High Winds, Fresh Breezes

March 17, 2008 By David Weiss

It?s been a turbulent week on the East Coast. an F2 tornado (tornados? in Atlanta?) blew through downtown Atlanta, an F3* sex scandal blew through our state government in Albany, a giant construction crane toppled over in midtown Manhattan, and Bear Stearns became the latest bank to topple on Wall Street - selling itself for 16 million dollars less than Heather Mills McCartney was

trying to get from her ex-husband.

The bright light of the week is our new governor, David Paterson. Paterson is a legally blind, African-American politician who rose to power less by self promotion than by honest hard work, overcoming the obstacles of physical impairment and of race with a grace that inspires the toughest skeptics. He gave a 28 minute inauguration speech from memory that made me feel at least a little hopeful that our state will be well managed in the difficult months ahead.

Self promotion isn?t necessarily an evil. We live in a crowded world whose inhabitants often must shout to be heard above the noise. It?s only when we promote ourselves simply for our selfish needs that it gets ugly. Paterson?s heart seems to be in the right place. I like this guy.

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* I rated the Spitzer debacle F3 only because it could have been worse - if Spitzer hadn’t stepped down, we’d have been forced to endure months of tabloid television features about prostitutes and politicians - two professions that are often said to be indistinguishable from each other.

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