

Russian into mob marriage

By RICHARD SISK

Daily News Washington Bureau

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Franzese said he gave Vinnie the okay to do the job, "which was to say, 'Pay the money or I'll break your legs,' and to sound convincing, which he was."

METRO AREA NEWS

LUCK WAS WITH a 17-year-old girl who survived a plunge off the Brooklyn Bridge yesterday.

Cold, choppy waters carried her a quarter-mile down the East River into the path of a tugboat and a police harbor launch, which were able to pull her to safety.

The crew of the tugboat Margaret Moran, reaching her first, threw her a life preserver. She feebly gripped it as currents kept dragging her under the vessel.

Pulled semi-conscious from the 50-degree water, the girl, not immediately identified, was rushed to Pier 11, near the South Street Seaport.

She was in critical condition yesterday in the intensive care unit at New York Downtown Hospital.

A GUYANESE accountant who killed his ex-wife by stabbing her nine times at her home in Waterside Plaza almost two years ago was sentenced to a maximum 25-year prison term yesterday.

A sobbing Reginald Thompson, 36, begged Acting Supreme Court Justice Mary McGowan Davis for "mercy and compassion." But Davis pronounced Thompson "calculating, cold [and] manipulative," ignoring his claim that he was suffering an "out-of-body experience" when he killed Joan Thompson, 31.

TWO GUNMEN hijacked a Federal Express truck yesterday, stealing \$100,000 in jewels in a brazen midtown robbery, police said.

The gunmen accosted two Federal Express employees at 46th St. and Fifth Ave. at 7:40 p.m., police said. They forced the 35-year-old driver and an armed 46-year-old guard back into the truck, said Officer Sara Carpenter, a police spokeswoman.

After disarming the guard, the bandits drove to Eighth Ave. and W. 128th St. where they were joined by a third bandit, who helped load the jewelry into a red four-wheel drive vehicle, police said.

Ed board OKs school for teens, their kids

By JEFF SIMMONS

Daily News Staff Writer

The Board of Education last night unanimously approved an unprecedented new Manhattan school to teach the children and younger siblings of students attending high school in the same complex.

The measure had been tabled after a vocal East Side parents group complained that the space at the Julia Richman Education Complex should instead be used for another badly needed community high school.

Board officials said the new kindergarten-through-eighth grade program is necessary. At the same time, depending on the response, they admitted they may never fill the 300-seat Ella Baker School with teen offspring.

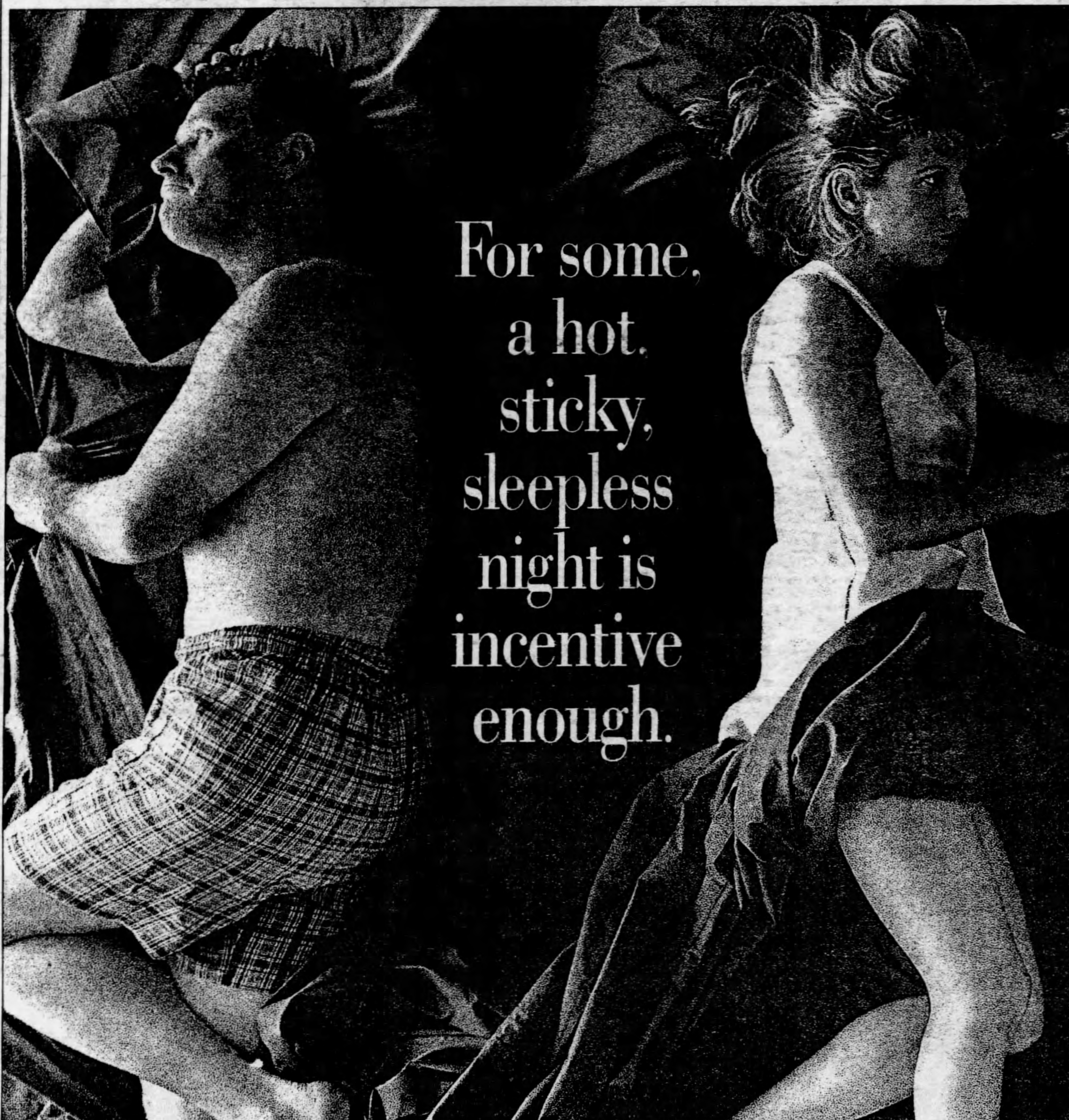
"I'm still concerned whether in fact they have a population that will support that school, given that the board has told us there are very few teen

parents who currently go to that school," said Renee Ward, a member of the Parents Coalition for an East Side High School.

"The board made a commitment to this, and it's important to honor that commitment," said Deputy Chancellor Judy Rizzo.

The school, which will open in the fall, has been billed as a way to offer education to teenage parents and their grade-school-age kids under one roof on E. 67th St. The new program "offers a unique opportunity for youngsters to have continuity of experience," said Ann Cook, director of the Urban Academy in the complex. It would be the first of its kind in the city school system.

Members of the Parents Coalition for an East Side High School, who lobbied for the space, said the board has promised them space downtown instead. One site being examined is at a Baruch College building on 18th St.



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WEATHER

Damp, cool; rain, drizzle and fog. High 56, low 52.

LOTTERY


- NEW YORK**
- Daily: 579
- WinFour: 0320
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- Pick Three: 703
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City pounds salad bars in scale scam

They lettuce pay for tray

By PATRICIA MANGAN

Daily News Staff Writer

Many of the city's salad bars are regularly gouging their dollar-conscious customers — illegally charging them extra for the weight of the plastic and aluminum food containers, a new investigation has found.

The rip-off is costing customers an average of 35 cents extra per purchase, totaling millions of dollars in fraud each year, outgoing Consumer Affairs Commissioner Alfred Cerullo said yesterday.

More than half the salad bars the department surveyed in all boroughs — 20 out of 37 — are cheating the lite-dining public by failing to deduct the so-called "tare weight" of the containers, Cerullo said.

Customers aren't surprised. "I'm used to getting ripped off," said Frank Gerardi of Staten Island, who buys salad several times a week from Smiler's at 49 Broadway in Manhattan, one of the businesses found in violation.

But, shrugged fellow cus-

tomers Pearl Dentsman of Manhattan, "the food is great."

In a precedent-setting case, that Broadway store is being sued by Consumer Affairs not only for charging for the container weight — but also for using a scale weighted by six nickels taped to the bottom, adding nearly one-tenth to every pound of food purchased.

After being slapped with 12 violations in the last 16 months, the store began deducting the containers' weight.

But it promptly boosted its salad price from \$4.99 to \$5.29 a pound, Consumer Affairs said.

The manager of the store refused to comment yesterday, but an employe said that the department's charges are "not true."

State law requires that food not packaged in containers must be sold only by net weight. Violators can be hit with fines from \$75 to \$425.

Despite the investigation, many of the city's hundreds of salad bars continue to charge for the containers.

An employe at 10th Avenue Farm on W. 34th St. said the cost of salad containers is not deducted at the register because the store charges just half the posted salad-bar price.

But Consumer Affairs says that's cheating.

"Customers think they're paying half price for the salad, not half price plus 35 cents," said spokeswoman Pat Cohen.

There are more than 500 salad bars in the city, Cerullo said.



SUSAN STAVA

SALAD DAZE: Salad bar patrons are being ripped off by delis that charge for the plastic container that holds food, a new Consumer Affairs investigation has found.

DON'T GET RIPPED OFF

■ Check the scales to make sure that there's a minus sign in the left-hand corner, signifying that the weight of the container has been deducted.

■ At businesses that don't subtract the container weight, don't accept excuses like, "we've already reduced the price" or "we don't charge sales tax."



Cocaine takes bus to midtown

Cops found 207 kilos of cocaine stashed in a tour bus abandoned on a midtown street, police said yesterday.

The unoccupied bus, which had Florida license plates, was parked with the door open in a traffic lane of 11th Ave. near 38th St., police said.

Manhattan South Task Force officers boarded the bus and discovered seven kilos of cocaine on the floor. Detectives later found 200 more kilos in secret compartments.

John Marzulli

Gas that fueled Russian, city mobs

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