

Editorial

St. Patrick's Day Is Everyone's Holiday

This Saturday is a significant holiday for New York City and the nation. On St. Patrick's Day everyone is Irish, at least for a few hours. And at least for a few hours, celebrants are united in honoring a spirit of unity that prevails all too infrequently the rest of the year.

The first parade in honor of St. Patrick was held in 1766, organized by Irish soldiers serving King George III. Early St. Patrick's Day marchers formed up at their parish churches or their organizations' headquarters and marched to the Old St. Patrick's Cathedral at what are now Mott and Prince Streets. The Archbishop greeted the groups, dignitaries and politicians addressed the crowd and the marchers dispersed in search of a bit of St. Pat's Day pleasure, usually in the form of liquid refreshment.

The present-day St. Patrick's Day Parade, sponsored by the Ancient Order of Hibernians, will see more than 150,000 marchers, members of various Irish societies from New York and around the country, and many Eire-based societies who have made the Atlantic crossing, trekking the two miles uptown. Large contingents include the Emerald Societies of the New York City Police and Fire Departments and a number of politicians. The parade is one of only a few such

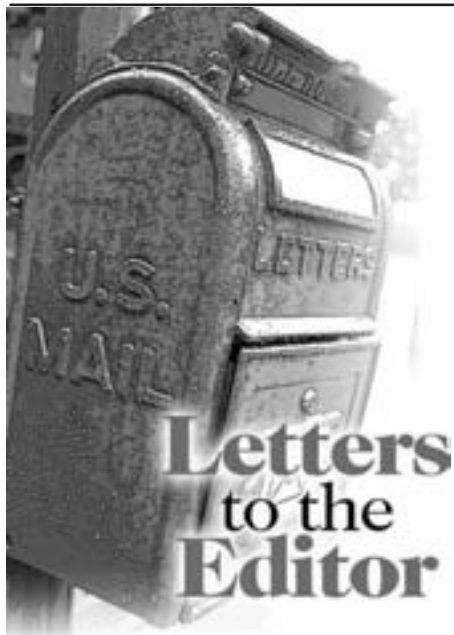
events with no cars, floats, buses, trucks or other vehicles allowed. Only people, led by members of the 165th Infantry (originally the Irish 69th Regiment of Fighting Irish fame), step off at 42nd Street and march north up Fifth Avenue to 86th Street. St. Patrick's Cathedral moved uptown along with the rest of the city, and as has been the case since the 1850s, the Archbishop of New York, today Edward, Cardinal Egan, will review the parade in front of St. Patrick's Cathedral at Fifth Avenue and 50th Street.

The New York City St. Patrick's Day parade in 1766 may well have been the first of its kind in the 13 original colonies. Certainly that first parade gave rise to a long, strong and still flourishing tradition that the city and the nation would be the poorer without, and not just because the marchers and the celebrants who line the sidewalks bring in a fair amount of holiday trade. Despite the regrettable record of intolerance toward Irish immigrants that marked a good part of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the New York City St. Patrick's Day parade made everybody in town at least a little bit Irish for at least a few hours every March 17. Starting with those few hours at those early parades, inclusion and acceptance spread and

grew. Not quite 200 years after the first St. Patrick's Day parade, the country had progressed from employment advertisements that included the sentence "No Irish need apply" to the election of an American of Irish ancestry as 35th president of the United States.

We think we're correct in surmising that the tradition of celebrating St. Patrick's Day led to the tolerance, inclusion and acceptance of other immigrant groups. New York City hosts what may well be the largest number of parades and celebrations of different ethnicities in the United States, if not the world. Were it not for the tradition begun by the first St. Patrick's Day parade, we believe we're safe in surmising that few of the others would take place today.

On this coming Saturday, March 17, 2007, we'll all be sons and daughters of Erin for at least a few hours. Even if you're not on Fifth Avenue, take a moment or two to reflect on and appreciate the first St. Patrick's Day revelers who bequeathed to all of us the right to honor and celebrate who we are and where we come from and to take unto ourselves our own or any other national identity we please whenever that particular parade passes by.



Have A Safe St. Pat's

To The Editor:

Each year on St. Patrick's Day, people everywhere--both Irish and Irish at heart--sport the green and celebrate Ireland's unique culture and heritage with parades, parties and community activities.

Fortunately, many of those planning to celebrate make designated drivers a part of their party plans. According to a national survey, more than 148 million American adults have been a designated driver or used one. That's equal to giving the entire population of Ireland a ride home 37 times!

Along with strong law enforcement and community-based alcohol awareness and education programs, drunk-driving fatalities nationwide have decreased 39 percent since 1982, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

This St. Patrick's Day, help keep the roads safe by volunteering to be a designated driver or using one. And whether Irish or not, don't for-

get to thank your designated driver with a kiss, or better yet, visit www.whosyourbud.com and send them an electronic thank you card for getting you home safely.

Sincerely,
C.A. Verdon
CA&E Coordinator
Anheuser-Busch Sales & Service
Of New York, Inc.

10 Stock Market Lessons

To The Editor:

The following are ten things that I learned from the stock market crash last week:

1. Antacids are useful medications.
2. What goes up can come down.
3. Stock market analysts are superb at explaining why something happens but only after it happens and not before when you could really use the information.
4. There's a bit of truth that pebbles thrown into the water and stock bubbles in China can ripple around the world.
5. The yen carry trade does not refer to take-out food; it has something to do with economics.
6. Bull markets and bull**** have a lot in common.
7. We may or may not have a recession this year.
8. The phrase "know your investment comfort level" sounds good in theory.
9. Emerging markets and submerging portfolios can go together.
10. My S&P stocks were standard, and they made me poorer.

Sincerely,
Martin H. Levinson
Forest Hills

Landmarking

To The Editor:

The rush to landmark Sunnyside Gardens is

partly being driven by fear of overdevelopment. Many people are under the misperception that one of the purposes of landmarking is to prevent overdevelopment. If one reads the Landmarks Commission's enabling legislation, it becomes clear that stopping overdevelopment isn't their job.

It is the job of the City Planning Commission and zoning to regulate size and bulk of buildings and their relationship to open spaces as well as appropriate uses. The McMansions and expansions that many people find objectionable are prevented through appropriate zoning. Zoning provides specific rules formed with input from the local community planning board. [The] Landmarks [Preservation Commission], as the issue is style and look of buildings, revolves around materials such as specific window, door, and brick types and yes, slate shingle, with approvals at the discretion of staff of the commission.

Zoning is used to preserve the relationship between buildings and open spaces and appropriate uses. In Sunnyside Gardens the zoning now in place prohibits any enlargements without special approvals. We do not need landmarking to prevent overdevelopment.

Preservation need not be historically focused, taking a neighborhood back to its original look. Zoning can, and should be used to preserve and control the size of buildings and preserve the open spaces.

I believe that preservation of the open spaces and the size of the buildings is what is most important to people in Sunnyside and Queens, and that most people would not support landmarking if they were fully aware of City Planning's role and recent Buildings Department's enforcement efforts in Sunnyside.

In fact, it appears that some enlargements that are now prohibited under the present zoning would be allowed under landmarking if the special zoning was rescinded.

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E Mail Address

QGazette@AOL.COM

Business Office and Display Advertising
42-16 34th Avenue, L.I.C. N.Y. 11101
(718) 361-6161

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