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The Week That Was

04-21-17

1. Madame DeRosa

Our Spin:

Many years ago when Melissa DeRosa was in her mid-twenties and working in the private sector, Feathers had dinner with her “office team,” and some mutual clients. During dinner, one of the clients asked, “how Albany worked?” Before anyone else spoke, Melissa turned over her napkin and began writing names and drawing lines showing connections. According to Feathers, when she was done she had solved the rubrics cube on Albany politics. Hardly a thug, she is more likely to be the Bobby Fischer of Secretaries. Congratulations Melissa... By the way, to our old friend Ed Cox who levelled the “thug,” charge, go ahead and have a Bloody Mary now and then Ed, it will calm you down!

The Story:

As part of a major transition in Governor Andrew M. Cuomo’s second-term administration, Melissa DeRosa, his chief of staff, was appointed on Monday as Secretary to the Governor. DeRosa will not only be the first woman to serve as secretary to the governor, but at 34 years old, will also be the youngest. She started with Cuomo in April 2013 as his communications director after serving as deputy and then acting chief of staff to Attorney General Eric Schneiderman. She is taking over for William Mulrow, who is going back to his old Wall Street firm, The Blackstone Group. Despite DeRosa just being named as one of Crain’s New York 40 under 40

rising stars, Cuomo has faced criticism since the hiring as DeRosa is the daughter of Giorgio DeRosa, a prominent Albany lobbyist and partner at Bolton St. Johns, a top lobbying firm. Her husband is Matt Wing, a former Cuomo administration spokesman who now works at the ride hailing company Uber. On Wednesday Cuomo defended the appointment, even suggesting questions over her family’s business ties might be sexist.

“Melissa DeRosa is the first female Secretary to the Governor,” Cuomo said. “She’s worked for me, she’s worked for the Attorney General. She’s one of the young superstars in the business. Her father is a longtime, well-known lobbyist in Albany. Everybody knows that. So, I don’t see the issue whatsoever.” Cuomo then went further, questioning reporters whether they would ask about the conflicts of interest for a man who is related to a lobbyist, either through marriage or by parentage. “You know there’s some men whose wives are lobbyists,” he said. “But I’m sure you are going to ask every man whose wife is a lobbyist or mother is a lobbyist.”

[NY Daily News](#)

[Fox News](#)

2. Cuomo Construction Inc.

Our Spin:

As Governor, Andrew Cuomo has proven to be a leader who wears many hats, sometimes even a hard hat. In no uncertain terms the Governor has proclaimed that

rebuilding New York’s infrastructure is a top priority. As he maneuvers through his second term it has become apparent that the Governor is building his legacy, literally. The Legislature is heading back to Albany next week, but based on the Governor’s recent remarks we think we will be hearing more about Robert Moses and less about ethics reform.

The Story:

Speaking with reporters over the weekend, Governor Cuomo said he’s just about done dealing with the Legislature for the remainder of the year now that the state budget has been approved. Instead, he will focus his efforts in the remaining months of the legislative session to building things. “My top priority now is getting the economy running upstate and rebuilding infrastructure all across the state... We have the financial commitment, but now these things have to happen,” Cuomo said. “You have to stay after these things. It’s like you’re doing a construction project in your home: If you don’t stay on the contractor every day, they’re going to be late, and if you don’t question every change order it’s going to be over budget. So that’s what I’m going to do.” As a result, the possibility that he and the Legislature agree to deals before the legislative session ends in June on an ethics reform package or to create a state DREAM Act seem very slim. “Those that weren’t done in the budget, I don’t know that they’re feasible to get done. If we didn’t get it done in the budget, it means you don’t have the political will to get done,” Cuomo said. Lawmakers return at the end of this month to a thin legislative agenda in Albany. The renewal of mayoral control of New York City schools at the end of June is the only truly deadline-driven concern, while lawmakers may also make a push for a bill that ends child marriage in the state.

[State of Politics](#)
[Politico](#)

3. Earth Yay!

Our Spin:

Just in case you may have forgotten, tomorrow is Earth Day’s 50th Anniversary. How will you celebrate this milestone? Just remember if it involves confetti,

make sure to pick it up. Reduce, Recycle, and Reuse – at least for tomorrow. You could also snap a selfie with a tree or some flowers and post it to the Internet. That won’t leave a carbon footprint. But be careful as Anthony Weiner and many other politicians have discovered the art of the selfie is fraught with danger. The Governor has demonstrated his outdoorsmen skills over the past few years in the Adirondack / Catskill Challenges and posted some impressive pictures showing off his fishing abilities. Think you can do the same...? But in all seriousness, and with all due respect, if you happen to see a Forest Ranger or Environmental Conservation Officer please thank them for their important service, especially tomorrow. They are after all, proud members of Feathers’ flock.

The Story:

Earth Day is officially this Saturday, April 22 which kicks off “Earth Week,” here in New York State. The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has set up a variety of events to get families and friends outdoors and exploring the natural beauty New York has to offer. Below are some of the activities being offered across the state on Saturday to celebrate Earth Day:

Sat. April 22 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	Reinstein Woods Environmental Education Center Depew, NY	Fungi with a Fun Gal Explore the wonderful world of mushrooms! Enjoy a walk to look at mushrooms that we find, while learning the basics of mushroom identification and how fungi contribute to the ecosystem. Registration is required..
Sat. April 22 8 AM - 4 PM	Thompson Park Zoo Watertown, NY	North Country Earth Day at the Thompson Park Zoo Come join the Earth Day celebrations at the Thompson Park Zoo! Learn about the natural world around you and the importance of protecting our natural resources. Discover new places and ways to enjoy the outdoors. There will be numerous family friendly activities and many different organizations will be at the event.
Sat. April 22 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM	Pine Bush Discovery Ctr, 195 New Karner Road, Albany	Pine Bush Earth Day Stewardship Event Stewardship/cleanup activities suitable for all ages. Pre-registration is required at www.AlbanyPineBush.org/events
Sat. April 22 9:00 AM site assignments	Bashakill Wildlife Management Area S Rd, Wurtsboro, NY 12790	Bashakill Wildlife Management Area - 36th Annual Bashakill Clean-up Celebrate Earth Day! Enjoy a walk and fresh spring air while ridding the wetlands of debris. Garbage bags are provided. Wear boots, work gloves, and insect repellent. Bring chairs as lunch, supplied by the BKAA, will be eaten al fresco in the Haven Road DEC parking.

For a full list of events on Saturday and throughout the week, visit the [DEC website](#).

[Department of Environmental Conservation](#)