



February is Black History Month and the 113 Precinct in Queens celebrated by honoring retired Det. Molly Ann Gustine. Gustine had been working for the Federal Reserve in the early 1960s, when her cousin, Det. James Ray of the 32 Precinct in Harlem, suggested she consider becoming a cop with the Policewoman's Bureau. Although it would require a pay cut, Gustine considered the security of civil service and joined the force in October 1963. After serving in a number of different capacities, she was promoted to Detective in November 1974 in the Queens Sex Crimes Unit. In February 1982, after a late tour, she was shot by a group of hoodlums who mugged her when she was returning from work to her Queens home at 2:00 a.m. Her key was in her front door when one bullet went through her arm into her screen door and the other shattered when it hit her breastbone. Still, the tough, petite Detective spun around and managed to squeeze off shots at the perps, who were fleeing in different directions. The thugs were later caught and prosecuted. But the intrepid Gustine was misdiagnosed by several doctors who did not realize she had a splintered bullet from the shooting still in her body. Weeks later, the fragments were spotted on x-rays and eventually removed, but the shooting led to Gustine's retirement in July 1983.

A pioneer in many respects, in the early 1970s, Gustine was the first woman elected as a Delegate of the Patrolmen's Benevolent Association, and the first African American female Delegate of the DEA. During her career, she taught ethical awareness to Department personnel, and lectured to various women's groups on the topics of rape, sexual abuse, and personal safety. She often represented the Department in media efforts to warn the public about scams and con games, a topic she knew well and firsthand from her time spent as a decoy and an Undercover. In one case, Gustine arrested a scam artist who had bilked a woman out of \$200,000.

Leading a much less frenzied life in retirement, Det. Gustine works with the homeless and Christian fellowship through various church affiliations, and she occasionally takes the time to enjoy a classic film on television.

Pictured at the 113 Precinct on February 26, 2019, are, from left, Chief David Barrere, Commanding Officer of Patrol Borough Queens South, Det. Gustine, and the Commanding Officer of the 113, Inspector Jerry O'Sullivan. At right, Det. Gustine poses with Sgt. Marcus Lewis.