



Christine Drakatos, a lifelong Astoria resident, hangs a sign on the door of alleged dog killer Milan Rysa's apartment building. Drakatos was one of the organizers of the candlelight vigil held in memory of Brooklyn, the shar-pei that died after being thrown out of a third-floor window

PHOTO BY PJ SMITH

# Astoria residents seek justice for Brooklyn

## Most agree that more needs to be done to punish animal abusers

by Jason Pafundi  
*Chronicle Contributor*

Astoria residents gathered outside the home of Milan Rysa on Tuesday for a candlelight vigil in remembrance of his dog Brooklyn, the shar-pei he allegedly killed by throwing it out the window of his third-floor apartment last week.

Sloane Quealy-Miner and her husband, Matt, led the crowd of about 30, which got larger and more vocal as the night went on, in chants of "Puppy killer, leave town" and "There's no excuse for animal abuse," while others passed out fliers and held signs memorializing the dog.

Rysa, a 30-year-old bodybuilder from Astoria, was arrested and charged with animal cruelty and second-degree reckless endangerment, according to the Queens District Attorney's Office. If convicted, he faces one year in prison on the animal cruelty charge and one year for reckless endangerment.

At the vigil, the sentiment was that even the maximum sentence wouldn't suffice.

"It's not enough," said lifelong Astoria resident Christine Drakatos. "These types of people cannot be around. We organized this vigil to get the word out. I'm not going to stand for it."

Fliers urged people to bombard the DA's office with phone calls and emails. According to one woman, that's the only way something will be done.

"The DA needs to know that this will not be tolerated," Michael Moskin said. "Justice needs to be served harshly."

Amidst the anger toward Rysa were the tears being shed for helpless Brooklyn.

"When I heard, there was immediate sadness and disgust," said Astoria resident Dan Martin, who has two rescued dogs of his own. "How can anyone do that to an animal?"

tioning why someone would kill their dog, but they also wondered why, if the allegations of past abuse are true, did nobody report it to the authorities. A sign even said that a dog can't call 911, but a person can.

"Supposedly this dog was left on the roof for hours at a time in the hot sun," said Gaston Reyes of Elmhurst. "How come nobody said anything; why didn't anyone call the police?"

According to a resident of Rysa's building who wished to remain anonymous, she would often see the dog on the roof and in the hallway unattended.

"I'd go up there just to check out the view of Manhattan, and [the dog] would be there, using the bathroom and roaming around unsupervised."

She said that the building they live in has no super and an apathetic landlord, who when told of what she saw on the roof, said he was too busy to be concerned.

"We don't want him in the building, but what can we do?" she said.

Things got heated at the beginning of the vigil when an employee of Sleepy's, which is on the first floor of the apartment building, came out and shouted that those against the killing of a dog should "stop wearing leather shoes." People shouted expletives at him as he went back into the store.

The ASPCA said that animal abusers suffer from serious psychological problems that will probably not go away on their own. Research has shown a link between animal abuse and other crimes, such as domestic violence, gang activity, weapons violations and sexual assault.

Bobbi Giordano, who operates Bobbi and the Strays, a rescue group based in Glendale, thinks that Rysa might be even worse.

"He will kill kids," she said. "He'll kill