

On the brief side...

Gennaro Condemns Hate Crime

City Councilmember James F. Gennaro is offering a \$1,000 reward for information regarding swastikas painted on the walls of the Young Israel of Hillcrest Synagogue in Hillcrest on October 18.

"This is a disgusting act of hate," declare Gennaro, an honorary member of the Jewish Community Relations Council. "Marring a sacred place with ugly symbols of intolerance, bigotry and prejudice is the despicable behavior of a contemptible criminal. I am appalled that in this day and age such criminals still exist, which is why I'm offering a reward to those who will not stand by quietly or withhold information that will lead to the apprehension of a hatemonger."

Italian Heritage Night At City Hall

Italian Americans who have excelled in their professions and have contributed to the betterment of society were honored at Italian Heritage Night at City Hall last week.

City Councilmember Peter Vallone Jr. honored Robert Fonti, president of a real estate management company and a leading philanthropist. Fonti, a St. John's University graduate, serves as real estate consultant for the town of Huntington on Long Island.

"Mr. Fonti signifies the achievements of those Italian Americans who have helped make this country great," Vallone stated.

City Comptroller William Thompson honored five Italian Americans who have excelled in their fields and civic pursuits and have all made extraordinary contributions to our city:

- Frank Celenza Jr., D.D.S., P.C., past president of the Northeastern Society of Periodontists and associate clinical professor, NYU College of Dentistry and member of the International Team of Implantologists and his son, Vincent Celenza, D.M.D., P.C., secretary of the American Academy of Esthetic Dentistry, diplomate American Board of Prosthodontics and past president, Northeastern Gnathological Society, Fellow of the Greater New York Academy of Prosthodontics..

- Christine M. Meola, a former director of development at New York Weill-Cornell Medical Center, now executive director of the Columbus Citizens Foundation, a sponsor of the Columbus Day Parade, former assistant vice president for development at Fordham University, member of the Council for Advancement and Support of Education..

- Roma Torre, anchor NY1 "News All Day" and "News All Morning" television shows, former anchor of the award-winning news program "Inside City Hall", Emmy Award winner, Red Carpet coverage of the Tony Awards and the Newswomen's Club of New York 2003 Peggy Award.

Dr. Sal Primeggia, professor of sociology at Adelphi University, co-editor of *The Italian-American Experience: An Encyclopedia* and *The Saints in the Lives of Italian-Americans*, contributor and participant in film documentary "La Festa" and WLIW 21 Public Television's "The Italian-Americans: Part 1" and the PBS Emmy-Award winning documentary "Heaven Touches Brooklyn in July."

Padavan Collects Cellphones For Domestic Violence Victims

As part of a national effort to increase awareness of domestic violence, state Senator Frank Padavan is collecting used cellphones for victims as part of national and local efforts during National Domestic Violence Prevention Month.

The collection will run through Wednesday, November 14. All contributions of phones, batteries or accessories will be given to Verizon Wireless for use in their Hopeline phone recycling program, which provides used and recycled phones to domestic violence prevention organizations.

Phones can be dropped off at Padavan's district offices, 89-39 Gettysburg St., Bellerose from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday, or 150-26 14th Ave., Whitestone from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., also Monday through Friday.

"Many of us have an old, unused cellphone that we don't know what to do with," Padavan said. "Please bring any unused cellphone to either of my district offices and make good use of them by providing a safe line of communication for victims of domestic violence."

Mayor Signs Bill Creating Bayside BID

Noting that Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) provide services to the community that are essential to ensuring that small businesses and the neighborhoods in which they operate are given every opportunity to succeed, Mayor Michael Bloomberg recently signed into law a bill creating the Bayside Village BID.

The BID will serve 254 businesses in the area bounded by Northern Boulevard, 35th Avenue, Bell Boulevard and 41st Avenue. The budget for the first year will be about \$80,000, the mayor said. The budget is funded by local property owners and overseen by the city Department of Small Business Services.

BIDs provide maintenance and sanitation services, security services, marketing and promotion of local businesses, holiday lighting, economic development, beautification and landscaping.

Vallone Lights Up Dark Area Of Shore Boulevard

The city Department of Transportation, responding to requests from City Councilmember Peter Vallone Jr and residents of the Shore Towers Apartments, has agreed to install new streetlights in front of the building at 25-40 Shore Blvd., Astoria.

Residents of Shore Towers, a large residential complex along the East River, had complained to Vallone (D-Astoria) that sidewalks were dark and dangerous at night.

"Light is the enemy of crime," chair of the council Public Safety Committee Vallone said. "More street lights not only make people feel safer, it actually makes them safer because criminals are afraid to be seen."



Fonti and Vallone

Suit Filed To Block Spitzer License Plan; Senate Bill Outlaws It

Continuing their assault on Governor Eliot Spitzer's edict allowing illegal aliens to get drivers' licenses, an upstate county group filed suit on Monday to block the plan.

The same day, the GOP-controlled state senate passed a bill to invalidate the governor's proposal.

Neither action in the ongoing battle appeared to faze the embattled Spitzer, however.

Responding to both the legal move to upend his controversial plan, and the state senate's action, Spitzer said he acted within his legal authority.

It's doubtful that Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver would have his Democratic majority follow the senate's lead.

However, if the Assembly doesn't approve the senate measure, Senate Majority Leader Joseph Bruno threatened court action. "We are going to contemplate serious legal action," he said.

The suit to block Spitzer's plan, which is due to take effect in December, was filed by Rensselaer County Clerk Frank Merola in State Supreme Court in

Albany. It charges that the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and DMV Commissioner David Swartz would be violating state and federal law if they implemented the governor's plan.

Merola, a Republican, besides seeking to block Spitzer's plan, would forbid the DMV to order county clerks unwilling to comply to do so.

The senate bill would require immigrants to provide a Social Security number as proof that they are in this country legally.

Democrats charged that the measure was anti-immigrant. During the debate on the bill, Republicans said the governor's plan violated federal and state law and created opportunities to make terrorist activities easier to carry out.

Over the weekend, fears were expressed by opponents of the plan that it could open the way for non-registered voters to cast ballots if identifying information such as a driver's license number can be found on their voter registration form.

—John Toscano

114th Precinct Blotter Highlights

Monday, October 15:

- A 23-year-old Hispanic male was charged with assault, acting in a manner injurious to a child and harassment after he hit a victim with a metal chair in the presence of a child. The incident took place at 39-18 29th St.
- A 16-year-old Hispanic male was arrested at 25-60 49th St. and charged with aggravated harassment and stalking after he had been harassing and making threats to a victim by phone.
- A 41-year-old white male was charged with criminal trespass after he was observed inside 21-19 27th St. without permission.
- Two Hispanic males 22 and 23 years old were charged with criminal possession of marijuana after they were found in possession of marijuana when stopped at a vehicle checkpoint at Crescent Street and 31st Road.

Tuesday, October 16:

- A 29-year-old Indian male was charged with bail jumping and having an open container of an alcoholic beverage in public after he was observed drinking beer in public at 32-08 31st St. and upon further investigation, was found to be wanted on an active warrant.

Stamp... From page 1

Queens, the most diverse county in the United States. Eng also noted that the U.S.P.S. has always delivered mail to him consistently and efficiently, even though at times his life experiences, including service in the U.S. Army, have led him into rural areas and to far corners of the country.

After the stamp unveiling, Burton delivered closing remarks. The speakers and dignitaries present also received framed commemorative "panes" of 20 stamps. Each program for the event also had one stamp affixed cancelled with a special cancellation stamp with the scales of justice and "Serve With Pride/Queens Civil Court Station/Jamaica, NY 11435/October 23, 2007."

With the stamp, the U.S. Postal Service calls attention to the importance of jury service, a cornerstone of democracy in the United States. "The Constitutions of the United States and the state of New York provide that a collective body of 'eligible' citizens shall perform as jurors, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender or economic status," Chief Judge Judith S. Kaye wrote in her "Message From the Chief Judge" in the *New York State Unified Court System Juror's Handbook*. "It is a role you should assume with pride. While I recognize jury service is a burden, interrupting your personal and business lives, it is also a unique privilege we enjoy as citizens. Jury service is thus not only your responsibility but also your opportunity to participate in the American justice system, to learn firsthand how it works, and to help us make it work better."