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## NEIGHBORHOOD BRIEFS

### Hit-and-run

Nassau police appealed to the public for help in the case of a hit-and-run accident in South Hempstead two weeks ago, just after the pedestrian who was run down died Wednesday.

The accident occurred on Long Beach Road, south of Beech St., at 10:56 p.m. on Dec. 13.

Marc Sapini, 40, of South Hempstead, was crossing Long Beach Road when he was struck by a copper-colored Blazer-type vehicle, according to the police.

Sapini died at 12:45 p.m. Wednesday at Nassau County Medical Center in East Meadow.

Police said he suffered multiple injuries to his body, including a fractured skull.

Anyone with information is asked to call Detective Steve Carey of the First Squad at 516-223-1100. All calls will be kept confidential, the police said.

### Land buy

The City Council, at the request of Councilman Sheldon Leffler (D-Hollis), has approved a \$766,000 appropriation for the purchase of wetlands to be added to the Udalls Cove Wildlife Preserve in Douglaston.

Leffler said that the funds will be used by the city to buy a parcel of the wetlands owned by St. Anastasia Church in Douglaston. The property was condemned by the city in 1980, but has been in litigation over the cost ever since. It is expected that the property will be acquired by January 1987.

### He's guilty

Forest Hills lawyer Steven Weiss, 47, faces up to seven years in prison after his conviction stemming from an assault that occurred on Nov. 20, 1983, in his apartment on 73rd Ave.

A Daily News story on Dec. 18 said that the assault occurred after he lured a woman to his apartment. The jury acquitted him of kidnap charges, but convicted Weiss of unlawful imprisonment, criminal solicitation, assault in both the second and third degree, coercion, criminal possession of a weapon, and criminal contempt. He is to be sentenced on Jan. 22 by Supreme Court Justice Seymour Lakritz.

# Churchmen, Baird meet

## Abortion foes, supporters plan rallies tomorrow

By MICHAEL HANRAHAN

Daily News Staff Writer

Officials of the Diocese of Rockville Centre met yesterday with Bill Baird, the birth-control and abortion rights advocate, at the chancery offices in a discussion of the plans of the two sides for anti-abortion and pro-choice demonstrations tomorrow in Hempstead.

Bishop John McGann, the head of the diocese, said he would personally lead a demonstration by 150 parish priests, 50 nuns and brothers of local religious orders, and other of pro-life activists outside Baird's Center for Women on Fulton Ave. in Hempstead.

The anti-abortion rally is to begin with a prayer service led by McGann in the auditorium of the Sacred Heart Academy on Cathedral Ave. in Hempstead at noon, said the Rev. James Lisante, the director of the Respect for Life Office of the diocese and the coordinator of the demonstration, called, "A Prayer and Walk for Life."

### Request by Baird

The priests and lay people at the service are expected to then march in a procession outside Baird's center, which fronts on Fulton, but has a parking-lot entrance to the building that is off Cathedral across the street from Sacred Heart Academy.

Baird had requested the meeting with McGann, but met with Lisante and other aides to the bishop for about 40 minutes yesterday. The bishop was not at the discussion.

Lisante said Baird expressed concern over acts of violence against abortion centers elsewhere in the nation and was given assurances that the Diocese planned to conduct a "peaceful and prayerful" demonstration.

Baird said after the meeting that he told the priests that "operations would be going on Saturday afternoon during the demonstration and that shouting and catcalls to the patients could cause them stress and led to serious physical complications."

### Asks for quiet

He said he asked Lisante "to keep the demonstrators quiet and to be certain not to

disturb any of the women entering the building."

Baird said supporters of the pro-choice movement, including members of the National Organization of Women, the American Jewish Women's Congress, and several ministers and rabbis, will conduct a counter-demonstration between noon and 2 p.m. and then hold a prayer service at 4 p.m. in the Presbyterian Church of Roslyn.

Lisante said that McGann decided to lead the demonstration personally in an effort to dramatize the church's desire to have all people develop a "respect for life in all stages, be it a fetus, elderly, homeless, or the handicapped."



**'Respect . . . life in all stages, be it a fetus, elderly, homeless, or handicapped.'**

Bishop McGann

**'Catcalls to patients could cause stress and lead to serious physical complications.'**

Bill Baird

# Judge quits rackets trial upon defendant's request

By ROBERT GEARTY

Daily News Staff Writer

A federal judge who slapped a crime-family captain with a stiff sentence 19 years ago stepped aside yesterday in a case involving the capo's son.

Uniondale Federal Judge Jacob Mishler excused himself after lawyers for Michael Franzese, 34, of Brookville, and his co-defendants said they would be ready to go to trial in 90 days.

The case was reassigned to Judge Eugene Nickerson and moved to Brooklyn.

Franzese's lawyers had asked for Mishler to step down because of his connection with Franzese's father, John (Sonny) Franzese, who has been identified as an underboss in the Colombo crime family.

Mishler sentenced the

elder Franzese to 50 years on a bank-robbery conspiracy conviction. Franzese served eight years before being paroled.

The younger Franzese, a movie producer, was indicted by a Brooklyn federal grand jury Dec. 19 on charges that he masterminded a rackets ring that defrauded major corporations and government agencies out of \$5 million.

### Hearing postponed

Franzese pleaded not guilty at an arraignment before Mishler on Monday.

Franzese had been returned by federal authorities from Florida, where he was indicted on charges alleging that he had cheated the state of \$40 million in gasoline taxes.

Mishler had ordered Franzese held without bail, pending completion of a

bail hearing, which was canceled yesterday after Mishler stepped aside.

Nickerson is scheduled to continue the hearing Monday.

Federal prosecutors have argued that to release Franzese and his co-defendants, Frank Cestaro, 46, of North Bellmore, and Frank Castagnaro, 40, of Amityville, would pose a danger to witnesses.

The prosecutors produced a convicted swindler, Lawrence Iorizzo, 42, of Dix Hills, who testified that Franzese was involved in discussions to bribe a federal parole officer and to murder Iorizzo's son.

Iorizzo, the former head of Vantage Petroleum Corp., is in the government-witness protection program. He is expected to be a key witness against Franzese.