

AT A GLANCE

WHITE PLAINS — A

Yonkers man was sentenced yesterday to 15 months in the Westchester County jail for slashing his neighbor's dog.

District Attorney Janet DiFiore said Andrew Owens, 59, of Nepperhan Avenue, previously pleaded guilty to one felony count of aggravated cruelty to animals for slashing his neighbor's 4-year-old German Shepherd, Jenna, in the face and causing it to lose an eye in the April 5 incident.

Owens said the dog had bitten him a year earlier.

WILLIAMSBRIDGE —

From Revolutionary War days to Civil War draft riots to a French-speaking community, learn about the history of the Bronx River in Williamsbridge with a free walking tour tomorrow.

Sponsored by the Bronx River Alliance and led by Damian Griffin and Stephen DeVillo, the two-hour tour will meet at 10 a.m. at White Plains Road and Gun Hill Road, outside the subway station.

For information, contact DeVillo at (718) 430-4613, or stephen.devillo@parks.nyc.gov.

LEHMAN COLLEGE —

Lehman College's Department of Nursing is one of 63 schools across the nation to receive funding to award scholarships from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the American Association of Colleges of Nursing through the Foundation's New Careers in Nursing Scholarship Program, school officials announced.

Eight scholarships, totaling \$10,000 each, will be awarded to Lehman students entering accelerated nursing programs in the 2010-2011 academic year.

The NCIN program is designed to provide opportunities to students traditionally underrepresented in the nursing field, and strives to prepare culturally competent leaders in accelerated baccalaureate nursing programs, they said.

MELROSE — City agencies will team up tomorrow to close 160th St. between Elton and Melrose Aves. and turn it into a Playstreet from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

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GUN PERMIT BATTLE

BY **ABBY LUBY**
DAILY NEWS WRITER

WESTCHESTER GUN owners are balking at the county's firearm safety laws.

With the echo of the Supreme Court decision upholding the Second Amendment right to bear arms still ringing in their ears, they want the county to stop scrutinizing applicants for permits and licenses.

Scott Sommavilla, president of the Westchester County Firearm Owners Association, criticized police for using "no-knock" (if need be) search warrants issued by local judges.

The warrants allow police to enter homes — by force if needed — to verify weapons listed on permit applications are safely stored.

"This is an invasion of privacy

W'chester owners take aim at county laws

and denies a gun owner's civil rights," charged Sommavilla, who met Monday with county legislators and state Supreme Court Justice Alan Scheinkman to review the county's gun law.

Legislator Tom Abinanti (D-Greenburgh), who authored the law 10 years ago, called the searches prudent in cases in which owners had more than five guns.

"It bears on judges to issue handgun licenses and additional permits. They want to know what the circumstances are, how the guns are stored," Abinanti said.

Unlike New York City, which requires renewal of gun licenses and permits every two years, Westchester requires it every five years.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruling also upheld the right to possess a firearm inside a person's home for self-defense. But the county is sticking to its gun storage law, which mandates the use of trigger locks or that guns be stored in a locked space. Some gun owners say the rules make it impossible for them to defend themselves.

Charles Timlin, who, with his wife Rita, owns the RT Smoke & Gun shop in Mount Vernon, said the county law favors criminals.

"If my home is being invaded by a criminal carrying an illegal gun, do I ask him to wait so I can unlock my gun and protect my

family, or do I get killed?" he asked.

Timlin's shop requires gun permit applicants to take classes and be fingerprinted, photographed and investigated by police.

"The problem is that the criminal doesn't have to lock up anything, but the person who's not a criminal — the legal firearm owner who goes through all the testing — is the one who is always the target," he said.

Westchester Legislator Martin Rogowsky (D-Harrison), chairman of the county's Public Safety & Security Committee, said regardless of the Supreme Court ruling, Westchester will not change its gun law.

"The game plan is to do nothing. The laws on our books are lawful. Why should we play judge on a law that we voted for?"

TENNIS LEGENDS AND YOUNG CHAMPIONS IN TRAINING



Tennis legend Billie Jean King (l.) joins 22-time Grand Slam champion Steffi Graf at Central Park Tennis Center yesterday, where Graf hosted the Center Court for Kids Tennis Clinic. Event was presented in partnership with City Parks Foundation and USTA Eastern. Photo by Mariela Lombard

\$5M influx of settlement funds & grants for Bronx River cleanup

BY **DANIEL BEEKMAN**
DAILY NEWS WRITER

THE JEWEL of the Bronx is going to sparkle, thanks to \$5 million in settlement money and matching grants for local groups cleaning up the polluted Bronx River.

Attorney General Andrew Cuomo stopped by the New York Botanical Garden yesterday to allocate the funds from a \$7 million settlement between his office and several Westchester County towns accused of dumping raw sewage into the Bronx River.

Decades ago, the Bronx River was "an open sewer" and "a symbol of urban decay," said Cuomo. But local efforts have begun to re-

store the waterway.

Since 1997, more than 300 tons of trash, 72 cars and 18,500 tires have been hauled from the river, now home to beavers and herring, he said.

"We are working with community groups and local governments to bring new life to the treasured Bronx River," said Cuomo.

Matched by \$2.5 million from the federal government and private donors, the grants were awarded to 11 local governments, including New York City, and nonprofits such as Rocking the Boat, a Bronx boatbuilding program. The New York Botanical Garden and the Bronx Overall Economic Develop-

ment Corp. also received grants.

Rep. Jose Serrano (D-South Bronx) called the \$5 million investment "welcome news for the Bronx and our state," while Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr. applauded "building community around our natural resources."

GrowNYC, a Manhattan-based nonprofit, was awarded \$61,700 from the Yonkers settlement, plus \$16,420 in matching funds, to harvest rainwater at five community gardens along the Bronx River.

Harvesting rainwater will help local gardeners use less tap water and keep sewage out of the Bronx River. When rainwater overwhelms the sewer system, it flushes sewage into the river.