

bellerose commonwealth civic association, inc.

action news



Volume 18 No6

JUNE 1992

**Block Captain
Recognition
June 4, 1992 at 8:00PM
House of Hope Church
Corner 248 St. & 85 Ave.**

**RAIN DATE FOR PARK
CLEANUP & CAR/BIKE
REGISTRATION
May 30 at 10AM
Please come!**

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

President's Gavel

By: Richard Hellenbrecht

As you read this special edition of BCCA Action News the BCCA is winding down for our summer break. We hope we have demonstrated to you a renewed vigor. We are most serious about our campaign against graffiti and generally about instilling pride in our beautiful community of Bellerose. See our special articles below and on page 4.

Another thing we've done this year was to ask our graduating classes at St. Gregory's and PS133 what they would do if they were "Mayor of Bellerose". You'll find their thoughts interesting.

We were pleasantly surprised by the thought and effort that went into the responses. A winning essay of one boy and one girl will be announced at graduation for each school and all four essays will be published here in the fall.

Please have a peaceful and Happy summer and keep Bellerose Beautiful.

Graffiti

By: Frank T. Olton

After the rain-out of the May 16 Bellerose clean-up, teams of volunteers got together on Sunday to remove graffiti from light posts, traffic signs and mail boxes throughout the neighborhood. Other volunteers have been working on assigned streets since then. Hopefully by the time this issue is distributed, our rain date clean-up will have been a success and graffiti will have been removed from all the lamp posts and traf-

fic signs in our area.

Our May 5th anti-graffiti meeting was well attended. We want to especially thank Father Cunningham for donating use of the St. Gregory's Oak Room, Henry Mazer for representing PS133 and mustering support of parents and students, and Clif Seale for representing the Bellerose Library. We also want to thank representatives of Discount Deli on Hillside Avenue and Horizon Garage Door on Jamaica Avenue for ensuring the pres-

ence of some local businesses.

We are also appreciative of the work done recently in painting the Cross Island Parkway tunnel.

It is very difficult to achieve complete removal of graffiti. Markings on a wooden post and on brick walls attached to some stores are much harder to remove because the surface is very porous, and graffiti on the front of a traffic sign is difficult to remove because the remover can destroy the paint.

See Graffiti on page 4

If I were Mayor of Bellerose

By: Students of PS133 & St. Gregory's

Members of the BCCA spent part of the beginning of May ranking essays prepared by graduating students of St. Gregory's and PS133. In all, over 100 essays were reviewed and selecting best boy and girl categories from each school was very difficult. We were all impressed with the range of problems our students identified and with the quality of grammar and spelling. Our sincere congratulations to these students and our appreciation to the teachers and principals for coordinating this large effort.

Since several people ranked different groups I haven't seen all of the papers yet, but using the boys group from PS133 I recorded the themes that came up most often. The four winners (a boy and girl from each school) will receive a savings bond and their papers will be published in September and October *Action News*.

In general, the 43 papers I read were mostly concerned with issues related to Recreation, Security, Sanitation, Education and Social Services. The greatest single response was for more police and security guards. Since my group was boys, it was not surprising that recreational items were high on their list. Recreation centers, pools and parks were high on their dream list (just after more cops). Kids cited boredom, hanging-out as problems.

On the otherhand, it was shocking to see several boys calling for more trees and flowers. Recycling came up frequently and

cleaning streets and parks. A few kids spoke of removing graffiti and suggested taxes and penalties to punish vandals. I was equally shocked to see these fifth graders concerned about homelessness, aids and help for the poor and mentally ill. Finally, several kids wanted to eliminate potholes, fix sidewalks and improve "smelly sewers" (?)

Quotables

Following are a few of the notable quotes from the boys of 133:

"I want to make Bellerose the best community in all New York City. The best way to start is by making it the cleanest community in the city." "...I would try to make this community a model for the whole city...by encouraging people to be the best. I would make this an ideal place to live." "I would award people who helped make this community the best. I hope when people see less litter and cleaner environment they would be proud to live in Bellerose."

"This is a wonderful place to live in and I would like to keep it that way." "I would try to build community spirit because this is a great place to live and we'd like to keep it that way." "I'd start by helping children. They are our community's future. I'd like to involve everyone in doing this." "I would try to have better safety rules for schools that parents and children would agree upon. Together we would write a safety code that everyone could follow." "Children need fun like people need food. Get together as a community not enemies. I would create a feeling of brotherhood if I were Mayor of Bellerose."

Padavan Fights Illegal Apartments

Senator Padavan recently sponsored legislation that would prohibit Con Edison from installing more electric meters than are authorized in the Certificate of Residence issued by the City Building Department. Governor Cuomo has signed this legislation into law.

The law is intended to address a major concern of the BCCA and many other civics. When the density of a neighborhood is increased above the planned density through the addition of illegal living space, city services such as water, sewage, parking and street traffic become overburdened.

Under the new law, the power company is required to reject a request of a landlord for an extra meter, unless the landlord can show that the Building Department's Bureau of Electrical Control has approved the installation.

Queens Children's Theater Opens

Beginning on May 30, the Marketplace Mall on Union Turnpike will become the new home for the Queens Children Theater. The theater will present *The Happiness Man*, a delightful musical for young and old. Performances will be Saturdays and Sundays at 1PM; \$5 for children and seniors, \$6 for adults.

The Theater is hoping to expand to a general audience evening musical theater by the fall if the childrens theater is successful. Go enjoy this fun production as soon as possible.

Community Column

The BCCA is pleased to note the birth of a beautiful baby girl named Sara Alice MacKenna to Janine and Peter MacKenna, Block captains on 250th Street for the BCCA. Sara's entry to the world in early March also made long-time BCCA Board member and past president George Wolf and his wife Carol grandparents for the first time. Congratulations to all of you!

New Services at Holy Trinity

Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, 87th Avenue and Commonwealth Blvd., Bellerose, now has two services at 9AM and 10:30AM continuing through June 28th. Sunday church school at 9AM. Parents can worship while children are in Sunday school.

For information, call (718)347-0278. All Welcome!

Clean-up Kudos

Last month we congratulated the Library for their excellent efforts at keeping the Library clean after numerous Graffiti attacks.

Several other stores deserve the honor as well. Two corner businesses have been hit many times but keep cleaning and painting. Congratulations to Reflections Hairdressers and Laffey Realtors on Hillside Avenue for their perseverance in keeping after this damage.

Without first class work from all of us, we will not be able to get on top of graffiti. Thanks to these and all other businesses who try to keep graffiti in control.

Storm Sewers

In our "Mayor" article we mentioned that many children have noted smelly sewers as something to fix to improve Bellerose.

Our friends in the Queens Colony Civic Association ran the following article last month - its good advice to address smelly sewers:

The storm sewers in our neighborhood are not sanitary sewers. They should not be used for disposal of any sorts. These sewers do not receive the same waste treatment as a sanitary sewer.

Motor oil, transmission fluids, antifreeze and canine waste should be disposed of in its proper manner, not poured down these storm sewers.

Community Day at Rose House

The Rose House residential care center for mentally ill homeless people, is celebrating its annual Community Awareness Day with a free Bar-B-Que lunch at the front yard of their Creedmore Building 4 headquarters, right along Hillside Avenue. This event will start at 11 AM on June 13 and will feature elected officials, awards for clients, tee shirts and baseball caps.

BCCA Co President Rich Hellenbrecht is honoree in recognition of service on Rose House's Community Advisory Board for several years.

All members of the community are invited to come, have some good food and see the good works accomplished at Rose House.

St. Gregory's Lucky Thirteenth

The thirteenth annual Gregorian Summer Festival starts on June 18th, running through June 28 at St. Gregory's schoolyard. Festivities include Bellerose Night June 18, Irish nights June 19 to June 21, Country and Western Night June 22, Polish Night June 23, 50's Night June 24, German Night June 25 and Italian Nights June 26 to June 28.

As always, the festival will start with a parade. Featured through the 11 days are rides, games, prizes and plenty of food.

The festival is a great way for the Church to get seriously needed funds for the school. I hope everyone has fun and spends lots of money. But remember to respect the property and privacy of neighbors. Please encourage your children to have a good time, but not to get carried away.

Letter to Councilman Leffler

The accompanying letter was prepared by concerned parents of Bellerose interested in keeping budgeted educational funds for our schools intact. This letter does not necessarily express the editorial policy of the BCCA or of the Action News. We encourage you to follow your conscience and use the letter as you see fit.

But we did learn that on many surfaces, graffiti is very easy to remove. It is very easy to remove from the lamp post in front of your home and from the security gate on your store. Graffiti removal sprays, sold in many paint stores, can be purchased for under \$6 per can, are very effective and will last a long time.

We have asked the stores in our area for a commitment to remove graffiti from their security gates. Security gates covered with graffiti are perhaps the most

easily correctible. Those stores in our civic association which have gates covered with graffiti have been given a complimentary can of remover. Please observe which stores keep clean security gates and let them know, in conversation and by your business, that you appreciate their efforts. In the future, we will try to keep our membership aware of which stores are making concerted efforts to clean their fronts. At this point we are still waiting for some to make the first effort.

Special Thanks

We want to give a special note of thanks to Best Paint, 220-23 Jamaica Avenue. The owners are people who obviously feel a sense of responsibility to the community. They demonstrated this by selling us large quantities of graffiti remover at well below shelf price. We thank them for their discounts, for their "throw-ins" and for their advice.

Other Graffiti Issues

There have been a number of letters and press releases received in the last month or so that I thought you should be aware of.

Most importantly, under legislation sponsored by Sen. Padavan, graffiti vandals would face mandatory minimum fines of \$100 for conviction of defacing property. This introduction won the approval of the Senate on May 18. If enacted, Padavan's bill would make defacing property a Class B Misdemeanor with mandatory minimum \$100 fines and maximum \$500 and/or three months imprisonment.

Senator Padavan commented "*Graffiti is more than just an urban blight. When unchecked, graffiti presents the image of a deteriorating community; a community that no longer cares about itself.*"

In other actions recently Senator Padavan has spoken to Captain Dansky to ensure that the graffiti problem is a priority

in the precinct and that it gets the attention it deserves. The Captain reported that eight arrests have occurred in the past year in the 105th Precinct for graffiti vandalism, including six juveniles. The Captain also assured Senator Padavan that the precinct has also established an extensive list of "tags" and the names of the vandals and that he will continue to use late night plain clothes surveillance teams to apprehend graffiti vandals.

Douglas Brigandi, District Counsel to Senator Padavan attended our May 5 meeting and spoke of the many efforts of the senator and his office to restore and preserve the quality of life in Bellerose. Several copies of the Senator's legislative committee report entitled "Coming Clean" were given out but they ran out quickly. We have been advised that a full supply is available at the Senator's new district office at 89-39 Gettysburg Street in Bellerose.

Councilman Sheldon Leffler has also been very active creating

new legislation in New York City to strengthen enforcement and punishment for graffiti crimes and sale of graffiti tools to minors. Three recent Leffler introductions include a bounty for information leading to the award and conviction of graffiti vandals and raising the current "tool bill" from civil to criminal offense so local police can handle complaints. Finally, an introduction has asked State Legislature to give powers to courts to suspend drivers licenses or delay issuance of licenses or driver's permits to youths convicted of graffiti.

Operation Paint Out-Clean Up

Borough President Claire Shulman has designated 1992 as the year of Operation Clean Queens. In her announcement she said "*Graffiti is one of the most challenging quality of life issues in the Borough of Queens. There is not a community or highway which hasn't been touched by this malicious scrawl. Graffiti continues to challenge our ingenuity and tax or resources.*" The Paint

Continued on page 5

Dear Residents of our Community,

Last spring parents, educators and concerned citizens visited legislators in Albany to ask them to restore funding for New York City Education. Our State legislators restored \$67 million for education in New York City. Unfortunately Mayor Dinkins, in formulating a budget for the City for the coming year, not only did not give the Board of Education the \$67 million but cut the education budget by \$150 million. Our children, who are the future of this city, cannot learn in overcrowded classrooms with little or no books and supplies. The children cannot effort to lose teachers, guidance counselors and support staff in the schools.

Please support our city's children by sending the "tear off" below to your city Councilperson. He has the power to vote for the budget as it stands or adjust it - giving education the funds it desperately needs.

If you are planning to disregard this letter because you do not have children in the school system yet or if your children have already passed through, remember that helping to maintain the excellence of this school district will also maintain the value of your real estate.

Send it today. Do it for the children. Do it for New York's Education system.

Thank you,
Concerned parents of children in District 26

Send it to: Councilman Sheldon Leffler
205-07 Hillside Avenue
Hollis, New York 11423

-----TEAR OFF -----

Dear Councilman Leffler,

I am counting on you to reject Mayor Dinkins' budget and approve one which does not cut education in our city.

Sincerely,

Name _____

Address _____

Continued from page 4

out will be held on June 13 and June 14. We will use this day to continue our clean up of lamp posts, mail boxes, signs, etc.

Father Cunningham, Pastor of St. Gregory's spoke at our May 5 meeting. Father suggested that parents watch children's school books, rooms, etc. for use of Tags or graffiti logos or presence of

spray paint cans and markers. Father has compiled a list of logos and is closely monitoring the situation around the school. The Holy Name Society and the Boy Scouts have recently painted the underpass and it looks great!

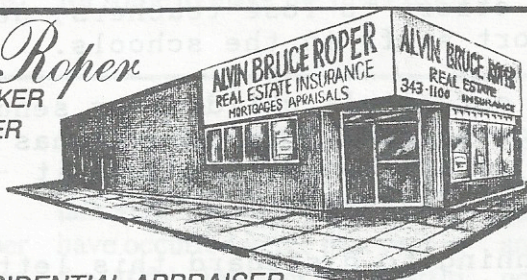
PS133 Principal Henry Mazer wrote to Claire Shulman in support of our efforts. PS133 has adopted the letter box near the school and vowed to work

with the community to clean up our neighborhood. Referring to our joint efforts of removing graffiti and cleaning, Mr. Mazer ended his letter by saying "In the spirit of human kindness we, as a society, can do great things."

As you can see, there is a groundswell of activity and interest in overcoming this blight. We will work through the summer to keep the pressure on.

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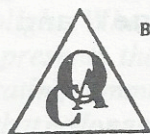


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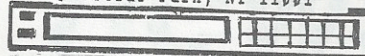
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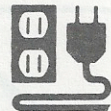
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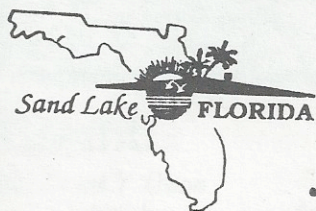
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