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PRESS RELEASE

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D.A. DONOVAN: S.I. MAN ARRAIGNED ON FELONY ASSAULT CHARGES IN PIT BULL MAULING OF 90-YEAR-OLD MAN

******D.A. Seeks Additional Witnesses to Pit Bull Incidents to Come Forward******

STATEN ISLAND, NY - Richmond County District Attorney Daniel M. Donovan, Jr. today announced that James W. McNair (DOB: 4/15/1980) of Newark Avenue, has been arraigned on charges of Assault in the 2nd and 3rd Degrees, in relation to a July 1, 2008 incident in which 90-year-old Henry Piotrowski was mauled and seriously injured by 2 pit bull dogs owned by the defendant. The attack occurred in Mr. Piotrowski's yard on John Street, Port Richmond.

The defendant has also been charged with the misdemeanor crime of Unlawfully Dealing with Fireworks, for possessing assorted fireworks, including sparklers, mortars and sparkler trees, which were recovered from his home.

District Attorney Donovan stated, "These charges allege that the defendant recklessly caused serious physical injury to Mr. Piotrowski by means of a dangerous weapon or instrument. In this case two pit bull dogs were the deadly weapons which caused substantial cuts with the severing of muscle and tissue as well as significant blood loss, to the victim. For over three months the defendant had known the risk that these animals' violent behavior posed to his neighbors, as documented by numerous calls to 311 and 911 and other witness accounts, yet chose not to secure them appropriately."

The District Attorney also requested that any neighbors of Mr. Piotrowski who may have come in contact with the pit bulls, named Brutus and Popeye, contact his office at 718-876-6300 or via e-mail at info@rcda.nyc.gov.

The defendant was arraigned this afternoon before Criminal Court Judge Alan J. Meyer and ordered held on a total of \$255,000 bail until his next court date on July 8, 2008. The top charge against the defendant, Assault in the 2nd Degree, a Class D felony, carries a maximum penalty of up to 7 years in prison.

The case against James W. McNair is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Joe Gim of the Supreme Court Bureau under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Paul A. Capofari, Bureau Chief. James W. McNair is represented by Richard Kopacz, Esq.

The public is reminded that the defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

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