

**Installation of Officers  
by Councilmember  
Sheldon Leffler**

**& Holiday Awards**

**January 7, 1999**

**8:00 PM**

Refreshments

House of Hope Church

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Bellerose Commonwealth  
Civic Association, Inc.  
P.O. Box 260225  
Bellerose, NY 11426

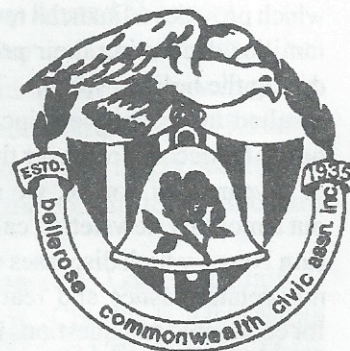


We meet the first Thursday of each month at the House of Hope Church, corner 248th Street and 85th Avenue at 8:00 PM

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bellerose commonwealth civic association, inc.

# *action news*



Volume 25 No. 1

JANUARY 1999

## **President's Gavel**

by: *Richard Hellenbrecht*

I am pleased to sit down and write the President's Gavel once again after several years of "semi-retirement." I would like to thank my predecessor, Richard Brown, for his years of service. I truly believe in the Bellerose community and I want to see the BCCA continue to represent and protect our lovely neighborhood.

In January, we will install our officers and directors for 1999. Councilman Sheldon Leffler has agreed to conduct the installation.

Two important questions for Councilman Leffler, who is chairman of the Council's Public Safety Committee, pertain to the long-promised ambulance station and to staffing of the 105th Precinct. A BCCA member just sent me a flyer that protests the City's consideration of a proposal by Northshore Hospital to replace FDNY ambulances covering our area. The City has promised to put the ambulance station at Little Neck Parkway and Hillside Avenue - what happened to that promise? Also, we hear that there will be significant additional staff reductions

at the 105th Precinct. This precinct has the slowest response rate in the City and is already short by dozens of officers. Why are we being hit for more?

The second half of a listing of BCCA activities on behalf of the community appears on page 2.

Holiday Awards will be made at the January meeting. See page 3 for details.

Finally, the principal of Martin Van Buren High School responds to last month's letter to the editor. See page 3.



## In Response

The questioner last month asked what community service programs that the B.C.C.A. has been involved in. There are a number of programs that fall into this category. Here are a few examples:

Each year we work in cooperation with the local schools, St. Gregory's and P.S. 133, to provide citizenship awards for outstanding graduates. In addition we sponsor an essay contest, focusing on community improvement and other local issues. Both of these programs include a certificate from the organization and savings bonds - the citizenship winner also receives a beautiful medal at the graduation ceremony. Another activity is our annual holiday decoration contest, which provides a financial reward for families decorating their properties during the holiday season. This has resulted in a significant increase in beautiful decorations over the past 5 or 6 years. Of course, we also put out a monthly newsletter, called **Action News**, which discusses community-related issues and reaches out for comments and questions from the membership. Finally, we conduct monthly meetings (except during the summer and February) and invite speakers on local topics and other issues of interest. Meetings regularly feature our local community patrol officer with an update on criminal activity in the area.

These activities may sound simple and may not seem to have a significant impact, however it is important to note that this organization is continually mindful of local problems and is organized and ready to act on behalf of the community to respond to City, State or external elements that can harm the community. It is also important to note that all of the members of the board of the

B.C.C.A. are volunteers and no one serves with any pay whatsoever. In addition, nothing can be accomplished by any one organization in a vacuum. For that reason we have representatives active in a number of organizations seeking neighborhood improvement. Let me identify a few:

A. Community Board 13 - Two of our board members are also members of Community Board 13 and actively involved in transportation, land-use and Parks issues. Community boards are formal entities of New York city government providing coordination of city services and advocating for neighborhood development. Community Board 13 comprises the largest Community Board in the city and one of the most diverse.

B. Queens Civic Congress - the Congress is a coalition of 100 civic associations throughout Queens that seeks to leverage this combined clout to improve city services and increase the investment by the city in neighborhoods throughout Queens to ensure our long-term viability. One of our board members is chairman of the Platform and Resolutions Committee for the Congress.

C. 105th Precinct Community Council - this council meets monthly with "Top Brass" of the 105th Precinct to ensure that manpower is maintained and adequate coverage of our neighborhood continues to be a priority. At the last B.C.C.A. meeting, the commanding officer spoke to our members for almost 45 minutes, thanks to our active involvement in the council. The Deputy Inspector does

not often visit civic associations.

D. The Rose House Advisory Board - the Civic Association is actively involved in the community advisory board with a residential center for mentally ill homeless men and women at Creedmoor. This board, initially established to protect the community from a men's shelter placed there overnight by Mayor Koch in the mid-70's, has resulted in a prototype, humanitarian approach to treatment of mentally ill homeless people and the committee continues to advise the center and advocate for funding, staff and enhanced programs for its clients.

E. Borough President's taskforce Creedmoor Redevelopment - the state is in the process of selling-off several hundred acres of property on the former psychiatric center just west of us. Without proper controls, this entire area could fall prey to improper development that could over tax our infrastructure, crowd our streets and deprive us of the light, air and green space that we are accustomed to. As a result, the civic association and several others forced the governor to abide by established laws that require a formal taskforce to monitor any future development of the area. We are represented on this committee. The Queens Civic Congress, of which we are a number, has prepared and submitted a master plan for the redevelopment of Creedmoor to the taskforce and to Empire State Development, which will preserve and protect the character of the community and prevent over development and "Big box" stores such as Home Depot.

See Page 3



From Page 2

F. The Bellerose Business District - the B.C.C.A. is a charter member of the Joint Bellerose Business District Development Corporation, with its mission to unite the merchants and building owners on Jamaica Avenue/Jericho Turnpike in order to improve the shopping strip and identify and seek government sources of funding for improvements to increase business and improve the area. This year the B.B.D. will introduce holiday decorations, welcome signs and directory brochures. We are currently seeking a one-half million dollar federal government grant to in-

stall new lighting reminiscent of the original lighting of the 1920's and 30's.

G. Borough President's Task Forces on Zoning and Illegal Conversions - in order to maintain and strengthen the zoning resolutions and penalties against infractions, the B.C.C.A. is represented and attends all of the Borough President's meetings of these two committees.

H. VIN Etching and bike registration - with the 105th precinct and St. Gregory's Church - protects dozens of neighbors' cars and bikes from theft.

I. Fought the relocation of the sani-

tation garage from Alley Pond Park into Bellerose - an idea which is back again - and we'll fight again.

### Van Buren Reacts

Last month we published an article called "The Times We Live In" from one of our members. "Times" mentioned among other things Martin Van Buren High School as "one of the worst schools to go to." Principal Peter Goldfien of Van Buren responded at some length to this article with statistics rebutting this statement. Mr. Goldfien's pride is obvious. Next month we will publish his whole letter.

### Holiday Award Winners

Our award committee has selected the following winners in the annual competition. Thanks to all of you for the lovely decorations and to the committee for the hard work.

James & Lorie McClain of 247th St., Charles & Alice Santa Maria of 249th St., John and Lisa Hardin of 253rd St., Daniel & Jane Salgado and Daniel & Pat Drolet both of 250th St.

## BCCA Board of Directors

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### BCCA Feedback Form

January 1999

#### To the BCCA:

I suggest the following article for Action News, or issue to pursue, or general comment:

\_\_\_\_\_.

I suggest the following speaker topic: \_\_\_\_\_.

I suggest the following newsletter topic: \_\_\_\_\_.

We encourage you to leave your name and address: \_\_\_\_\_.

**action news**

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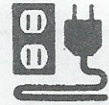
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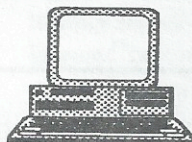
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