



Western Queens Gazette

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ZONE 1

- Astoria
- Ditmars
- Dutch Kills
- E. Elmhurst
- Hunter's Point
- Sunnyside
- Woodside
- LaG Airport
- L.I. City
- Jackson Heights
- N. Corona
- Ravenswood
- Roosevelt Island
- Steinway

what's inside...

- Senior Spotlight
page 16
- Eye on Politics
page 26
- Restaurant Review
page 42

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Reading



With Rewards
See page 32

Greek Night



At Shea Stadium
See page 44

Break Ground



For Korean Memorial
See page 35

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Queens Libraries Net \$6M



Gazette Photo

Flushing branch of the Queens Library.

BY JOHN TOSCANO

Great advances in school aid and anti-crime legislation marked the end of one of the most successful legislative sessions in Albany in many years.

The legislature also provided generous grants to Queens institutions and organizations, topped by a \$6 million capital improvement grant to the Queens Borough Public Library system. The 17-member Queens Assembly delegation amassed the \$6 million grant from its discretionary funds, which are allotted to every Assemblymember and state senator. State Senator Frank Padavan added another \$250,000 for the library system.

In addition, each member received funds and handed out grants to many senior, youth, education, housing and parks advocacy groups throughout the borough.

The same applied to every state senator from the borough.

Assemblymember Ivan Lafayette (D-Jackson Heights), who heads the delegation, said an important consideration in making the grant was that many branches don't have cable service. "Once it's in, at least local kids will get to use the service," he said.

Other important Queens approvals pointed out by Lafayette were the renewal of rebates to the movie industry; including condo and co-op owners in the STAR property tax rebate; and the addition of 100 "red light" cameras at certain intersections throughout the city to catch motorists going through red light signals.

Legislators said it was decided to make the boroughwide library the grant recipient because the library serves the entire

borough. The library comes under the jurisdiction of the Education Committee which is headed by Assemblymember Catherine Nolan (D-Ridgewood).

Assemblymember Michael Gianaris (D-Astoria) said the library, the largest in the world, was selected for the large grant because for the past several years it has taken large cuts "so they needed the help," Gianaris said.

During the session, state Senator Serphin Maltese (R-C, Middle Village) funneled a grant of \$55 million to La Guardia Community College in Long Island City for the purpose of buying a building to relieve student overcrowding and to expand student services, especially child care.

See page 24