

# Courier News

SATURDAY, MARCH 5, 2011



STAFF PHOTO: MARK SPIVEY

Dennis C. Hynes owns the BatteriesPlus franchise, which is slated to open March 14 on Route 22 West in North Plainfield.

## Former commodities trader embarking on new career

By MARK SPIVEY  
STAFF WRITER

**NORTH PLAINFIELD** — Technological advances may have snatched away a career that Dennis Hynes loved, but at least they also offered him a serviceable alternative.

The Berkeley Heights resident, a former commodities trader who worked in the World Trade Center for nearly a decade, lost his job when certain parts of the work were computerized in 2007. But after trying his hand at trading from home — an effort that resulted in plenty of frustration and an unpleasant “culture shock,” he recalled — Hynes is a proud franchise owner affiliated with one of the nation’s fastest-growing retail outlets. His BatteriesPlus on Route 22 West in North Plainfield, one of nearly 450 stores in 45 states offering more than 40,000 different types of batteries, is scheduled to hold its grand opening March 14.

“I got displaced by the computer,” Hynes said, “but you cannot fight technology.”

The 42-year-old started trading in 1994, specializing in international sugar markets and working on the eighth floor of 4 World Trade Center, a nine-story low-rise office building next to the twin 110-story towers, which once dominated the Lower Manhattan skyline. His office building housed one of the world’s largest trading floors until the morning of Sept. 11, 2001, when the 9-11 terrorist attacks left it damaged beyond repair and slated for demolition.

Hynes, who saved the cell phone bill that reflects the phone call he placed to his wife seconds after the first airliner hit the North Tower, said he and a group of colleagues started walking toward Central Park shortly after the second airliner hit on that fateful morning. All of them ultimately made it to safety before the towers fell, but other friends and co-workers weren’t as fortunate, he added. Hynes’s firm moved its operations to Queens be-

fore relocating to the New York Mercantile Exchange building in 2004 — a symbolic move, he said, that meant a lot to him and other survivors.

“It was such a great victory to go back (to Lower Manhattan),” Hynes said.

Still, the perseverance gave way to disappointment three years later, when Hynes found himself out of a job. He wound up considering franchise ownership for three different companies, but BatteriesPlus stood head and shoulders above the others, he said.

“This was the only one that actually grew during the recession,” Hynes explained. “And with all the franchise support that I’ve had, I’m so glad I didn’t go out on my own.”

The approximately 1,500-square-foot store, which is occupying the space vacated by a Quizno’s sandwich shop, will offer both retail and commercial sales. Free services will include testing of vehicle batteries and conditioning restoration of laptop batteries that prove to be salvageable, Hynes said.

A promotion recently enacted by the franchise nationally also will allow Hynes to pay tribute to the memory of 9-11 victims and survivors, he noted. During the weeks of both Memorial and Veterans Day, \$5 from the sale or installation of every watch battery will be donated to USA Cares, a nonprofit organization that provides housing assistance, employment and basic needs to military families of veterans who have fought overseas during the last decade.

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**ON THE WEB:** To learn more about BatteriesPlus, visit [www.batteries-plus.com](http://www.batteries-plus.com).