

Hedging the bets

Mike Coleman, a Democrat, has received solid backing from the predominately Republican business community during his tenure as mayor. Now that Coleman is running for governor, will Columbus business leaders continue to support him with campaign contributions? We checked the latest filings with the Ohio Secretary of State's office to see which GOP backers are sending cash to the hometown candidate. We also reviewed local donations for the other Democratic candidate

surprise that Wexner has given \$2,500 each to Petro and Montgomery. But if money speaks, his seems to be saying, "Vote for Coleman." He gave the mayor \$10,000 earlier this year. In addition, Wexner's wife, Abigail (who historically supports both parties), has handed Coleman \$10,000 as well. (See "Les Wexner talks" on page 41.)

Republicans supporting Democrats

A number of prominent business leaders who usually

seeking national office in 2004, including a group called "Promoting Republicans You Can Elect." So far this year, he has given \$7,500 to Coleman and \$2,500 to Montgomery.

Developer **Don Casto** contributed \$3,000 to Montgomery from 2001 to 2003. He also gave more than \$10,000 to Republican campaigns nationally last year. This year, Casto has contributed \$7,500 to "Coleman for Ohio."

Developer **S. Robert Davis** of Dublin made a \$1,000 contribution to Montgomery in 2004 and supported George W.

traditionally supported Republican candidates. Skestos has given Petro \$9,500 and Coleman \$6,000 this year.

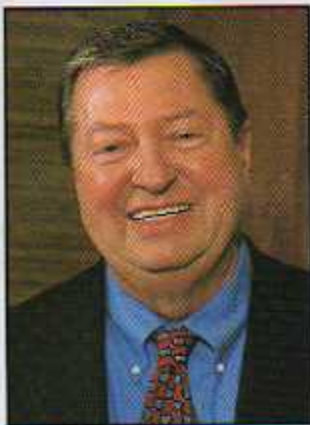
Rodney Wasserstrom, CEO of the Wasserstrom food service company, has donated \$2,500 to Montgomery, \$1,000 to Petro and \$2,500 to Coleman in 2005.

Two Republicans

Some campaign contributors have donated to both Montgomery and Petro thus far. A few examples, including the amount (with the



Don Casto



S. Robert Davis



John P. McConnell



Donald Shackelford

(U.S. House Rep. Ted Strickland) and the Republican hopefuls: Secretary of State Ken Blackwell, Auditor Betty Montgomery and Attorney General Jim Petro.

Note: State law allows donors to give up to \$10,000 to each candidate for each election. The Democratic primary and Republican primaries and the general election are considered separate elections.

Wexner money

The city's most influential campaign contributor is Limited Brands CEO Les Wexner. The richest man in Ohio traditionally supports Republicans, so it's no

support Republicans have made contributions to the two Democrats, as well as, in some cases, to the GOP candidates. They include:

Wayne Boich—of the coal mining concern Boich Company—and his wife and children gave nearly all their \$165,500 in contributions in 2004 to Republicans, according to opensecrets.org, which tracks spending on presidential and congressional races. However, Boich and his son, Wayne Jr., have donated \$10,000 apiece to Strickland's gubernatorial campaign.

Douglas Borror of Dominion Homes donated nearly \$30,000 to Republicans

Bush for president, but has ponied up the maximum \$10,000 for Coleman this year.

Edgar Ingram III, White Castle CEO and Bush-backer, handed over \$1,000 to Montgomery in 2004 and \$10,000 to Coleman this year.

John P. McConnell of Worthington Industries—who has a long history of donations to Republicans—has contributed \$7,500 to Coleman.

Donald Shackelford, chairman of Fifth Third Bank of Central Ohio and a consistent GOP contributor, has given \$2,000 to Petro and \$2,500 to Coleman.

Builder **George Skestos** and members of his family have

Montgomery contribution listed first): Former Columbus mayor Greg Lashutka (\$1,000, \$1,000), civic leader Katherine LeVeque (\$2,500, \$2,000) and Ricart Automotive's Rhett Ricart (\$7,500, \$5,000).

Split households

Some households are divided. For instance, Schottenstein Stores president **Jay Schottenstein** has been supporting both Montgomery and Blackwell, donating \$5,000 to each over the past two years. His wife, Jean, however, wrote a check this year to Strickland's campaign for \$2,000.

▼ *Alice Hohl*