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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
FRIDAY, MARCH 13, 2009 _____

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ASTORIA MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO DRIVING WHILE INTOXICATED
AND RECKLESS ENDANGERMENT FOR DRIVING
ON HOUSING DEVELOPMENT SIDEWALKS

Expected To Receive Sentence Of 1 To 3 Years In Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that a 36-year-old Astoria man has pleaded guilty to driving while intoxicated and reckless endangerment for driving his vehicle on the sidewalk and in the courtyard of the Astoria Houses.

District Attorney Brown said, "Drinking and driving is a deadly combination, one that has the potential of turning a vehicle into a lethal weapon. In this case, the defendant recklessly drove through the courtyard and on the sidewalks of a housing development. Luckily, none of the residents who normally use these common areas were struck or injured."

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Richard Trialonas, 36, of 32-17 37th Avenue in Queens. He pleaded guilty yesterday to driving while intoxicated and first-degree reckless endangerment before Acting Queens Supreme Court Justice Pauline Mullings. He is expected to receive an indeterminate sentence of 1 to 3 years in prison on March 30, 2009.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the criminal charges, on December 1, 2008, at approximately 8:20 p.m., the defendant was observed by a police officer driving a black Mitsubishi on the sidewalk through a courtyard of the Astoria Houses at a high rate of speed. In an attempt to avoid the police the defendant drove back onto the street and through a steady red light. When the officer approached the vehicle he noted that the defendant had slurred speech, bloodshot eyes and a strong odor of alcohol on his breath. The defendant admitted he had been drinking beer. Records accessed by the police indicated the defendant was driving without a license and had two previous convictions for driving under the influence in Suffolk County.

The case was investigated by Police Officer Michael Castelli of the NYPD Housing PSA-9.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Mark E. Misorek of the District Attorney's Narcotics Trials Bureau, under the supervision of Karen H. Rankin, Bureau Chief, and Robert J. Ferino and Barry S. Weinrib, Deputy Bureau Chiefs, and the overall supervision of James C. Quinn, Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney, Trial Division, and John H. Larsen and Robert J. Masters, Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorneys.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted at www.queensda.org.

