them."

Another issue is security.

Hallett notes that the county jail was built in 1976 for 149 inmates, but now houses more than 300 prisoners. On any shift, only 10 line officers are on duty. The poor ratio is lowering morale, he says.

Hallett believes people-sharing is one key to finding solutions. "I've seen first hand the results when agencies work together, when training pays off with convictions."

"Improving staff morale, security and minimizing costly lawsuits at our jail starts on day one," said Hallett. ★