



**One of the paintings donated by Gregory Perillo that will be on exhibit at Wagner College.**  
*Courtesy Wagner College Holocaust Center*

GRYMES HILL

## Artist donates 33 paintings to Wagner College Holocaust Center

*Staten Island Advance Entertainment Desk*

Staten Island artist Gregory Perillo has donated 33 paintings to the Wagner College Holocaust Center and the exhibit will open tonight.

There will be a reception at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Wagner College Hormann Library Spotlight Gallery in Grymes Hill.

The art subjects range from Nazi round-ups in ghettos to heroic images of Jewish Resistance fighters to brutal depictions of mass graves and death camps. The liberation of Dachau by U.S. troops is also depicted.

Gregory's son Steve Perillo and his sister Lucy Buttermark will speak on his behalf during an earlier event — 6 p.m. in the Manzulli Board Room, Foundation Hall — that includes a candle lighting and 30-minute film on Holocaust survivors created by Staten Island Advance multimedia specialist Shira Stoll. This week marks Holocaust Remembrance and Heroism Day.

Perillo is a World War II veteran who enlisted in the Navy on his 17th birthday. He served on the USS Storm King (AP 171) that earned four gold stars for service in the Pacific as a transport ship.

"I wanted people to know that the Nazis

were evil and they should never, never forget it," Perillo notes.

Of one of his paintings, titled "The Last Goodbye," Perillo said: "There's so much sadness in the Jewish couple saying goodbye."

Another inspiration for painting Holocaust images, including several of the U.S. army liberation of Dachau, was to emphasize the importance of Israel as a democracy within the Middle East: "Israel is our greatest ally and this democracy was founded on the suffering of the Jewish people."

Several framed images of headlines from World War II, from the Staten Island Advance, are paired with the exhibit in order to emphasize the role of U.S. newspapers in capturing turning points in the Nazi rise to power and Allied military confrontation. There are also two articles from April 1943 of interfaith protests on Staten Island to raise awareness of the Jewish refugee crisis and ongoing Nazi murder of "two million Jews."

A Staten Island resident for 90 years, Perillo had been haunted since his days in the war when he first read newspaper articles recounting the atrocities of the Holocaust.