

# THE VOICE OF WESTERLEIGH

NEWSLETTER OF THE WESTERLEIGH IMPROVEMENT SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 140-043 Staten Island, NY 10314 [www.wisonline.org](http://www.wisonline.org)

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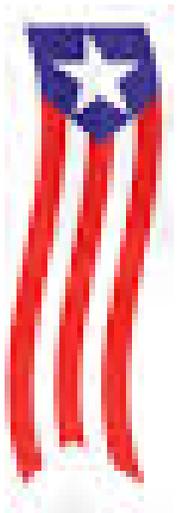
## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Westerleigh is ready for the warm summer months and the season has blossomed in all of the streets and yards of our community. Many street trees have been added to our community in recent months many of which are flowering varieties. Residents have given their personal touches to homes that reflect the pride we all have for Westerleigh.

Our Annual Meeting was held on May 14 with Borough President James Oddo as guest speaker. Many came to hear and ask questions of our borough's leader. He has proven to be a good friend to our community. This summer his office will once again sponsor the annual Starlight Concert in Westerleigh Park. We have also provided a list of many of the other upcoming events in the Park so you can make your plans to attend many of them.

Please mark your calendar for our June 22 Patriotic Sunday in Westerleigh Park. The South Shore Band will perform marking the 30th year the band will have played in the park. Refreshments will be provided. Folding chairs are a good idea to bring along.

As always, please keep in touch with the Society over the summer months. While we don't have monthly meetings in July and August, we can be contacted through our website or our email [wis\\_si@yahoo.com](mailto:wis_si@yahoo.com).

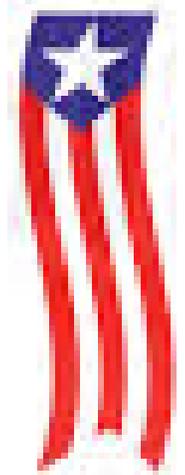


## WILLIAM SCHORKOPF MEMORIAL PATRIOTIC SUNDAY IN WESTERLEIGH PARK

Featuring The South Shore Band

**Sunday, June 22, 2:00 P.M.**

**Bring folding chairs - Refreshments will be served**



# ANNUAL MEETING

James Oddo has been a frequent guest speaker at many Westerleigh Improvement Society events. But when he addressed the gathering at the Society's annual meeting on May 14, he did so for the first time as Staten Island Borough President.

And his speech reflected his new-found commitment to not only our community, but the entire borough.



Oddo's words to the 100 or so members of the audience at the Immanuel Union Church was that in the four months since taking office, he recognized that the job was different than the ones he previously held, first as chief of staff for former Councilman John Fusco, then as the councilman for the district. After the necessary period of acclimation, during which time he put together his own staff, he was now focusing on making life better for all his constituents, not just here on the North Shore.

Staten Islanders, he said, were happy to be a "bedroom" community for city, but that their previous quality of life was threatened. What he wants to do, he said, was to take advantage of the opportunity to create a new, vibrant corridor on the North Shore.

It was with that in mind that the new BP is resorting to a proven method of getting things accomplished: the creation of a Task Force to deal with the issues that plague us, specifically the horrendous road conditions throughout the borough.

"Our previous policies have failed," he said. "We have to do things differently in the future."

For starters, he said, the weather can't be seen as the only culprit for the current mess. The city's failed strategy is far more to blame. The average life of a street in this borough is 17 years, which means the Department of Transportation has to replace approximately 1,000 miles of roads each year. The city, he pointed out, has failed to meet that goal. In fact, he said, the city hasn't even come close.

"Fixing potholes by itself is not the answer," he said. Neither is simply increasing the amount of money in the budget. Oddo has proposed trying various new and experimental asphalt processes,

which promise a longer street life, as well as new machinery which makes resurfacing more efficient, as possible solutions. An asphalt plant on Staten Island, as well as an extra paving crew is also seen as essential.

But – as with many of the other problems in this borough – getting the city and the new DOT commissioner to understand our needs, is a difficult task. As Oddo put it, mayors change, BPs change but the city's bureaucracy remains the same. "Alec Baldwin is right," Oddo said, "when he says NYC is mismanaged ... city agencies are dysfunctional. Everything is difficult to change."

Another issue on the BP's quality of life agenda is the cleanliness – or lack of it – in the borough. "Staten Island is filthier than ever," he pointed out, and once again he's trying to change that.

He's put together what he calls a "Clean Team," one which is working with youth groups to help clean up various areas. "We're attacking the problem from different angles," he emphasized. "We're trying to educate youths that it's in their interests to clean up."

Oddo also spoke about the huge amount of money that's being poured into four major projects on Staten Island. Almost \$1 billion, he says, is being invested in the St. George Wheel, its accompanying outlet mall, its neighbor in that area, Lighthouse Point and the Homefront Project in Stapleton.

If all those projects produce what they've been touted as producing, Staten Island, he said, will be on the verge of an exciting new future.

The BP then finished up with a question-and-answer session, which touched on a number of sore points with residents, including:

- \* The poor quality of sidewalks that the city put in last April throughout the neighborhood. In less than a year, many are already cracked and pock-marked.
- \* The status of the 12X bus, and what can be done about improving service on the North Shore
- \* Pedestrian safety, especially between Jewett Avenue and Victory Boulevard, where cross lines



have been eradicated due to sewer work. That includes the poor state of yellow divider lines on many roads, which also need to be repainted.

Oddo concluded by praising the work of the Westerleigh Improvement Society, including President Michael Morrell and Ed Malone for their continued work ethic in helping to solve problems connected with everyday life in our neighborhood.

“The state of politics in this community is more bi-partisan than any other place in the city,” he said. “We should all work to keep it that way.”

The full slate of the Board of Directors were unanimously re-elected to another three years in their respective offices.

Ed Malone and Evelyn MacDonald also gave their annual treasurer’s and secretary’s reports.

Also at the meeting, President Morrell outlined the Society’s new pro-active campaign, which will feature a survey of each street in our community to highlight such problem areas as road conditions and a lack of street signage.

He also discussed the status of the three upcoming DEP projects.

Special thanks were extended to Malone for his ongoing efforts to hold the Water Board accountable for its ongoing rate hikes, and to Rich Cirbus, who is stepping down after many years as membership chairman.

Lastly, checks were presented to Immanuel Union Church (\$1,000) for its hospitality in allowing the Society to use its facilities for meetings, and to the P.S. 30 PTA(\$2,000) for its annual book fair.



## THE SOCIETY TESTIFIES AT WATER BOARD HEARING

In April the NYC Water Board proposed yet another increase in the water and sewer charges for all city residents starting July 1. Year after year homeowners

have been hit with these overwhelming charges for this basic service. While 2014’s proposed increase is smaller than previous years, it is applied on top of 15 years of annual increases. This year Society Treasurer Ed Malone and President Michael Morrell appeared before the Water Board on May 19 and opposed the proposed increase. Treasurer Malone stated that the Water Board has ample opportunity to control costs involved in administering the water system and that there are ways to avoid costly increases to homeowners. President Morrell testified that despite vigorous conservation efforts to reduce water usage these efforts are wiped away by annual increases.

The Water Board approved the new charges on May 23 despite the public testimony. A change in the makeup of the Water Board is necessary to make the hearings more representative of all parts of the city with the Borough Presidents having a voice in the makeup of the Water Board.

## WESTERLEIGH STREET SURVEY

Many times the Society has asked residents to notify it if there is a street or other problem that needs to be addressed by a city agency. We have forwarded many requests for repaving to the DOT. The DEP has responded when sanitary and storm sewers need to be upgraded.

This year the Society is being more proactive and is undertaking an area- wide survey of all of the streets in our civic area. The boundaries of our survey are Victory Blvd., Willowbrook Rd., Forest Avenue and Manor Road. A survey form will be used and all streets will be examined for pavement condition, street sign condition and other special issues that require attention. All of the survey forms will be collated and a list will be compiled to notify the various agencies of problems that have to be addressed. Of course there will be limitations on how quickly the problems can be addressed. But at least there will be a guide for correcting many problems.

## WESTERLEIGH PARK EVENTS JUNE - SEPTEMBER, 2014

- JUNE 14 - FITNESS MOBILE 12-2 PM
- JUNE 21 - MAKE MUSIC NEW YORK 3-9 PM
- JUNE 22 - PATRIOTIC SUNDAY IN THE PARK 2-4 PM
- JULY 1 - PUPPET MOBILE 12-12:30 PM
- JULY 8 - ART IN THE PARK 10AM-12PM
- JULY 15 - ART IN THE PARK 10AM-12PM
- JULY 17 - STARLIGHT CONCERT
- JULY 22 - FITNESS MOBILE 12-2 PM
- JULY 29 - SKATING IN THE PARK 12-2 PM
- AUG 8 - ARMY NATIONAL GUARD BAND 7-9 PM
- AUG 29 - MOVIE IN THE PARK TBA
- SEPT 3 - WAG YOUR TAIL SOCIAL 8-10 PM
- SEPT 13 - WESTERLEIGH PARK BIRTHDAY 1-3 PM
- SEPT 20 - FOLK FESTIVAL 11AM-7 PM

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



**CURRENT RESIDENT OR:**

A large, empty rounded rectangular box for entering the current resident's name.



Serving the Community for 121 years

**IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS:**

Borough Hall Helpline:

**(718) 816-2000**

120th Precinct:

**(718) 876-8500**

121 Precinct:

**(718) 697-8700**

Congressman Michael Grimm

**(718) 351-1062**

State Senator Andrew Lanza

**(718) 984-4073**

Assemblyman Michael Cusick

**(718) 370-1384**

Assemblyman Matthew Titone

**(718) 442-9932**

49th District Council Member Debi Rose

**(718) 556-7370**

50th District Councilman Steven Matteo

**(718) 980-1017**

Public School 30:

**(718) 442-0462**

CommunityBoard #1:

**(718) 981-6900**

**Westerleigh Improvement Society, Inc.**

**Officers:**

President... **Mike Morrell**

Vice President... **Mark Anderson**

Treasurer... **Ed Malone**

Secretary... **Evelyn Otten MacDonald**

**MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Please enroll me as a member of

**Westerleigh Improvement Society Inc.**

P.O. Box 140-043, Staten Island NY 10314

**Annual Dues:**

Regular Membership **\$10**  Associate Membership **\$20**

**Membership #** (3 digit number from upper left of mailing label) .....

**Name** .....

**Address** .....

**Phone# (optional)** .....

**email (optional)** .....