

SCENE

THE TWO RIVER TIMES™



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THE WEEK OF FEBRUARY 20 - 27, 2015

PHIL MURPHY

May River Road Rise Up to Meet Him

WHEN THE ST. Patrick's Day Parade in Rumson steps off on March 8, you better believe it's going to be following in the steps of its grand marshal, a proud descendant of the old Sod and prouder than a shamrock Irish-American.

That's Philip Murphy, holder of several college degrees, successful businessman, generous philanthropist, innovative financier, former U.S. Ambassador to Germany, majority owner of a women's professional soccer team, loving husband, ideal dad of four, and oh yes, possibly the next governor of the state of New Jersey!

What's more, Murphy doesn't even live in Rumson. He's a Middletown resident who's in love with not only Rumson but just about every other part of Monmouth County. And the office of his Murphy Enterprises is in Red Bank, just across the river from his Middletown home.

Tall, thin, with sparkling blue eyes and a smile that never quits, Murphy is both proud and humbled to be center stage at the third annual Rumson gala honoring the patron of Eire. "We have so many attachments to Rumson and have so many friends there, I'm honored to be the grand marshal of this wonderful event," he said, before ticking off a litany of people and places he loves in Rumson. "All four of our children went to Rumson Country Day School, in fact, Charlie and Sam who still attend, will be marching right alongside me in the parade." The two older Murphy offspring Josh and Emma attend Phillips, a private academy in Massachusetts, and Josh has a commitment preventing them from being home that weekend. Phil's wife, Tammy, will be with daughter Emma on a special mission to Yugoslavia.

It's an interesting and luck-of-the-Irish-filled life this third generation Irish American has enjoyed and worked hard for so far. The youngest of four children of a middle-class Irish-American family who lived just outside Boston, Murphy grew up with a hard working dad who didn't finish high school but was ready, willing and able to take on any job to support his family – including being a paid pall bearer and a liquor store manager – and a mother who believed that a good education was as much of a foundation for a successful and happy future as hard work. All four young Murphys earned college degrees and two, Phil being one of them, went on to earn master's, and all are highly successful in their own fields.

As much as hard work and education were a part of the Murphy ethos, so also was giving back and being civic-minded, another trait their dad instilled in them. And once he was successful, philanthropy and helping those in most need were added to the Murphy list of things that must be done.

Armed with a degree from Harvard and a soon-to-be achieved master's degree from Wharton School in Philadelphia, Murphy started as a summer associate at Goldman Sachs in 1982 and over the next 23 years, rose to be a senior director. During that time, his work spanned the globe, from the United States to Europe to Asia, heading the German region of Goldman for four years, then serving as president of Goldman Sachs Asia for another three, then retiring as global co-head of the Investment Management Division. Before he retired in 2006, he also served on the company's management committee.

If he weren't such a terrific St. Patrick's Day Irish story, Murphy and his wife, Tammy, could also be the perfect Valentine's Day special. Though they met in the early 1980s when both were employed at Goldman Sachs, Murphy never asked her for a date for another seven years. He quickly made up for lost time, however; within 18 days they were engaged, and six months later, they were married. That was more than 20 years ago, and it's a love affair that has only intensified over the decades. Tammy is a partner with her husband in all their ambitious endeavors, and to hear him tell

it, he's the lucky one. "If you were in my shoes and just followed her around for one day, you could see why I'm so in love with her," he says fondly, adding, "I'm the one who wonders what she sees in me."

After retiring he concentrated all of his efforts into other endeavors to be civic-minded and work for the betterment of others. Murphy served as national finance chair of the Democratic National Committee from 2006 to 2009, at the encouragement and with a close working relationship with Howard Dean, former presidential hopeful. The pair are close friends, and Murphy likes the way they complemented each other in their fundraising efforts. Not only does he admire Dean's vision that brought a financially sagging party to the front-line in fundraising, but he likes the discipline the former candidate brought to the party. As finance chairman, Murphy could not take sides with either Hilary Clinton or Barack Obama during the primary in 2008.

As it was, Obama won, but Clinton also became Murphy's boss. She was Secretary of State when Obama tapped Murphy to be ambassador to Germany in 2009 for a four-year term. Those years the Murphy family lived in

Germany had a huge impact on all their lives, more so even than when he was there as a civilian with Goldman Sachs in the '90s. Each of the children is fluent in German, their friendships span the globe and their interest in soccer, a sport in which Murphy participated as a boy, was intensified. The Murphys are now part owners of Sky Blue, a women's soccer team that plays at the Rutgers field, a grass soccer field Murphy maintains is the best of any he's seen anywhere.

Phil and Tammy now spend a considerable amount of their time in other philanthropic and generous endeavors including serving on boards and committees of the NAACP, the Goldman Sachs Foundation, 180 Turning Lives Around, and most especially their own charity, a Teens Help Line called the 2nd floor, which offers a help line for teens in all manner of difficulty, quandary or despair. The organization has already fielded and assisted more than 700,000 teen callers.

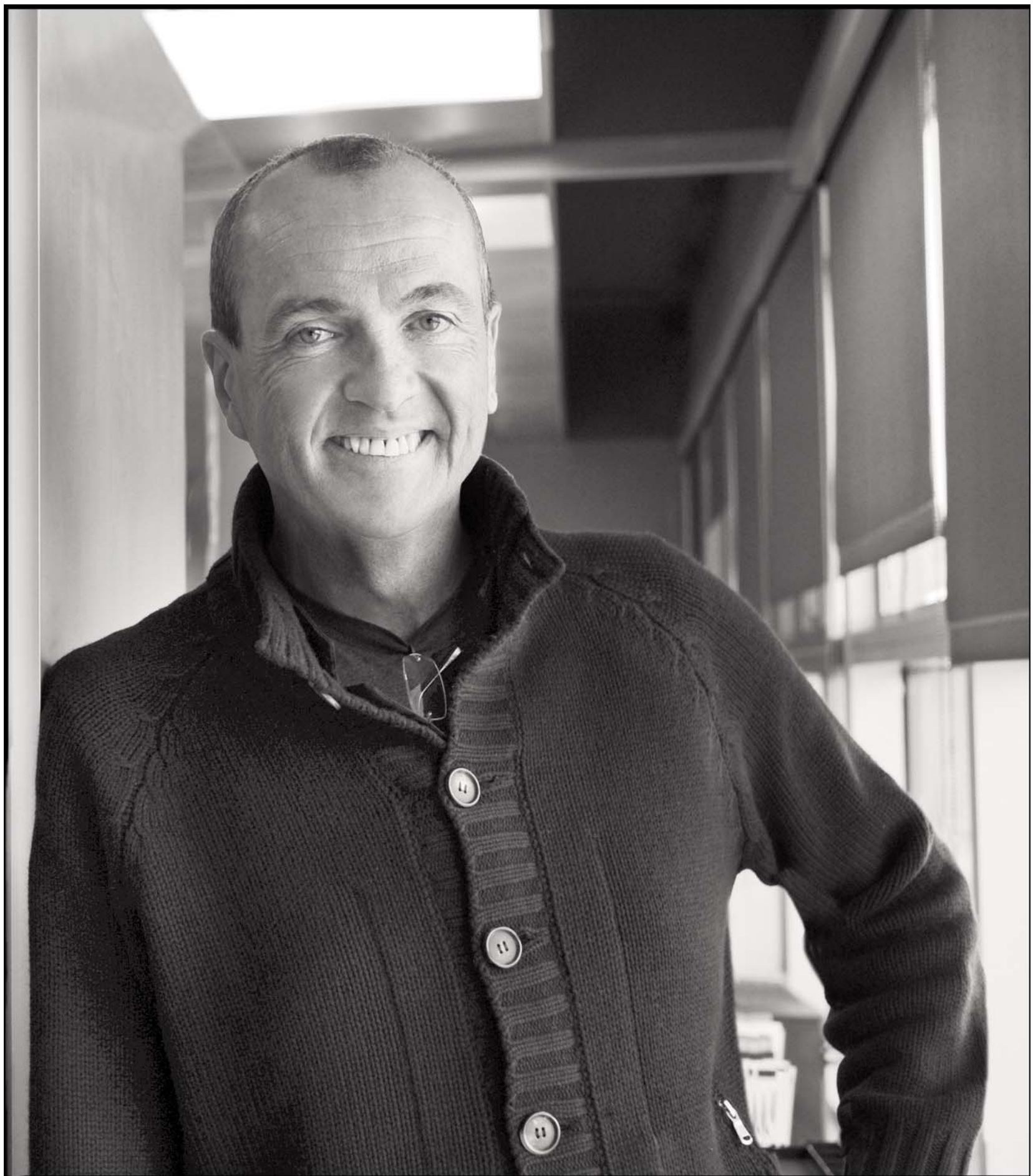
As for the gubernatorial possibilities, Murphy makes it very clear he is "dead serious" in considering a run in 2017. His aim is to improve the situation for the economy of the middle class, simply because "we can do

better." At the end of 2013, wife his wife and the support of numerous friends, including Jon Bon Jovi, he launched New Start New Jersey, a non-profit organization with specific goals to help the middle class, with a priority being to ensure that workers who feel they're permanently displaced in the work force can back into it. "This year we have ideas and specifics," he explains with gusto, "but come back and ask me again a year from now. I want to tell you then that not only did we write them down, but by that time, we've made some accomplishments."

He and Tammy are absorbed in dozens of activities, in dozens of different directions. But the numerous photos of the Murphy clan in their offices show they're both grounded in family. Holding a prominent spot just behind his marble-topped desk, in a silver frame, is a small, handwritten note that Murphy looks at every day. It's from his son, Sam, and says simply: "Daddy; Good luck at work today. Love Sam. P.S. Don't forget to eat lunch."

And that's the kind of note that keeps great men like Phil Murphy happy and thoroughly enjoying the luck of the Irish.

BY MURIEL J. SMITH



DANNY SANCHEZ