



THE VOICE OF WESTERLEIGH

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERLEIGH IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY
P.O. Box 140-043 Staten Island, NY 10314 www.wisonline.org

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2010!

On behalf of the Westerleigh Improvement Society I would like to wish all of you all the best for the New Year.

Continuing with a series of Westerleigh Talks begun by Vice President Mark Anderson last fall, the Society will present programs in the coming months concerning Westerleigh history and life. Each program will take place at 7 PM (just before the monthly meetings) in the Immanuel Union Church. More information is elsewhere in this newsletter.

2010 is being observed as the 350th Anniversary of the settlement of Staten Island. Borough President Molinaro will kick off the celebration on January 25 at Borough Hall. More information will follow.

This year is also the year of

the Census. Residents are asked to participate in the process which allocates federal resources and representation according to the data collected. Workers are also needed to help with the effort. Please read the notice in this newsletter.

In response to requests from residents who live on the east side of Jewett Avenue from Constant Avenue to Coale Avenue, the Society is seeking your opinion on the possibility of making some of those streets one way. Two-way traffic is almost impossible without pulling over to allow oncoming traffic pass. Please read the article and give us your feedback.

As always, if there is any issue that you feel the Society can assist with, please let us know.

STATEN ISLAND'S 350TH BIRTHDAY

Beginning this month a year-long celebration of the 350th anniversary of the settlement of Staten Island begins with a Reception and Press Conference at Borough Hall. Borough President James Molinaro will begin.

the celebration together with our elected officials and Staten Island Borough Historian Thomas Matteo.

Stay tuned for more information concerning many ongoing events during 2010.

2010 Census

We received the following information from Director Richard Verardi:

The Census is coming. The Census is counting. The Census is hiring. Temporary office and field positions are paying \$14.25 to 20.25 per hour depending on the position. There are part time, full time, day and night or weekend openings. You can train and work on Staten Island. Call 1-866-861-2010 and follow the prompts.

If you have any questions, call Mr. Verardi at 347-745-2532.



Pictures from Holiday Reception

The Annual Holiday Reception was held at the Staaten on December 12th. It was a joyous evening. Following are some pictures taken at the event:



Crowell Avenue Traffic

It's not breaking news that traffic in and around our neighborhood is getting worse every day. But it's still annoying, frustrating and, sometimes, dangerous.

Take, for example, Crowell Avenue. The street runs from Jewett Avenue to Manor Road, the first one going north from Victory Boulevard that connects those two heavily traveled roads. Because of that distinction, Crowell gets more than its share of traffic, almost all day – and all night – long. Drivers in a hurry – and that seems to be the majority of those on the road these days – tear down the street at speeds far exceeding the legal limit. Police are well aware of the problem, and have sometimes resorted to parking a patrol car in a resident's driveway in an attempt to ticket some of the offending drivers.

Compounding the street's problems is that the Westerleigh firehouse, home to Engine Company 163 and Ladder Company 83, sits at the corner of Jewett and Crowell. The firefighters have been excellent neighbors, but have brought their own share of problems, including their cars, which are parked along the street for days. Those cars, not to mention the FDNY's own vehicles, parked in front or on the side of the firehouse, frequently jam the corner, cutting down on drivers' sight lines and indirectly causing a number of accidents. Cars trying to turn left on Crowell, toward Victory, are most severely affected. One resident of the street even went as far as to forbid his family members from making that turn, always fearing the worst.

Residents along the street also

have suffered from problems of their own causing, including a proliferation of family vehicles. Twenty years ago most residents owned a single car, which they usually parked in their driveways. These days, one-car families are about as rare as sub-\$2 a gallon gas, and when combined with the cars from the FDNY, the result can sometimes resemble mid-town Manhattan on a weekday. Those extra cars now dot both sides of the street, narrowing passage lanes and causing dangerous traffic situations. Cars approaching each other from opposite ends of the street frequently engage in a game of chicken, challenging the other to see who gives ground first.

Most Crowell Avenue residents have experienced what happens when cars try to pass one another in the middle of the street. The sound of rear-view mirrors being torn off parked cars is a familiar one to many residents, as are the sounds of cars – both parked and traveling – being scrapped by passing vehicles.

Society President Michael Morrell has been inundated with complaints from residents, and has even gone door-to-door soliciting opinions. He's discussed the problem with the Department of Transportation, and even with our city councilmen. Everyone has been concerned, but coming up with a solution has been difficult.

There are some options, such as turning Crowell Avenue into a one way street in either direction or putting in some speed bumps. But with each solution, it seems, comes another problem, especially when the needs of the FDNY in responding to a fire are taken into account.

So now, President Morrell and the rest of the WIS want to know what you think.

Why not take a few minutes to fill out the accompanying tear-off on the last page and send it back to us. Or email us with your suggestion (*wis_si@yahoo.com*.) Only by putting all our heads together can we begin to come up with an answer.

Remember, it's your community. Making it better one street at a time is up to all of us!



Renewals Reminder:

The month of January begins our Membership Dues drive. Applications are being sent out now! Please renew as soon as possible.



A "Talk" on Prohibition Park at the Turn of the Century

Immanuel Union Church
693 Jewett Avenue at Maine Avenue

Tuesday, February 2nd at 7pm

Have you ever wondered what the oldest houses on Deems or College Avenues are?

Mark Anderson and Lou Motola will bring the 1890's maps of National Prohibition Park to life. We'll take a look at what was here, what is still here, and what is gone. This interactive map presentation will place the pieces of the past into perspective for a new level of understanding of our historic neighborhood.

Other exciting "Talks" are scheduled for the first Tuesday of each month at 7pm, before monthly Board of Directors Meetings. March 2nd, April 6th, May 4th, June 8th.

Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc.
P.O.Box 140-043
Staten Island, NY 10314

www.wisonline.org

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120th Precinct:

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Congressman Michael McMahon

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State Senator Andrew Lanza:

(718) 984-4073

Assemblyman Matthew Titone:

(718) 442-9932

49th District Councilwoman Debi Rose

(718) 556-7370

50th District Councilman James Oddo:

(718) 980-1017

Public School 30:

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CommunityBoard #1:

(718) 981-6900

Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc.

Officers:

President... Mike Morrell

Vice President... Mark Anderson

Treasurer... Joe Ficara

Secretary... Evelyn Otten MacDonald

Narrow Street Solution

Suggested Solution

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Name

Address

Return to:

Westerleigh Improvement Society

P.O. Box 140-043

Staten Island, NY 10314