

THE VOICE OF WESTERLEIGH

Newsletter of the Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc.

PO Box 140-043, Staten Island, NY 10314

www.wisonline.org

JUNE 2017

Serving the Westerleigh community for 125 years

Vol. 52 No. 3 Circulation: 850

PATRIOTIC SUNDAY IN WESTERLEIGH PARK
SUNDAY, JUNE 25 AT 2 PM
FEATURING THE MUSIC OF THE SOUTH SHORE BAND
BRING FOLDING CHAIRS. REFRESHMENTS WILL BE SERVED.



WESTERLEIGH LITTLE GUYS & GALS CELEBRATE 50 YEARS

On April 22 old timers and newcomers alike met in North-erleigh Park to mark the 50th Anniversary of the Westerleigh Little League. Old timers, such as former Borough President Ralph Lamberti, were on hand to renew old friendships and to be proud of the growth of the league over the past half century.

Hundreds of boys and girls gather at Charles McLaughry Field every week to play and enjoy America's favorite pastime. The dedicated support of many coaches and countless parents make that possible. ☺



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We have finally moved into the warmer days of spring after weeks of below normal temps. Our lawns and gardens are exploding with growth and color. It takes all of our efforts to keep up with the forces of nature.

I hope many of you were able to attend our annual meeting on May 17. We were addressed by Staten Island District Attorney Michael McMahon. Mike was accompanied by many members of his staff and was able to outline the latest initiatives of his office. (Read more about the meeting in an article by Lou Bergonzi inside this newsletter.)

This summer we are once again hosting the South Shore Band in Westerleigh Park on June 25. After last year's hiatus the Patriotic Sunday in Westerleigh Park will resume. The bandstand will be festooned with the red, white and blue. Refreshments will be served and all are welcome to this free event. In addition, Borough President Oddo's office will feature a Sunset Concert in Westerleigh Park during the month of July. The date will be announced in the press.

As I write this there has been no further information about the Wardwell Avenue sewer project. The project is slated to begin after school closes for the summer. We will post any new information on our website www.wisonline.org

Finally, even though the Society does not hold monthly meetings during the months of July and August, we are always available to call on, if you have an issue that you feel we can assist you with. Please email us at wis_si@yahoo.com to let us know if we can help.

WIS NEXT MEETING
TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 5
8 PM. Immanuel Union Church

DISTRICT ATTORNEY MICHAEL MCMAHON ADDRESSES THE ANNUAL WIS MEETING

BY LOU BERGONZI

When President Michael Morrell introduced Michael McMahon to the audience at the annual meeting of the Westerleigh Improvement Society on May 17, he mentioned that the Staten Island District Attorney was a familiar face in the neighborhood.

He wasn't exaggerating.

McMahon, who succeeded Dan Donovan in 2015, previously represented portions of Westerleigh as Councilman from the 49th District for six years and following that, as U.S. Congressman from 2009-11.

And in all that time, and in all those positions, Morrell said, "Mike McMahon came through for this community."

It is a responsibility that McMahon takes seriously – and wants to continue.

"I believe you have to fight for your community," he said in his opening remarks to the crowd of 60-plus in the Immanuel Union Church hall. "And the District Attorney's office is a powerful platform to continue to fight."

It's the reason, he said, that he left a lucrative law practice to return to public service: to battle the things that threaten

our community and our way of life, and to protect and serve the people of this borough.

According to the D.A. he has focused his crime-fighting efforts along three fronts:

1) **Combating street crime.** To spearhead his assault, he established a Trials Bureau. Before this, McMahon said, his office tried anywhere from eight to 24 cases



a year; since the establishment of the Bureau, those cases have tripled.

"We need to send a message to criminals," the D.A. said. "We think this is best way to do it."

He has also targeted guns, with the creation of an anti-violence unit, which tracks the use and existence of guns through "Shot Spotter," a device that listens for the sounds of gunfire and alerts police who no longer have to wait until someone calls them

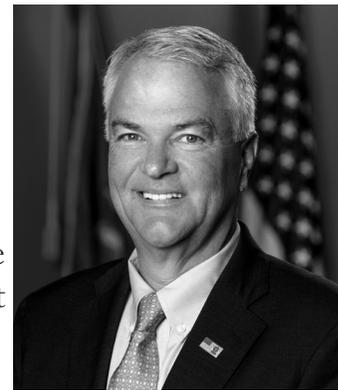
to report the shots. It is now in the

120th and 121st Precincts, and soon will spread to the others on Staten Island. He also created the "Cease Fire" program, which enables his office to pursue those people committing gun crimes more aggressively, while at the same time increasing the number of detectives dealing with street crimes.

2) **Dealing with domestic violence.** Staten Island, according to McMahon, has seen the largest percentage increase in domestic violence of any borough, as

well as the number of deaths related to these crimes. To deal with this epidemic, the D.A. has set up a "Victim Advocates Unit," whose primary focus is to support the victims of domestic violence. He also established a Family Justice Center (Staten Island was the only borough not to have one) to aid in this effort. "We initially will see an increase in these cases as these units will result in more cases reported to authorities, but eventually

Continued on page 3



SMART ELECTRIC METERS ARE COMING!

Beginning this year Con Ed will be replacing all electric meters with a “smart meter” which will allow the utility to read the meter remotely. In addition to remote meter reading the smart meter will be able to transmit information about power outages and service interruptions to the utility instantly.

Beyond that, consumers will be able to access infor-



mation about their energy usage such as daily consumption and options like high-bill alerts. An app for smart phones will be provided

should a consumer wish to use one.

Homeowners will be notified by postcard and letter as to when the installation will take place. There will be a brief pause in service (at most 15 minutes) while the new meter is installed. A reminder will be left at the entrance to the residence reminding the owner to reset clock and other appliances. ☺

Continued from page 2

they will help the number of these incidents to decrease.”

3) **The opioid crisis.** Staten Island, to the surprise of no one, is in the grips of this scourge, and has been for some time. Previously, McMahon said, overdoses had been treated as accidental deaths, resulting in no follow-up investigations. Now, he said, he has established an “Overdose Response Initiative,” which allows the D.A. and the NYPD to treat those incidents as a criminal investigation. It is already, he said, “reaping rewards,” with an increase in arrests of dealers. It has also enabled those agencies to realize that the number of deaths attributed to drug overdoses is substantially higher than previously thought.



This has led to an increase in treatment centers to combat this plague, as well as a spike in the amount of funds needed to continue the fight.

Such actions – and the accompanying success rates in dealing with the opioid crisis – have caused the other boroughs to take note and copy the Island blueprint.

And, McMahon said, it hasn’t stopped there: a “Hope Initiative,” to help those arrested and steer them to getting help has also been estab-

lished. “We want to change our image from Heroin Island to Island of Hope,” he said.

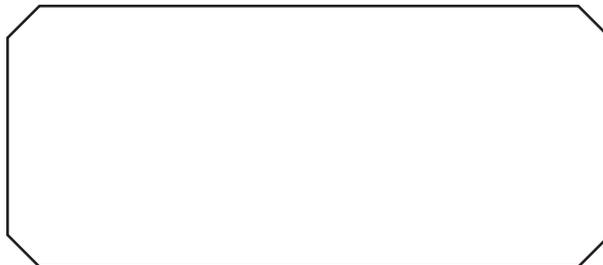
McMahon mentioned a number of other new policies and directives he has overseen, including a Veterans Court, an Animal Cruelty Prevention Unit, a Community Partnership Program and an Economic Crime Unit to aid business owners. All of this was possible, he pointed out, because he was able to secure a 35 percent increase in the budget, which was woefully underfunded when compared to the other boroughs.

Before taking questions from the audience, McMahon repeated his pledge to serve the community. “I still have the passion and dedication,” he said, “to make our community better.” ☺

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- * U.S. Congress, NY District 11
Dan Donovan: 718-351-1062
- * NYS Senate, District 24
Andrew Lanza: 718-984-4073
- * NYS Assembly, District 63
Michael Cusick: 718-370-1384
- * NYS Assembly, District 61
Matthew Titone: 718-442-9932
- * SI Borough President
James Oddo : 718-816-2000
- * NYC Council, District 49
Debi Rose: 718-556-7370
- * NYC Council, District 50
Steven Matteo: 718-980-1017
- * Staten Island District Attorney
Michael McMahon: 718-876-6300
- * 120th Precinct: 718-876-8500
- * 121th Precinct: 718-697-8700
- * Community Board 1: 718-981-6900
- * P.S.30: 718-442-0462
- * I.S. 51: 718-981-0502

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IF RENEWING: MEMBERSHIP # _____

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