

**A15** Brooklyn subway derailment injures 89

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Treatments can save lives

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## A PORTRAIT PROBLEM



ADVANCE PHOTO ■ ROB SOLLETT

The Borough Hall mural "Erastus Wiman First Steam Railroad 1860" includes a figure in the lower left corner that has stirred charges of racial insensitivity.

## Restoration of murals stirs racial debate

■ Critics say representation of a black man in one of the 1930s panels at Borough Hall is demeaning

By MICHAEL J. FRESSOLA  
ADVANCE ARTS EDITOR

A \$700,000 facelift slated for the foyer at Borough Hall has put the spotlight on a 62-year-old mural that some African-Americans say demeans blacks.

The controversial mural — entitled "Erastus Wiman First Steam Railroad 1860" — includes a classic "Sambo" figure, in which a Civil War-era black man is portrayed as a docile, irresponsible and lazy child, critics say.

The mural is part of the foyer's principal decoration: A series of 13 oil-on-canvas paintings depicting Staten Island history, which is slated for cleaning during the restoration. At present, the cinematic series of panels, measuring approximately 12

### More on the mural

The controversy over what some are calling a racially insensitive mural in Borough Hall touches on cultural stereotypes, history, politics and the limits of artistic expression. For an in-depth look at the issue, which some are comparing to the flying of the Confederate battle flag over the South Carolina statehouse, see Michael Paquette's "In It Together" column in the Punch section of the upcoming Sunday Advance.

feet by 7 feet and painted by Frederick Stahr between 1935 and 1938, is muffled by grime.

Critics say the image has no place in a seat of government. Cleve Overton, a self-described activist, artist and local historian, wants the image removed.

Overton, who is researching a book on local black history, said Stahr was the product of an era in which representations of

PLEASE SEE MURAL, PAGE A 12

## Parochial schools to get

■ City allocates \$13 million to extend health-care staffing to all non-public schools

By JILL GARDINER  
ADVANCE STAFF WRITER  
and REGINALD PATRICK  
ADVANCE CITY HALL BUREAU

In a radical restructuring of the current school health system, the city has allocated an additional \$13 million to staff all New York City's non-public schools — mostly parochial schools — with full- and part-time nurses.

Come September, regular school employees will be relieved of health care responsibilities — including dispensing antibiotics, injecting

allergy shots, administering nebulizers and helping students with asthma inhalers.

"Teachers, principals and secretaries would look at a kid having an epileptic seizure and debate whether to take him to the hospital," said James Mahoney, the associate superintendent for the Archdiocese of New York, referring to the current system.

The program will be underwritten by \$11.5 million from the Health Department and a \$1.5 million allocation from the City Council, earmarked in the recently approved city budget, said Erich Giebelhaus, a department spokesman. The Council's portion will cover salaries for 25 nurses.

Under the new system, 426 schools, including 52 on Staten Island, will be eligible for the city-funded nursing program. The city will provide full-time nursing coverage during the school week to 411 schools. The remaining nurs-

## Island man's 'death' a \$2.8 million hoax?

■ Ruse charged after investigation into claims for insurance benefits hits a dead end in Haiti

By STEPHANIE SLEPIAN  
ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

Prosecutors say a Staten Islander concocted his own death to try to claim more than \$2.8 million in insurance benefits.

The charges allege that Daniel G. Craig, 47, of Richmond Terrace, purchased several life insurance policies naming a purported brother, Kenneth Craig, as beneficiary, according to Terri Marchon, spokeswoman for the New York State Insurance Department.

Daniel Craig was charged with two counts of grand larceny in the second degree, attempted grand larceny in the first degree, criminal possession of a forged instrument, criminal possession of stolen property and forgery, after surrendering yesterday morning in the Staten Island district attorney's office.

Ms. Marchon said Daniel Craig falsely represented himself as Kenneth Craig in submitting a claim to AIG Insurance Co. The claim indicated that Daniel Craig was killed in an automobile accident in Haiti in April 1999.

An investigation revealed that, although the two individuals share the same last name, they are not related, officials said. The details on whether the two men knew each other are still vague, Ms. Marchon said, but investigators do not believe Kenneth Craig participated in the alleged scam and he was not charged. It is not known if Kenneth Craig is an Island res-

## Another season of home



Sam Bozanich belts one out to give the Staten Island Y

## Island's Boys of Summer are back in

A packed house welcomes Staten Island Yankees for their opening home game; fireworks display caps the evening for enthusiastic fans

By MARJORIE HACK  
ADVANCE STAFF WRITER

Staten Island's Boys of Summer are back — and just in the nick of time.

Almost exactly in concert Full



John Jonassen leads h seventh-inning stretch.