



Department of Investigation

Press Releases

Manhattan Travel Agent Charged In Parking Ticket Scam

Release #020-2000

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2000 -- EDWARD J. KURIANSKY, Commissioner of the Department of Investigation (DOI), today announced the felony arrest of JOHN GARANES, a travel agent, for fraudulently securing dismissal of nine (9) parking summonses he received in 1997 and 1998, totaling \$575, and for displaying a bogus law enforcement parking placard on his automobile dashboard.

GARANES is accused of falsely stating, in letters he submitted to Parking Violations Operations (PVO) to explain his various summonses, that he had parked in restricted zones in Manhattan and Queens because his car had been rendered inoperable in a collision and that he had left the scene either to telephone a towing company or to seek medical aid.

To support his bogus letters of explanation, GARANES also allegedly filed forged documents, including towing firm receipts, signed NYPD Incident Information Slips, State Department of Motor Vehicles accident reports, and hospital letters stating that he had been treated for accident-related injuries.

Commissioner Kuriansky said that PVO initially found GARANES not guilty in all nine instances. However, the rulings were later set aside and the tickets reinstated after PVO's fraud unit uncovered a suspicious pattern in his defenses and referred the matter to DOI.

The DOI investigation disclosed that GARANES had also displayed a counterfeit laminated parking placard on his dashboard fraudulently indicating that the vehicle was on "official police business" for the "Department of Justice Office of Law Enforcement."

GARANES, 47, of 410 Central Park West, Manhattan, who works for a midtown Manhattan travel agency, was charged with Forgery in the Second Degree, Criminal Possession of a Forged Instrument in the Second Degree, Tampering with Physical Evidence, Offering a False Instrument for Filing in the First Degree, and Criminal Impersonation in the Second Degree. If convicted, he faces up to 7 years in prison.

Commissioner Kuriansky expressed his sincere appreciation to Department of Finance Commissioner Andrew S. Eristoff, Assistant Commissioner Michael Phillips of Parking Violations Operations, and the Fraud Investigation Unit of PVO for their assistance and cooperation during the investigation.

The investigation was conducted by DOI Assistant Commissioner and PVO Inspector General Vincent E. Green and members of his staff, including Assistant Inspector General Alberta E. Ancrum and Confidential Investigator Amy Harmon.

<file:///C:/nycgov/html/press/pr/pr0405a00.html>

The Office of Manhattan District Attorney Robert M. Morgenthau is prosecuting the case. Assistant District Attorney Patricia Braun of the District Attorney's Special Prosecutions Bureau is handling the matter.