

# Editorial

## Leave July 4 Where It Is

Today, for the second time in this decade, July 4 has fallen on a Wednesday. The interruption of the business week for a one-day holiday has some people calling for moving Independence Day to a Monday, thereby giving most of the American workforce a three-day weekend, as is the case with other federal holidays.

This should not be allowed to happen.

In spite of the disruption in our production schedules occasioned by several federal holidays having been moved to Monday, like everyone else who has these days off, we enjoy them. (The national holiday of Thanksgiving Day approaches the long weekend from another direction: it occurs on a Thursday and some fortunate souls, sometimes including ourselves, get

the next day, Friday, off as well.) Of course, in this business, a holiday means only that there will be two days worth of work waiting for us when we get back to the office, but all the same, time off is time off and we appreciate it.

There seems to us, however, not the slightest justification for moving Independence Day, the day that celebrates the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776 and the founding of this nation, to the Monday that falls closest to July 4. The willingness of the members of the Continental Congress, representing the free citizens of the 13 original colonies, to pledge "our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honor" to the cause of throwing off the yoke of British economic and military oppression and founding a new nation is far too significant to be

moved around on the calendar willy-nilly. If July 4 falls on a Wednesday, so be it. We can suffer the mild inconvenience of a midsummer day's vacation from whatever we're doing to celebrate the birth of this nation.

We've said it before: take a few moments in the course of your leisure time activities today, whatever they may be, to appreciate the significance of the sacrifices the Founding Fathers were willing to make and the legacy they bequeathed us. There is a Free World for other nations to admire and emulate because they were willing to risk their lives. We should not diminish their achievements by moving Independence Day to suit our alleged convenience.

## Congestion Pricing Is Not The Answer

The specter of congestion pricing continues to hover over New York City. Although the state legislature adjourned before any kind of a vote could be taken on putting Mayor Michael Bloomberg's plan to levy an \$8 fee, including any bridge or tunnel tolls, on motor vehicles entering Manhattan below 86th Street from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekdays, the concept is still very much alive. In fact, the legislature is due to vote on the plan in a special session this month.

Aside from the blatant unfairness of charging drivers from other boroughs to enter or cross Manhattan, congestion pricing would impose another burden on New Yorkers who use mass transit: that of being crammed into subway cars already filled to capacity during rush hour. The A, C and F lines and the "number lines"—the 1,2,3,4,5,6 and Queens' own International Express, the 7 line, are among the city's

busiest. Especially during rush hour, many of these trains have cars so packed with commuters that there is literally not one more square inch of room for more riders to squeeze in. Even during off-peak hours, some lines are still standing-room-only.

Last Monday, New York City Transit officials were quoted on a local radio station saying that most of these subway lines are at capacity now, with no more room on the tracks to add more trains. New York City Transit President Howard H. Roberts Jr. told Metropolitan Transportation Authority board members that congestion pricing could mean that the MTA would have to rely on more buses. "If all those cars don't come in, there will be more room for the buses," he said. This is scant comfort to those of us who have stood at bus stops for what seem like hours, especially in inclement weather, only to have buses pass by because they, too, are

filled to capacity and beyond.

Drivers from the boroughs other than Manhattan having to pay to enter a part of the city where there was once free access to all is very disturbing to us. We find ourselves in agreement with City Councilmember David Weprin, who has suggested alternative ways to combat congestion, such as prohibiting some truck deliveries during peak hours. Weprin called congestion pricing "just the wrong thing to do", especially at a time when the city's coffers hold multi-billion dollar surpluses. We agree. The working- and middle-class citizens of the city of New York who travel into Manhattan mostly of necessity should not be burdened with what amounts to yet another form of taxation, especially one that will aggravate the already miserable conditions plaguing the city's mass transit system.

*Gazette*, along with the many public officials who wrote such complimentary and congratulatory letters. We are honored to have such a wonderful local newspaper that enlightens us, inspires us, causes us to think, to share our opinions and views, to learn, to broaden our horizons and to care about our community and city and local New York state government.

I appreciate the letters to the editor page where we, the public, can express our opinions and voice our feelings on a wide variety of issues.

The June 27 issue was optimistic and positive in that it shared the joy of the many scholarship and award winners of our young people who graduated from high schools in our area. I am also delighted that EPIC has changed, enabling the elderly to better handle the financial burden of paying for needed prescription medications. I also applaud [Assemblymember Michael] Gianaris, [City Councilmember Peter] Vallone Jr. and the many lawmakers who have done so much for so many.

Our *Gazette* is a gift of the American spirit and encourages and enhances our democratic way of life. I wish all of us a happy 25 more years of *Gazette* readers. Happy birthday United States of America.

Cynthia Groopman  
Long Island City

## Thanks For 25 Years

To The Editor:

I have just pick[ed] up my copy of the *Queens Gazette* at Bay Terrace Shopping Center and could only think of one word, WOW! I have to say that the 25th anniversary edition was just great and I have to say Kudos to the entire staff of the *Queens Gazette*. I would also like to say that I was impressed with all the testimonials and congratulations from so many from the President [George W. Bush] to our local and congressional representatives, not to mention our own Mayor Mike Bloomberg. I thought [it] was just fantastic.

I also found the article by *Queens Gazette* Editor Linda J. Wilson quite informative, where she mention[ed] the highs and lows the paper had gone through, especially in relationship [to] the blackout in Queens in 2006. Linda Wilson sum[med] it all up and what the *Queens Gazette* is all about when she said, "The *Gazette* continues to grow and change and every day is a new adventure. We can't imagine being anywhere else." And for that I say, keep up the good work and may the *Queens Gazette* have another great 25 years more.

Frederick R. Bedell Jr.  
Bellerose

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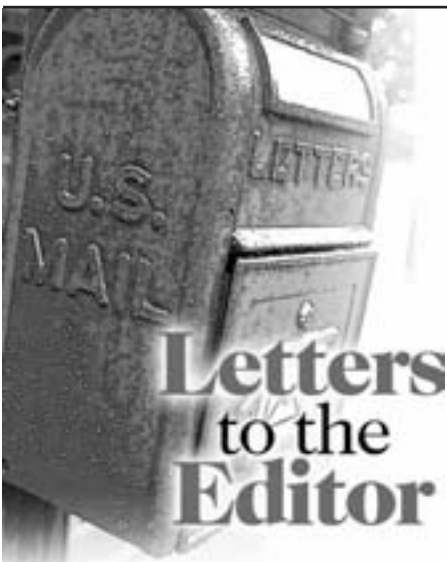
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## We Do 'Great Work'

To The Editor:

I am saving your anniversary issue. You really do great work.

Your Internet paper is one of the best.

Best wishes,

Catherine Tsounis

## Thanks For The Memories

To The Editor:

How delighted I was to share the joy of the celebration of the 25th anniversary of our