

WOODSIDE HERALD

SERVING SUNNYSIDE-WOODSIDE AND LONG ISLAND CITY

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WOODSIDE, L.I.C., N.Y. FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2023

FREE

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO SERVED

by Peter Ross

With Memorial Day (formerly known as Decoration Day) upcoming, a group of volunteers, including several Boy Scout units from Northeast Queens Pathfinder District, have organized to assist with the decoration of US Military veterans grave sites within the Saint Michael's Cemetery and Calvary Cemetery system in the Western part of Queens County. This annual event, which was expanded several years ago through the efforts of Charles White, a volunteer firefighter from New Jersey with family roots in Brooklyn and Queens, and a number of other dedicated local volunteers, has once again taken place through the month of May in the hopes that the families of our Country's fallen heroes and protectors may visit and see that their loved ones are not forgotten by the community at large. As importantly, the effort helps to remember, even if not by name (as many of the gravestones have become worn beyond recognition), the many veterans who no longer have family to visit them and/or whose descendents (if any) may not be aware of them at all. It is especially for those that the effort continues.

Two members/supporters of the presently defunct Scouts BSA Troop 390 (local to the Sunnyside/Woodside area) began this year's service in Third and Second Calvary earlier in the month and were joined the last two weekends by members, leaders and parents of BSA Troops 1923G (Jackson Heights), 70 (Astoria), and 96 (Forest Hills) and Cub Scout Packs 90 (Astoria) and 96. Their efforts decorated over 600 grave sites at the time of this article and it is hoped that time and resources (flag donations!) may allow for more to be completed by Memorial Day or soon thereafter (by Flag Day). First Calvary has been, as it has for the last few years, ably decorated over the last couple of months by Charles White and a dedicated woman affectionately known to us as LIC Janice (who has also decorated in parts of Second Calvary). A small group of returning volunteers also decorated over 400 veteran's grave sites in Saint Michael's Cemetery, utilizing military branch flags purchased and provided by the Cemetery.

The organizers/volunteers would like to thank Charles White for reclaiming hundreds of American Flags which were used for this effort as well as the J.V. Daniels Veterans Of Foreign Wars Post # 2813 and the Saint Sebastian's Catholic War Veterans Post # 870 for the donation of several boxes of flags which enabled hundreds of additional graves to be decorated. In their service and remembrance, the volunteers tried to decorate as best as possible all known deceased veterans (who collectively we remember and honor with those still living on Veterans Day), but during this holiday we hope specifically that all recollect on the lives of those who have died while in military service, making the ultimate sacrifice during and in the defense of us and others, whether at home or abroad. While off from school and work it is wished that all have a safe and enjoyable day/weekend but beyond any recreational activities you may engage in, do something to remember the point of this solemn day - visit a National Cemetery or a local war memorial, research the life and death of a service member killed in action, decorate a fallen service person's grave site, take part in a local parade, ceremony and/or the National Moment Of Remembrance, fly the American Flag at your home at half-staff (but only until noon). May we always remember, let us never forget.



Scouts BSA Troop 1923G Leader Stephanie Wong instructs her Scouts prior to their service work in Third Calvary Cemetery.



Scouts BSA Troop 1923G & Troop-Pack 96 members come together after veterans' gravesite decoration service.



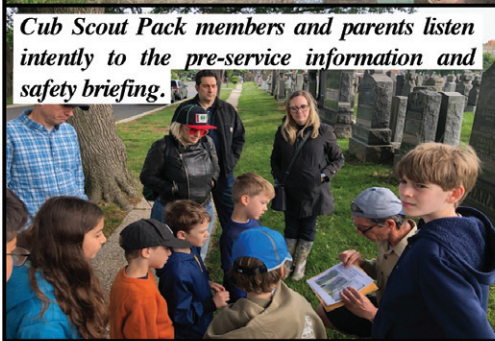
Cub Scout Max C. plants a flag by a family stone where a service member is buried.



Scout Valeria L. From Troop 1923G decorates the grave of PVT Pierce A. Moore of NY (died 1942).



Scouts BSA Troop 1923G & Troop-Pack 96 members come together after veterans' gravesite decoration service.



Cub Scout Pack members and parents listen intently to the pre-service information and safety briefing.



Cub Scout Vladimir C. decorates a grave with a government military marker stone.



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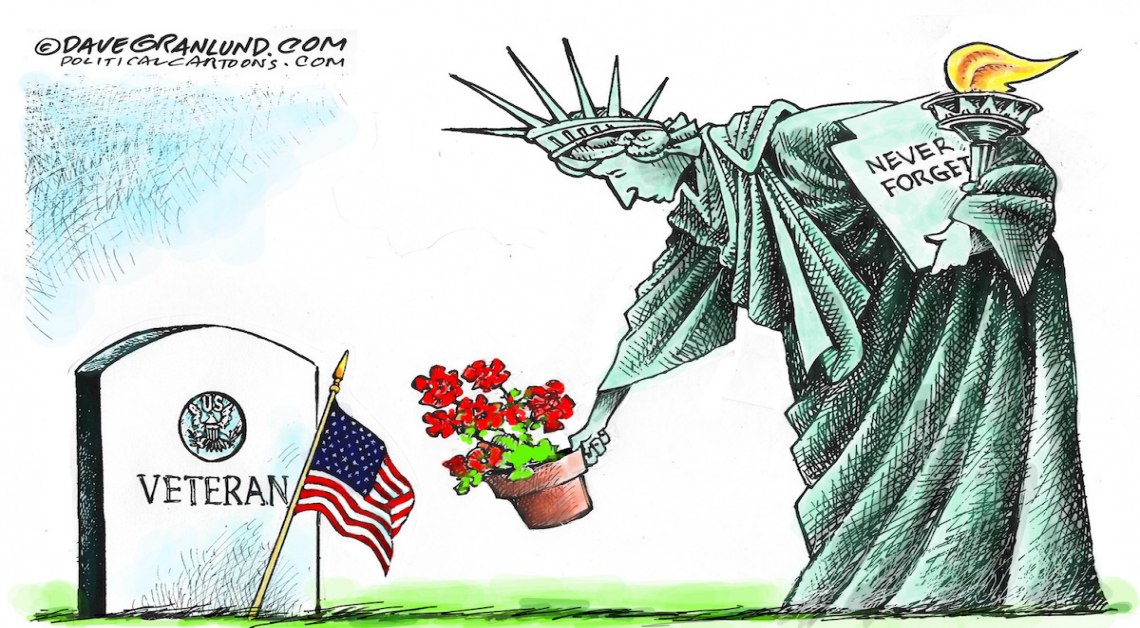
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COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS SPRING INTO VIEW

by Dr. Sharon M. Cadiz

Spring is the trumpet blast that summons our attention to notice the changing landscape. Like Spring’s call to action, community activists and civic organizers are those who likewise get us to notice the work of change. I have long admired the work of those who sacrifice time and energy to improve the quality of life in our communities. They are often the unsung heroes and sheroes who selflessly crusade for justice and the acknowledgement of our shared need to live out our days safely and well. To begin to list those who fit this description risks the countless omissions that are likely to occur. Instead of attempting such a feat, I thought; like picking Spring flowers for a small bouquet, I would select just three men. I have selected three men, and this is certainly not to overlook or negate the contributions of local women like Claudia Coger, Patricia Dorfman, Diane Ballek, Ann Bruno or RoseMarie Poveromo who are all stalwart champions of community service. It is simply because these three men are a part of this one ‘bouquet’ that I am highlighting here. I saw some striking similarities in these three. All three have deep roots in their respective communities; have monikers that identify them within their communities; and each one represents a different age group. I thought that the latter fact was significant because it shows how community action can evolve from people at any age. Perhaps by writing about these community activists, it will bring to mind many others known to us.

I first met Richard M. Vagge, community activist and resident of Jackson Heights at a candidate forum at Sunnyside Community Services before an election that would decide who would fill the office of Queens Borough President after Melinda Katz. Richard has lived in Jackson Heights for 43 years; is retired from his position as the former radiology manager at Elmhurst Hospital and former Director of the Elmhurst Hospital Blood Donor Program and is known as “Rabid Rich.” As his nickname suggests, he has a passionate belief in the value of community engagement. He has assumed the role of “watchdog” for a long list of issues related to housing; sanitation; rat mitigation; erosion of public space; roadbed safety, and he attends many meetings including those of Community Board 3; NYPD Council and Town Hall meetings. “Rabid Rich” is proud of his cross-community collaboration as a volunteer with Pastor Joseph Montavani of the Woodside Neighborhood Association and St. Jacobus Lutheran Church of Woodside on graffiti cleanups and food pantry support projects. He emphasizes the importance of making connections with other communities to foster higher levels of public engagement focused on relevant issues affecting the quality of life. I was pleased to have him attend the screening of “Pomonok Dreams” that was shown at the Long Island City Branch Library back in the Fall of 2022. It showed his support for engaging in dialogue about the past, present and future of public housing. His determination and research into issues of concern; as well as his commitment to equity of access and opportunity, is quite remarkable and he is known to say: “If the boat ain’t rocking, we ain’t moving.”

I met Lashawn Marston, known as “Suga Ray,” for the first time in a social media post on a Sunday back in March of 2023 when I saw that he was camped out and doing a hunger strike on 44th Drive in Long Island City to protest the gentrification, displacement and overdevelopment in the area which he captured in his reference to the “tale of two Long Island Cities.” He started his hunger strike on February 28th and pledged to continue until his 39th birthday on March 14th. I visited him the following day and found him in his tent under a brown tarp on that rainy Monday. We chatted and I got the sense that this young man represented the next generation of community activists. He expressed a dedication to his cause and the well-being of his neighbors in the community. A short time after, I saw another couple of social media posts sharing some of his activities. He and a group of local performing artists held a fundraiser at Urban Vegan on a Saturday evening. To say that this was a departure from conventional fundraisers would be an understatement. Musical performers, energy workers, meditation, crystal singing bowls and vegan fare were all part of the scene. That evening, I heard the word “artist” for the first time and became aware of the idea of “an artist whose work is a reflection of his or her activism.” I also saw his post about a weekly community grief support group at Riis Community Center where “Suga Ray is quoted as saying: “Grief is an emotion you shouldn’t have to process alone.” I attended two sessions and gained an even deeper respect for this young man’s active involvement in his community as a change agent and activist. It gives me optimism about the next generation of community activists. Altogether, I am convinced that I have been ushered into an ever-widening understanding of how activism can be expressed.

Long before I met Eric Mathews, I saw his handiwork in flowerbeds around the Astoria community. Right outside the entrance to Reality House, where I was the Director of Best Practice Implementation for six years, were large flower pots filled with beautiful flowers reflecting the changing seasons. It was, in fact, at Reality House and Justice for All Coalition Meetings back in 2014, that I got to know the man behind these wonderful creations. Like a rosebud that unfolds, I started to discover more about the man who goes by the name: “The Peaceful Gardener” and his devotion to planting the seeds of bright futures for youth in the community, as well as beautiful gardens. He is the Director of Grounds and Horticulture at Socrates Sculpture Park and Co-Founder of the Minor Miracles program, for youth between the ages of 5 and 18, that began over ten years ago with the support of local leaders and funding partners. The program’s primary focus was on creating “learning environments where children could thrive and have fun.” They participated in local beautification projects; learned about composting, urban beekeeping and sustainability; track and field activities, games and financial literacy. The youth visited museums; Ellis Island and engaged in self-defense classes and career exploration events. In addition to his skills in horticulture and programming for youth enrichment, “The Peaceful Gardener” is an experienced martial artist who has blended a diverse array of talents, interests and personal experiences of growth and development to form the basis for his brand of seasoned community activism. In the Summer of 2020, when the COVID pandemic and the murder of George Floyd triggered a sense of urgency, “The Peaceful Gardener” reached out to me and others in the community to brainstorm ways to create programming for a small group of youngsters. His vision and sense of mission that was well honed by the prior years of working with young people in the “Minor Miracles” program gave him ready access to some ways to proceed with the help of some generous funders including Socrates Sculpture Park that became the sponsor and base of operations for the program that is called AH YES which stands for Astoria Houses Youth Enrichment Service. The youth participants had an extraordinary Summer in 2020 in spite of the challenges; and the program continues to evolve as the Summer of 2023 approaches. Last year, the young people built a sustainable green roof, learned new skills; participated in financial fitness, wellness and hands-on nature study workshops; as well as trips and exposure to artists and crafts people with whom they interacted on a regular basis and during special events. I suppose that I am most impressed with how “The Peaceful Gardener” maintains a high level of nurturing long term support for the youth who are fortunate enough to come across his path. Youth who participated in “Minor Miracles” and helped to launch the 2020 effort are now leaders shaping experiences and goals

FIRST FRIDAYS BEGIN AGAIN!

It has been almost two years since the Sunnyside Kiwanis First Fridays crew held court at one of our neighborhood’s fine bars/taverns and consensus is that the time is ripe to get together again, have a good time and help a good cause. Well, the hiatus is over so let the fun begin again with stories to tell and memories to share together. The organizers are happy to announce the first First Friday Social Mixer Event of 2023 which will be held from 7:00 to 10:00 PM on June 2, 2023 at Bar 43 located at 43-06 43rd Street in Sunnyside, Queens. Thank you to ‘Shuggy’ and the management and staff of Bar 43 for making space available for this event, as they have many times before, which is open to all. A little birdie also advised there will even be drink specials for those participating in the event, but only for the first hour (7 to 8 PM, but don’t tell anyone!). Come join your neighbors, friends and local Kiwanians as you enjoy the tasty food and refreshing beverages readily available at one of Sunnyside’s favorite watering holes! Of course, don’t forget to bring something (greenbacks in any denomination will be thankfully accepted) for the cause whose focus has now changed to the support of Kiwanis’s local youth student leadership programs and other youth related programming (including sending kids to Kamp Kiwanis and support of Kiwanis Pediatric Trauma Centers). For those who are stalwarts to the past First Friday’s events if you slip up and bring any non-perishable foodstuffs, we will make sure they find their way to one of the local pantries (so fear not!).

The Sunnyside Kiwanis First Friday Social Mixers are occasional meet and greet events held to foster community togetherness, create stronger social bonds between our neighbors and civic groups and most importantly to raise funds to assist (now) our local youth leadership and other youth related programs. Help us to help others while enjoying a great time yourself. For further information on the events and how you can take part (other than just showing up and enjoying yourself!), or for any businesses looking to have your establishment host a First Friday event, please contact Howard Brickman at (917) 972-5587. The mission continues.

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for this year’s AH YES program. “The Peaceful Gardener” sees this investment in youth as a building block of “promising futures” and safe, stable communities. In my estimation, that is a winning formula.

Each of the people mentioned in this brief account captures a small piece of the big picture and varied dimensions of a community, summoning us to think of how we can broaden our thinking and not settle for one single profile or view. Community activism can start at any age and can take on any form that creates a connection to values that help us thrive. It can be reflected in the smallest things that we do to preserve a sense of safety and belonging for ourselves and our neighbors. It can identify a person using a familiar nickname. It can be shopping local to support our small businesses, picking up litter, donating to worthy causes or keeping our parks and playgrounds clean and safe. It can be a program that provides volunteers to walk people home or support literacy programs in libraries. It can be teaching a free yoga class or building a free library. It can be taking a moral stand on an issue or preserving the rights of children to have access to opportunities that support a bright future. It can be elders sharing their knowledge or talents. There are so many community activists, volunteers and organized groups that give us things like concerts in the Summer; year round events and ways to unite with neighbors at local places as we strive to feel that vital connection to our neighborhoods and each other. As Spring turns to Summer and people get outside, consider recognizing how those who show up and take positive, constructive action contribute to the full flowering of our communities, making things better for us all.

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GETTING AROUND BY BIKE: A GUIDE FOR MULTI-MODAL TRIPS

by Cyclo Pete

Happy trails, Woodsiders! It’s Bike Month and we recently went over short rides. We’ll go over medium and long rides in time for summer. But for this column I want to focus on the exciting opportunity to work a bike trip into your routine. And being as today is Bike-To-Work Day, this is as good a day as any to think about how you can bike to work this month or any month!

What is a multimodal trip?

Put simply, a multimodal trip is one in which you use more than one mode of transportation. This also relates to the more modern concept of Mobility-as-a-service, which for our purposes of biking is useful because there’s a half dozen trip planning apps that can recommend bike rides as part of a longer trip! I wouldn’t recommend one over the other because they’re all useful and fun to play around with to change up your commute. I’m sure you’ve seen straphangers with a bike helmet hanging from their bag. They are probably on your subway or bus as one leg of their multimodal trip!

Plan a multimodal trip

Many of us Woodsiders live along one of the most limited subway lines in the system. Don’t get me wrong, I love the 7 train, I grew up on the 7 (and the Green Line), but if you can avoid a transfer at the beginning or end of your route, it may save you time and stress! Is there a short leg of your trip where a bike might meet your needs? Think about biking to/ from the ferry, or to the EMR at Queens Plaza, or take the 7 into the city and bike the rest of the way to your office or next meeting. Just hang your helmet on your bag, pack your hi-viz, and you’re good to go.

Have you biked to work this month? What if biking to work didn’t mean biking all the way to work? One of the main reasons biking is at an all-time high in our area and in our city is because of the ease of access to bikes and safe bike lanes and the myriad types of trips people can take on them. Consider a multi-modal trip in what is left of Bike Month, and whether you get out by next Wednesday or any time this summer, ride safe, Woodside!



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2023

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FOR RAIN DATE: JUNE
3RD

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5/12 L/CPL Thomas P. Noonan Park
Turning Red | PG

6/3 Windmuller Park
Encanto | PG

6/9 Murray Playground
Soul | PG

6/23 Torsney/Lou Lodati Park
Finding Nemo | G

6/30 Ravenswood Park
Spider-Man: No Way Home | PG-13

7/9 Windmuller Park
Minions: The Rise of Gru | PG

7/21 Queensbridge Park
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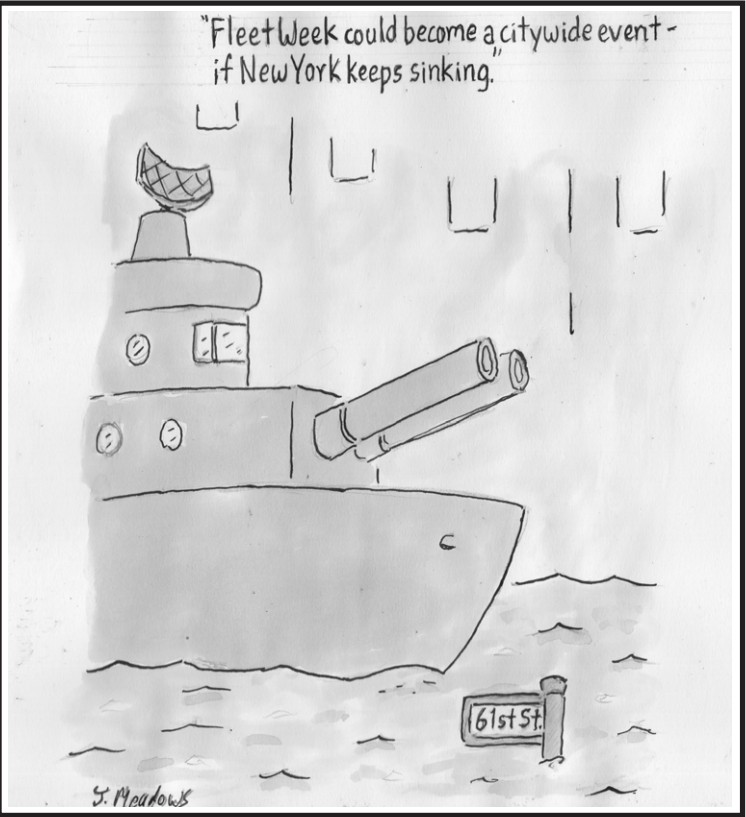
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KYRA’S LAW

New York State Senator Joseph P. Addabbo, Jr. is proud to co-sponsor a bipartisan bill (S.3170A), known as “Kyra’s Law,” to protect children from parents or guardians who intend to harm them. This legislation mandates judges to consider past accusations of abuse or domestic violence to ensure that the child’s safety is a priority when deciding on custody or visitation.

“Kyra’s law is the direct result of tireless advocacy by Kyra’s mother, Jacqueline Franchetti, and many supporters of her efforts,” said Sen. Addabbo after meeting with Jacqueline in his Albany office. “This legislation will ensure accountability and oversight, an important step in protecting New York’s children from neglect and tragic consequences at the hands of an abusive parent or guardian.”

Kyra’s Law would mandate court officials to take part in new training for handling cases regarding domestic violence and child abuse. The goal of the legislation is to keep children away from potentially dangerous parents by requiring courts to consider the health and safety of the child before making any decisions related to visitation or custody.

Courts would need to consider past and present abuse committed by the parent against the child, violence committed by the parent to their partner or other children in the home, and if the child is actively fearful of the parent and their behavior. The bill would also require courts to hold an evidentiary hearing to enter findings of domestic violence, child abuse, or child sexual abuse before making any final determination.

The Kyra Franchetti Foundation was created by Jacqueline Franchetti in memory of her 2-year-old daughter Kyra, who was shot to death while sleeping by her biological father, who then set his house on fire and killed himself during an unsupervised, court-approved visit.

Kyra’s father had a history of emotional and verbal abuse to Jacqueline during their relationship, so when she became pregnant, Jacqueline left him. After Kyra was born, he reappeared, seeking custody. Throughout two years of custody hearings, the court received numerous notifications that Kyra’s father was angry, violent, and suicidal, while he continued to harass, threaten, and stalk her. Jacqueline’s pleas for help and his dangerous behaviors were ignored as the forensic evaluator recommended joint custody.

Kyra’s Law also works to prevent courts from assuming that a child’s negative relationship with one parent has been caused by another and to discontinue the practice of restricting a child’s time spent with one parent in order to improve the relationship with another.

“As a father of two daughters, it’s heartbreaking to learn that the experts and authorities involved in this case failed to protect Kyra by choosing to ignore the pattern of abusive behavior presented to them, ultimately granting Kyra’s father unsupervised visitation that ended in a tragic, yet avoidable, loss of life. We need to pass this legislation and enact Kyra’s law to make sure no other child has the same fate as Kyra, and no other family has to deal with a similar tragedy,” Addabbo concluded.

The Kyra Franchetti Foundation works to raise awareness about the risk of family violence, especially to children, inside and outside New York’s divorce/family court system. They seek to change the way issues of violence and abuse are addressed in family courts so that child safety is put above all else. To learn more about the Kyra Franchetti Foundation, visit their website at <https://kyrafranchetti.org>.

If you or someone you know is in an abusive situation and a child is endangered, please call the NYS Domestic Violence 24-Hour Hotline at 1-800-942-6906 or 711 for Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

The Senate bill (S.3170A) and the companion Assembly bill (A.3346A) are currently under consideration by their respective Judiciary Committees.

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Being the persons interested as
creditors, legatees, distributees or
otherwise in the Estate of **MARTINE BILLOIS**, deceased,
who at the time of death was a
resident of 34-41 85th Street, Apt
1X, Jackson Heights, NY 11372,
in the County of Queens, State of
New York.
SEND GREETING:
Upon the petition of **LOIS M.
ROSENBLATT**, Public
Administrator of Queens County,
who maintains her office at 88-11
Sutphin Boulevard, Jamaica,
Queens County, New York 11435,
as Administrator of the Estate of
MARTINE BILLOIS, deceased,
you and each of you are hereby
cited to show cause before the
Surrogate at the Surrogate's Court
of the County of Queens, to be
held at the Queens General
Courthouse, 6th Floor, 88-11
Sutphin Boulevard, Jamaica, City
and State of New York, on the 6th
day of July, 2023 at 9:30 o'clock
in the forenoon, why the Account
of Proceedings of the Public
Administrator of Queens County,
as Administrator of the Estate of
said deceased, a copy of which is
attached, should not be judicially
settled, and why the Surrogate
should not fix and allow a
reasonable amount of
compensation to **GERARD J.
SWEENEY, ESQ.**, for legal
services rendered to petitioner
herein in the amount of \$17,838.46
and that the Court fix the fair and
reasonable additional fee for any
services to be rendered by
GERARD J. SWEENEY, ESQ.,
hereafter in connection with
proceedings on kinship, claims
etc., prior to entry of a final Decree
on this accounting in the amount
of 6% of assets or income collected
after the date of the within
accounting; and why the Surrogate
should not fix and allow an amount
equal to one percent on said
Schedules of the total assets on
Schedules A, A1, and A2 plus any
additional monies received
subsequent to the date of this
account, as the fair and reasonable
amount payable to the Office of
the Public Administrator for the
expenses of said office pursuant
to S.C.P.A. §1106(3); and why
each of you claiming to be a
distributee of the decedent should
not establish proof of your kinship;
and why the balance of said funds
should not be paid to said alleged
distributees upon proof of kinship,
or deposited with the
Commissioner of Finance of the
City of New York should said
alleged distributees default herein,
or fail to establish proof of kinship.
Dated, Attested and Sealed
5th day of May, 2023
HON. PETER J. KELLY
Surrogate, Queens County
Janet Edwards Tucker
Chief Clerk
GERARD J. SWEENEY, ESQ.
(718) 459-9000
1981 Marcus Avenue,
Suite 200
Lake Success, New York 11042
**NOTICE: THIS CITATION IS
SERVED UPON YOU AS
REQUIRED BY LAW. YOU
ARE NOT REQUIRED TO
APPEAR; HOWEVER, IF YOU
FAIL TO APPEAR IT WILL BE
ASSUMED YOU DO NOT
OBJECT TO THE RELIEF
REQUESTED. YOU HAVE A
RIGHT TO HAVE AN
ATTORNEY APPEAR FOR
YOU, AND YOU OR YOUR
ATTORNEY MAY REQUEST A
COPY OF THE FULL ACCOUNT
FROM THE PETITIONER OR
PETITIONER'S ATTORNEY**
Accounting Citation
5/12/23, 5/19/23, 5/26/23, 6/2/23

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