



Staten Island Advance

BREAKING NEWS ALL DAY ON [SILIVE.COM](http://silive.com)

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2009

PUBLISHED SINCE 1886 | 75 CENTS

Former Islander blew whistle on \$8B Ponzi scheme

Lawsuit of 3 years ago prefigured this week's SEC action against Stanford Financial

By KAREN O'SHEA
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

The former head of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce was among the first to blow the whistle on a Texas businessman accused of an \$8 billion fraud whose victims include several players for the Yankees and Mets.

Lawrence De Maria, a former West Brighton resident, Advance reporter and head of the Staten Island Chamber of Commerce, charged in a 2006 lawsuit that billionaire R. Allen Stanford's company was violating laws and running a Ponzi scheme that defrauded investors.

The federal Securities and Exchange Commission made similar charges in the civil action it brought against Stanford last week. The scandal has affected Yankees Johnny Damon and Xavier Nady, both of whom invested with Stanford and saw their assets frozen as part of the investigation. Mets pitcher Mike Pelfrey has said he's experiencing

SEE PONZI, PAGE A 11

ON THE INSIDE: FURNISHINGS FOR PAMPERS PET



Home decor has gone to the dogs ... and cats as pet furnishings become stylish enough to fit into the most chic surroundings. For the latest in pet decor, see **HOME, Page C 1**.

WEATHER WATCHER

Michael Foder, 9, of Great Kills



Cloudy, breezy and mild with rain in the afternoon

COMPLETE REPORT ON B 8

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"It was an accident. He wouldn't even step on an ant."

— THE DRIVER'S MOTHER



Joseph Catrama, 19, who received his driver's license in January, discusses the accident with his mother, Grace.

"I will make sure that whoever did that to my brother will be punished."

— THE VICTIM'S SISTER



Nathan Pakow of Dongan Hills, seen here with his daughter, was hit and killed while waiting for a bus on Capodanno Boulevard.

SECOND PEDESTRIAN FATALITY IN 4 DAYS

Car kills man at bus stop

New driver hops the curb as he fails to negotiate left turn near University Hospital

By MAURA YATES
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

A grandfather waiting for a bus in Ocean Breeze was mowed down yesterday by a newly licensed driver who lost control while turning left and jumped the curb.

Nathan Pakow, 47, of Tanglewood Drive in Great Kills, was wedged between the car's front bumper and a metal pole holding the bus schedule and route information.

The driver, 19-year-old Joseph Catrama of Jerome Road in Dongan Hills, was turning from Seaview Avenue onto Capodanno Boulevard just before 10:40 a.m. yesterday when he lost control of the 2008 Hyundai Sonata, which ended up with all four tires on the sidewalk, with the passenger side touching the bus shelter. There was minimal damage to the sedan, but the



Police officers examine the scene of a fatal accident at a bus shelter on Capodanno Boulevard near Seaview Avenue, Ocean Breeze.

impact of the crash tilted the pole about 45 degrees. "The man was pinned up against that pole. He wasn't

breathing when the ambulance got there," said Tommy Puglia of Dongan Hills, who witnessed the crash.

"They threw him right in the ambulance. What a

SEE ACCIDENT, PAGE A 16

2 quints take baby steps home

Sisters released from hospital while the 3 other sibs are making gains

By DEBORAH YOUNG
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Finally, Kevin and Jamie Ferrante have begun to use the dry erase board hung on the wall of their cozy, Grant City kitchen to keep track of baby feeding times.

Alessia and Emily, weighing not even five pounds each, their mouths tinier than Cheerios, have been downing mother's milk every three hours since they arrived home from Staten Island University Hospital, Ocean Breeze, Wednesday evening — and all their meals are lovingly noted on an elaborate graph in color-coded marker.

Brother Matthew is expected to join them before next week, and if sisters Amanda and Ella make weight, the Island's quintuplets will all be home sweet home by the end of March.

"It's amazing to see them here," marveled Mrs. Ferrante, who gave birth to the wee wonders Dec. 27, about three months before her due date. None tipped the scale at



Jamie Ferrante holds her quintuplets as she prepares to take home two of the babies. Leaving the hospital are Alessia, left, 4 pounds, 1 1/2 ounces, and Emily, third from left, at 4 pounds, 3/8 ounces. Looking on is dad Kevin Ferrante.

More on the web

To see a photo gallery of the quintuplets, visit silive.com/photos.

more than two pounds. "Wow, you're really growing," she cooed as she picked up and

nuzzled dozing Alessia, who responded by grabbing her index finger with her delicate, baby hand. "You're a big girl; like a football player."

Except for the occasional high-pitched mew Emily made as she

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Obama's tax plan looks good on paper

Some who stand to pay more don't mind as long as the \$\$ trickles down to those in need

By JUDY L. RANDALL
STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Two words popped into Gina Rammairone's head when she heard about the Obama budget plan: "More taxes."

Which the Todt Hill entrepreneur said she and her husband, Luciano, are OK with. Sort of.

"According to his plan, it is definitely going to mean more taxes because of our income bracket," said Mrs. Rammairone, in respect of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, which promises a bump in paychecks for those earning less than \$250,000 annually, and a bump in taxes for those earning more.

"If I have to pay a little more to have middle-class and lower-class people benefit, that's good. But I don't believe that is what will happen. I think we'll pay more taxes and the money won't get to where they are saying. If other income brackets benefit, great. But if they are just going to be taking more money out of our pocket, then no."

Emerson Hill businessman Robert Cutrona echoed that sentiment: "I don't have a problem with paying out more, and no question I'll be paying out more. My concern is where the money is



RAMMAIRONE

SEE BUDGET, PAGE A 10

Colleges warn students about Mexico travel

Surge in drug-related violence raises caution flag over several spring-break hot spots

By AMANDA LEE MYERS
ASSOCIATED PRESS

PHOENIX — The U.S. State Department and universities around the country are warning college students headed for Mexico for some spring-break partying about a surge in drug-related murder and mayhem south of the border.

"We're not necessarily telling students not to go, but we're going to certainly alert them," said Tom Dougan, vice president for student affairs at the University of Rhode Island. "There have been Americans kidnapped, and if you go, you need to be very aware and very alert to this fact."

On silive.com, posters said they would be staying locally for spring break, most likely heading to Belmar on the New Jersey shore.

More than 100,000 high school- and college-age Americans travel to Mexican resort areas during spring break each year.

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