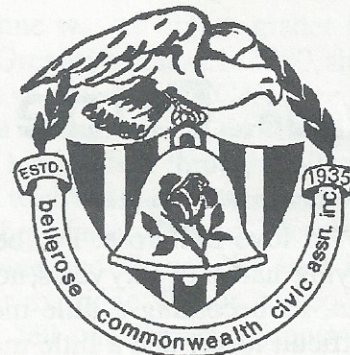


bellerose commonwealth civic association, inc.

action news



Volume 18 No. 3

MARCH 1992

Announcing...
Bellerose Pride
Queens Farm Museum
Jim Trent on the
History & Plans of
this Bellerose Landmark
Thursday March 5 8PM
House of Hope Church
Corner 248 St & 85th Ave.

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: Frank T. Olton, Co President

At our last meeting we introduced our new C-POP officer Russel Gurrier, welcomed him to Bellerose and expressed to him some of our concerns for our neighborhood. We also heard from representatives of our local volunteer ambulance service. An article in this issue will tell you more about that service.

There was considerable discussion on the subject of graffiti and on how to stop it from spreading. We would like the battle against graffiti to become a more regular topic at our meetings and we encourage all to share their ideas with us and with the local precinct. We particularly invite the businesses in our area, and bordering our area to become active in combatting graffiti. Businesses on Hillside Avenue, Jamaica Avenue and Little Neck Parkway seem to be very susceptible to kids with spray cans and nothing better to do. Please see the article inside on Pride in Bellerose.

QV-H-B Volunteer Ambulance Corps

By: Frank T. Olton

Representatives from the Queens Village, Hollis, Bellerose Volunteer Ambulance Corps addressed the membership. The ambulance service is composed strictly of volunteers, trained to work on an ambulance and to assist those in need of medical help en route to the hospital.

They explained that, unlike NYC-EMS, which will take a person only to an available, designated hospital, their service will

attempt to take you to the hospital you request, circumstances permitting. While EMS will bill you for their services, there is no charge for the volunteer service. In addition, if you are elderly or disabled and cannot arrange transportation to medical appointments, if you call in advance, it might be possible to arrange transportation. The emergency number to call is 464-2424.

Unfortunately, the volunteer service, like other organizations,

is suffering from governmental funding cutbacks. They also suffer from a shortage of volunteers to work on ambulances and to staff their office. As a result, their services center mainly around day-time hours on week-ends. If an ambulance is not available when you call you will receive a message to call 911.

The corps would love to have new volunteers for ambulance or office duty, particularly during day-time hours.

Pride...Pride...Pride

By: Richard Hellenbrecht

I love Bellerose. I've been saying that for twenty years, now. But, its becoming a little more difficult to say and a little more difficult to really believe. Age is starting to settle into this comfy little neighborhood, and with it a little less caring, a little less concern for neighbors and a little less attention to keeping things nice around our houses.

It seems like a little thing to let a candy wrapper fall to the ground, or to forget about the newspaper that started to blow around the neighborhood. It seems petty too that people constantly walk their dogs over by the parkway and never bother to clean up.

But, its these little things that leave a lasting impression on our children and neighbors that its really not important to be considerate of others or of how our little town looks.

Well, folks, we're beginning to see the legacy of these little things in several ways. First of all, take a look along the CIP southbound exit at Hillside Avenue. Its a disgrace. Its easy to say "it is those outsiders getting off the parkway..." but I'm not so sure. The northbound service road has also been a problem for many years. We've seen cans, newspapers, washing machines, cars, etc. over there.

A more serious problem has been surfacing for a long time now, too. Our children, that's right, the good little kids from here in middle class Bellerose,

are very aware of the slipping attitudes of many older residents.

We can all see the result every day on the wall of the Library, on the ghetto gates on Hillside and on Jamaica Avenues, on the abutments of the parkway overpasses. Virtually every stationary piece of concrete or brick is becoming a target to this mess. And its a vicious circle. Seeing the mess causes others, parents included, to care just a little less.

Another outcome of the general demise of neighborhood pride is the presence of annoying, noisy dirt bikes and ATVs, kids ripping up the lawn at St. Gregory's school with the ATVs, raucous parties almost every Friday and Saturday night at 87th Avenue near St. Gregory's.

Carelessness leads inevitably to lawlessness. As reported here before, on two separate occasions there have been gun shots through the doors at PS133. And recently there was a breakin at St. Gregory's school during which a fire was set.

Its Not Everyone

I've got to say its not everyone in Bellerose doing these things. There is a large number of concerned Bellerose residents. And there are a great many terrific kids in Bellerose. But the bad ones really hurt it for everyone else.

The critical message is that adults have to be more cognizant of the subliminal messages they send to children. Parents have to be more observant of the activities of their children. I have never

heard anyone say they have seen a graffiti artist in action. Even the ambulance drivers who are out at all hours said they've never seen one, but the evidence is there, and growing every week. This suggests that graffiti is done very late at night. Parents must insist that their children be in at earlier hours.

Our churches and schools must have more structured and attractive youth activities to keep kids off the streets. Our children must be taught to respect their property and their surroundings, they must learn to think of the future. Can you imagine how you would feel if you caused this damage and saw it twenty years later? I'm sure much of this graffiti will still be visible when they are adults.

Lot to be proud of...

Hey, folks, there is still a lot to be proud of about Bellerose. In order to keep up our spirit, not to mention our property values, we have to be constantly interested in keeping Bellerose clean and attractive. This Civic and all of our neighboring Civics will continue to sponsor programs to help out, like park clean-ups, etc., but we hope to get a lot of help from every house in Bellerose.

Dues is Due

Block Captains please collect your dues and bring them to the Treasurer, George Wolf or bring it to a meeting.

Dues is this Civic's life blood and we have not had a very good return so far this year.

Members who have not yet paid their dues can send a \$3 check made out to Bellerose Commonwealth Civic Association to: George Wolf, 86-15 247 St.

Community Column

The BCCA is very pleased to note that on February 1, long-time BCCA Board member Ross Fertitta and his lovely wife, Rose, celebrated their fiftieth anniversary. Rose and Ross's daughter helped them celebrate their golden anniversary with 40 of their best friends and relatives at the Milleridge Inn in Jericho. In addition to 50 years of marriage, Ross and Rose have lived in Bellerose for over 40 years. That makes them real pioneers.

On behalf of all the members and the Board of the BCCA I wish the Fertittas our best wishes for many more years of health and happiness.

More great news. We have recently been notified by Lorraine L. Persico that her daughter, Joanne was married on November 23, 1991 to Dr. Gerard James Smith. Joanne is a graduate of St. Francis Prep and Syracuse University and will soon receive her MBA from St. John's University.

Ms. Persico noted that while

Joanne was an eighth grader at St. Gregory's School in 1980, she was awarded the BCCA Citizenship Award. We are thrilled that she has made it through college and wish her the best in completing her Masters Degree. We wish Joanne and Gerard the best in their marriage. I hope someone will tell our former citizenship award winner that we have a spot available on the Board for Recording Secretary!

Cross Island Parkway

By: Richard Hellenbrecht

Last month I mentioned an upcoming meeting with St. Gregory's Church and School, the Community Board, the contractor and city agencies involved in the CIP project. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the northbound entrance to the Parkway, the service road and the safety of pedestrians crossing at the underpass.

I have heard of many accidents as cars attempt to merge with quickly moving traffic on the parkway, so we were trying to find a way to reduce the hazard. As it turns out, Fr. Cunningham and Sister Mary Agnes of St. Gregory's had been having a lot of trouble with traffic on the service road. At the meeting, Sister said she had seen a lot more traffic on the service road since the ramp was shortened. One car after another has been seen passing the stop sign at the pedestrian underpass.

After much discussion at two

separate meetings, it was decided to keep the entrance ramp opened until a few days before the Easter break at St. Gregory's. The ramp will be closed on April 13 and stay closed until April 27, taking advantage of the spring break. While its closed, the contractor will realign the ramp in the new roadbed, where the railroad bridge used to be, to provide additional acceleration space for cars entering the parkway.

As a result of all of these meetings and discussions I recommend two things to the people of Bellerose: first, do not use the Northbound entrance ramp near Jamaica Avenue until it is improved; second, ALWAYS stop at the stop sign near the underpass. It is nearly invisible to cars approaching on the service road, but kids can be very careless when coming out of the underpass. We are very lucky that no one has been injured there yet. Let's not take any more chances.

Many other very good ideas came up at the meetings to help control traffic. The City Department of Transportation will try to

add lights to the stop signs and increase enforcement in the area. The most difficult time for the students will be from April 13 to the 15 when the school will be open and the ramp closed for construction. At that time we expect significantly increased traffic on the service road. The Community Board and school will be looking for volunteers during morning and afternoon school crossing times during those three days. We will also seek additional police and auxiliary police help to protect the children.

Again, please exercise caution if you use the northbound entrance ramp. According to the contractor, the project will be entirely complete by the end of September, the roadway returned to its original configuration, temporary roadway on the southside will be removed and reggraded. One thing that may need to be completed later is some final repairs to the underpass after the temporary roadway is removed. This may affect the availability of the underpass and we will carefully schedule any closings.

Real Property Taxes

By: Richard Hellenbrecht

Ross Fertitta brought to my attention an article in City Councilman Sheldon Leffler's newsletter about the City's most recent attempt to substantially increase the property taxes for one-family houses. The Councilman is taking a very strong position in opposition to any increase for owner occupied single family homes and proposed instead that the city address the needs of middle income homeowners by adopting a policy that keeps taxation of owner-occupied housing at lower rates than income producing properties; establishes a "Homestead Exemption" to permanently hold down assessment levels on owner

occupied housing; and, treats absentee owners and properties that are illegally converted to higher occupancies as income producing properties at higher rates.

The BCCA will discuss and vote this proposal at the March meeting and decide whether to write in support of the Councilman's proposal.

In a related issue, you've probably recently received a new tax assessment form from the City. For the first time the assessment form shows what it considers to be your home's Estimated Market Value for two successive tax years. Due to the severely depressed market in the last few years, most of these reflect market values falling by 12 to 15 percent, yet the Assessed Value

remains the same, or increases. It is not clear why the City chose to show both estimated and assessed amounts. Its also not evident at first why assessed value has gone up while market values fell. The accompanying flyer explains that since legislative limits held property tax increases during the heavy growth years, and the city was unable to capture market value increases. Assessed values now will be allowed to catch up to what they would otherwise have been.

I also think the City included the estimated market values as a subtle reminder that taxes are now based on a very small proportion of actual property values, and that taxes are much higher in surrounding communities.

Park Cleanups & Call to the Troops

By: Richard Hellenbrecht

I've mentioned before that the BCCA has a very aggressive plan to clean-up the Bellerose Playground at PS133 and the Commonwealth Blvd. Triangle on May 16. If all goes well at the triangle we hope to do some planting or ground cover to make it look nice. In addition, we will register Bicycles and cars on that same date.

Many of you have children in boy scout or girl scout troops or cub scouts or brownies. These groups would be very helpful to us and could earn their citizenship badges, have some fun and do something good for their community at the same time.

If you are a scout leader please call me at 343-5397 or tell your child's scout leader to call me. If we can get some help I'd like to know early so we can arrange productive assignments. In addition, we will be cleaning up the triangle once again in the fall as we did last year. October 24 is the scheduled triangle day.

BCCA Still Needs a Corresponding Secretary

We still have a vacancy on our Board. In January, Lorraine Anzalone became a Director after some ten years as Corresponding Secretary. We are in serious need of filling Lorraine's spot before we loose too much of our paperwork.

The requirements and demands of this spot are fairly easy. We are looking for someone who can do some typing, mail and file our letters and send reminders of Board meetings. The co presidents do most of their own letter writing. You'll need to be available on Tuesday and one Thursday a month for Board and General meetings. Call Rich 343-5397

Recycling Oil & Batteries

Per NYS Motor Vehicles

It is illegal to dispose of your dead car battery in regular trash. Batteries MUST be returned to a battery recycler or retail store that sells batteries. Retail car battery sellers MUST accept, free of charge, two used batteries per month from any

individual. Such stores will charge a return incentive of \$5 if you do not return a used battery when you purchase a new one. You have 30 days to return a battery for a refund of the \$5 incentive.

If you change your own oil, it is illegal to dump used oil on the ground street or down the

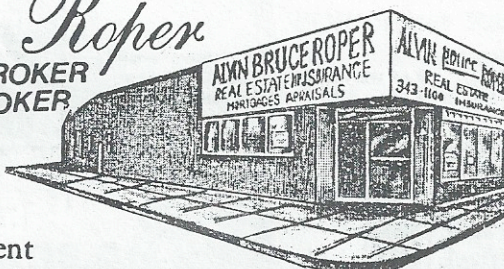
drain. Service Stations selling 500 gallons of oil annually MUST accept up to 5 gallons of oil per day per person, free of charge. Store oil in a clean plastic container and don't mix it with anything else. Call NYS Dept. of Envir. Conservation (518)457-7337.

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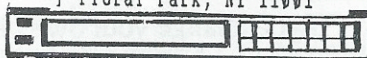
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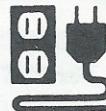
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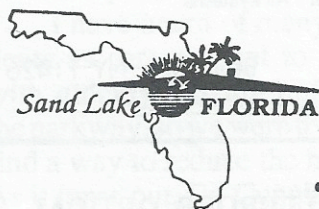


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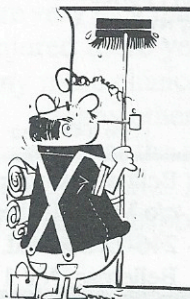
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