

TRAGIC ANNIVERSARY



Photo by Christina Santucci

Malka (l.) and Khaifka Malakov break down next to an enlarged photo of their son, Daniel, during a memorial service at the Annadale Playground in Forest Hills. Dozens of family and friends came out despite the rainy weather to remember the Uzbek orthodontist, who was shot to death one year ago at that spot. **See story on page 2.**

Memorial held for Malakov

Mourners visit Forest Hills playground on anniversary of shooting

BY IVAN PEREIRA

On any other stormy day, the entrance to the Annadale Playground in Forest Hills would be empty of visitors, but on Tuesday bad weather did not deter the family and friends of slain orthodontist Daniel Malakov from visiting that spot.

It was there on Oct. 28, 2007 that the 34-year-old father was shot twice in the chest as he was taking his 4-year-old daughter, Michelle, to visit her mother, Mazoltuv Borukhova. Although police have charged Borukhova and her distant uncle with his murder, 12 long months have passed and the family said their emotional pain has not dissipated.

"I don't think time can heal. It's impossible," said Daniel Malakov's younger brother, Joseph Malakov, one of 60 people who attended the memorial. "We will never forget him. He is in our hearts every day."

The ceremony began around 10 a.m., when Daniel Malakov's father, Khaifka Malakov, who like the rest of his family emigrated from Uzbekistan, unveiled an enlarged photo of his son and draped it in black ribbons as is customary in Jewish death memorials.

A Bukarian Jewish rabbi read a long prayer in the family's native Russian as the mourners placed bouquets around the memorial. Malka Malakov, the orthodontist's mother, could not hold back her tears as the rabbi reflected on her son's life and how it affected the close-knit community.

Daniel Malakov had decided to bring Michelle to the playground so his little girl could spend some quality time with his estranged wife. Borukhova, 34, had lost custody of the child six days prior following a



Photo by Christina Santucci

Malka Malakov (c.) cries during a memorial service for her murdered son, Daniel, at the Annadale Playground in Forest Hills.

bitter legal dispute.

Immediately after the shooting, the Malakovs blamed Borukhova and her family for the shooting, claiming they wanted revenge against their

son. Over the next couple of months, a police investigation would back up those claims.

Borukhova's distant uncle,

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Mikhail Mallayev, 51, was arrested at his home in Georgia three weeks following the murder after police found his fingerprints on a makeshift silencer abandoned at the park by the shooter. In February, they arrested Borukhova and charged her and Mallayev with first-degree murder and conspiracy.

Investigators said

the two had more than 90 phone conversations in the weeks leading up to the murder. Their trial, in which they both face up to life in prison without parole if convicted, is slated for sometime next year.

Malakov family friend Ellen Rosenthal-Gelband, who helped coordinate the memorial with her husband Stuart Gelband, said the ceremony needed to go on rain or shine because the murder shocked and affected all Forest Hills residents.

"My husband and I

thought it was important for the entire community to come out and show their respect," she said. "This community sticks together and it's very strong."

The Malakovs said they were very grateful for all who braved the harsh weather to join in their mourning.

"Everyday, everyone has the same question, 'How could this happen?' How could a person of that soul and nature be that viciously killed?" Joseph Malakov asked.