

# Next meeting: Jan. 9 at 8 PM



## Creedmoor Civic News

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CREEDMOOR CIVIC ASSOCIATION, INC.  
Founded 1927, Incorporated 1938

January, 2006

"UNITED EFFORT REAPS UNITED GAIN"

VOL. 75, NO.1

# CIVIC NEWS TURNS 75!

With this issue, our volume number turns 75. The Creedmoor Civic News has been publishing for 75 years, a remarkable milestone. Nine years older than Newsday (and more honest about its circulation figures), Creedmoor Civic News is one of the most respected Queens newsletters.

The beginning of this newsletter in November, 1931 is rather unique. It was never actually owned by the Creedmoor Civic Association. Several members of the Association decided to publish a newsletter in cooperation with the Association, but it was a private publication. It solicited ads, and any profit derived was kept by the publishing staff. By the 1970s, however, the paper was serving up losses, not profits, and the Creedmoor Civic Association agreed to operate the newsletter directly.

During those 75 years, there have been two editors, H. Jacob (Jack). Breininger who also served as president of the Civic for 28 years and after whom the playground on Braddock Avenue is named, and James Trent, the current editor (and president from 1970-1980), who account for the bulk of the 75 years. Jack Breininger operated the newsletter from 1933 to about 1970. Jim Trent has edited the paper since that time with only a few small breaks.

Creedmoor Civic News is widely read outside of our community, with articles often reprinted in other civic newsletters. Some of the weeklies, such as the Times Ledger, use the Creedmoor Civic News as sources for their stories. For example, a recent front page story in the Glen Oaks Ledger about Reinwald's Bakery, had its origin from our own news-breaking story in this newsletter.

At one point it was decided to dispense with the ads. There is a cost associated with carrying them, particularly in that they take up space require the printing of more pages, thus reducing the profits. Advertisers have to be billed, and someone has to go out and get the ads. Although most of our issues are only two pages, we  
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## FOLKS SAY EOK IS A-OK

Although the new awning is yet to go up proclaiming the new name, the Reinwald Bakery is being renamed EOK, the initials of the owner's sons. Meantime, visitors to the bakery have been amazed that once again the shelves are filled and at reasonable prices. The new owners take pride in their work, and plan physical changes to the retail store in the coming weeks. In fact, EOK is donating a whipped cream and cannoli sheet cake to our Association in conjunction with our New Year's party (we did not have a Christmas party this year, just for a change of pace.) We are also serving hero sandwiches, so why not come out and celebrate with us. Many civic and political leaders are being invited as well.

## MAYOR INKS NEW GRAFFITI LAWS

It is now illegal for anyone under 21 to carry spray paint or etching tools on public property. Exceptions are for those carrying such items for job related purposes or who have been given permission to carry such items. Fines for misdemeanor graffiti violations have been raised to \$1,000 and jail terms have been upped to one year. Youthful violators face \$250 fines and 15 days in jail.

Owners of commercial buildings or residential buildings with six or more units must remove graffiti within 60 days of a city notice or face a fine of up to \$300. Building owners can also petition the City to remove the graffiti free of charge.

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**POSTAGE ALERT:** Rates rise on January 8. First class letters go to 39 cents, and postcards go to 24 cents.

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Published since 1931

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88-01 Lyman Street, Bellerose NY 11427  
Tel. 1-718- 464-3369  
Member: Queens Civic Congress, Inc.  
Web page: [www.creedmoorcivic.org](http://www.creedmoorcivic.org)  
E-mail: [editor@creedmoorcivic.org](mailto:editor@creedmoorcivic.org)

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## *Around the Town*

❁ **Condolences:** to the family of Timothy Kelly of the 89 Block of 239<sup>th</sup> Street. Mr. Kelly passed away on December 9 and is survived by his wife Margaret Kelly.

❁ **Congratulations to:** Bernard "Barney" Aquilino who retired from the presidency of the Rocky Hill Civic Association last month. Barney had been president for the last 25 years. Congratulations also to the new co-presidents of RHCA, Linda Gritsch and Frank Toner. Did anyone tell them that each new term is 25 years?

### *President's Message*

This past year was an eventful one for civic associations in Queens. Problems with overbuilding, illegal demolitions, traffic, sidewalks, graffiti and noise issues kept us and other civic volunteers busy. Fortunately, it appears that some are actually starting to be confronted.

The rezoning of many Queens neighborhoods is a welcome addition to the fight for our quality of life. The huge monstrosities popping up all over are beautiful to very few other than the developers and owners who look to make a few bucks at the expense of the surrounding neighbors.

We've received a couple of e-mails and a few calls on our civic line about problems with the mayor's new "Street Tree" program. We hope to have a speaker come to a future meeting and discuss this program with our members.

The terrible sidewalks on 239th Street were replaced a few months ago. After receiving complaints about the quality of the work, I contacted our community board. I also had some concerns about the fact that the scope of the work would allow the same problems to happen in another couple of years.

I have not yet received a response other than "they'll be contacted, and we'll get back to you."

The number of illegal signs in Bellerose appears to have dropped to a minimal amount, thanks to the response we've gotten from the Department of Sanitation's Enforcement Unit. The response to our lists of signs has been fantastic at times. While it's still not clear to us which companies are actually getting fined, at least we're finding that these fly-by-night companies aren't replacing their signs with new ones as quickly.

One standout when it comes to graffiti removal has been the Bernard Fineson Center, which is housed on the Creedmoor property on Hillside Avenue. The brick entrance across from Preller Ballfield had been hit with graffiti at least half a dozen separate times. Each time, the workers there responded to a single phone call from Senator Padavan's office in a surprisingly fast amount of time. In fact, last week, the last act of vandalism was painted over less than two hours from my call to Virginia in the Senator's office!

I used to say that dues collection was this civic's only source of income. This past year, many residents decided to include additional donations with their dues. Many came with short notes of encouragement. Both are very much appreciated. Thank you.

Speaking of appreciation, many thanks must go to Senator Padavan and his excellent staff. Responses from his office are never less than professional, courteous, and of course, accurate. Councilman Weprin has been instrumental in some favorable legislation, and Assemblywoman Clark has been very helpful this past year too.

Fellow civic association presidents, with their vast amounts of experience and knowledge, make my job much easier. So many times, I've relied on Bruno and Lucy DeFrancheschi, Barney Aquilino, Angela Augugliaro, Rich Hellenbrecht, Nagassar Ramgarib and Corey Bearak for the best possible answers. Of course, going out and pulling down illegal signs and painting over graffiti wouldn't be as much fun without Queens Colony's Mike Augugliaro by my side.

Our block captains have delivered Jim Trent's award-winning newsletter in all types of weather, and Helen Trent has sorted the newsletters for the block captains for many years. Rose Daddario, until recently, had also sorted the packages along with Helen. Many thanks to all of them.

Rosemary Parker, CCA's Vice President, has delivered newsletters to the 89 block of 238 St for several years. She has now handed over that responsibility to Tom Dunstetter of 238 Street. Thank you, Tom, and thank you, Rosemary, for handling that all this time.

All of the officers and board members; Rose, Rosemary, Tom, Jim, Christine, Maureen, Ron, Betty, Jean, Rosemarie, Helen, Helene and Linda keep this association running. Of course, the biggest "thank you" must go to you, the members of the Creedmoor Civic Association. Without you and your support, this association would not exist.

See you at the meetings.

Your neighbor,

*Rick Duszkiewicz*

# Creedmoor Civic News Turns 75

*(continued from Page 1)*

actually carry more news than most newsletters twice our size. We tend to omit discussions about the weather, wishing people happy holidays, printing membership blanks, and maps of our territory. Other newsletters that do that take up huge amounts of space with little gain in informing their readers.

For a short period, the newsletter was renamed the Bellerose Manor News, due to pressure from a former pastor of St. Gregory's who objected to the name Creedmoor because of the association with the hospital. However, the name Creedmoor predates the hospital by many years. It was the name of the National Rifle Association shooting range going back to 1873, and was the name of a small hamlet that grew up around the range. At one time there was a famous beer garden called the Creedmoor Rest. There was a volunteer fire brigade called the Creedmoor Hose, and for many years, P. S. 33 was known as the Creedmoor School. The subdivision of homes from Moline St. to perhaps 240<sup>th</sup> Street was known as the Creedmoor Homes. It was from this subdivision name that Creedmoor Civic Association took its name. (In the 1950s when the Bellerose Braddock Civic Association folded, Creedmoor Civic extended its boundaries east to the Cross Island Parkway.) After John Maher left the Creedmoor presidency, the Creedmoor Civic News name was restored, as was the slogan, "United Effort Reaps United Gain", a slogan that has been on almost every issue for 75 years.

Several years ago, with the advent of the digital camera, the Creedmoor Civic News abandoned the use of clipart (a very time-consuming effort) and began using real photographs to illustrate its stories.

## **Life has Changed**

How has life changed since 1931? Let us see: common food prices - milk: 50 cents per gallon. Fresh bread: 8 cents a loaf. Eggs: 16 cents a dozen. Coffee: 33 cents per pound. Living costs were as follows - new homes: \$6,796.00. , Average rent: \$18 per month. Movie tickets: 25 cents each. Gasoline: 10 cents a gallon. Postage stamps: 2 cents each. New cars: \$640. Average income: \$1,858.00 per year. Harvard tuition: \$400.00 per year. Nationally: Herbert Hoover was president, life expectancy was 59.7 years. The comic strip Dick Tracy made its debut.

## **WE TAKE YOU TO OUR MORGUE**

In the newspaper business, a file of old newspapers is called a morgue. We at Creedmoor Civic News will now regale you with selections from each of the decades of our past newsletters.

### **1930s**

#### **January, 1932: Something Should Be Done About This**

This organization has been fighting for traffic lights on Rocky Hill Road for some time. Up to the present time nothing has been done about it. It is high time we all got together and put in a real big kick. Perhaps then we could obtain these very necessary lights.

On Christmas Eve one of our members met his death on Rocky

Hill Road. Perhaps traffic lights may have saved his life.

We know that autos travel with more care and less speed on streets controlled with traffic lights. It is therefore essential that we all get together and obtain these lights.

#### **May, 1934: Third Rail**

We were astounded to learn at our last meeting that despite the many words printed in these columns concerning the dangers of the third rail of the L. I. R. R. in the vicinity of 88<sup>th</sup> Ave., many of the youngsters of our community are using the tracks and also the third rail to play upon.

We view with apprehension the oncoming summer and we venture to say unless the parents warn and see that their children stay off this third rail, we will have a repetition of the terrible occurrence of last year when a youngster was electrocuted by coming in contact with it.

We regret that our efforts to eliminate this hazard have thus far been unsuccessful. We will carry on, however, and hope that we may find some way to relieve the situation. In the meantime, our children must be kept out of danger and this can only be done by the parents. We might also say that contrary to the belief prevalent in our community, the current is on at all times in this rail.

#### **July, 1935: Protest**

The Creedmoor Civic association has protested the L. I. R. R. against their practice of coaling their locomotives on the spur in the rear of the homes along 88<sup>th</sup> Ave. This coaling could easily be done at a point where the thick black smoke and soot would be less objectionable. A hard day's work at washing is all for naught when left on the line outside to dry within a few feet of a locomotive spouting soot, nor is it very desirable to have this same soot come wafting into our open windows.

#### **September, 1939: Can it be True?**

A correspondent to one of our daily papers, signing the name, "Apple Knocker", Oakfield, N. Y., writes the following: "As a recent visitor to the World's Fair, I want to compliment the suckers in Queens County on the way they take abuse, discourteous treatment, etc., from various roughneck bus drivers in those parts. These bus drivers would not last long in my home town. But I suppose you native New Yorkers don't know any better. You are so accustomed to being shoved around in your melting pot of a town that you have lost your backbone, and depend on your wishbone and the grace of God to keep things from getting worse.

### **1940s**

*[Ed note: Members of Creedmoor Civic used to meet at their Clubhouse at 237-05 Braddock Avenue to put together packages intended for servicemen in World War II.]*

#### **May, 1945: Letters From the Boys**

Philippines - Dear Neighbors

I received your Christmas present and regular monthly package, and I want to take this opportunity to thank you once again. As usual, all the articles contained were useful and I make excellent use of them. At the present time toilet articles are very scarce in this area, so I'd been awaiting your package eagerly. Thanking you folks once again for the swell job you're doing, I am, yours

truly, S/Sgt. John J. Dorman

### July, 1946: Success

Another hearing was held before the Queens Local Board last Monday Evening, June 24<sup>th</sup>, to consider the construction of a sanitary sewer through 239<sup>th</sup> (Creedmoor) Street from north of the railroad tracks and emptying into the sewers at 88<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 239<sup>th</sup> Street. This would have necessitated demolishing three of the homes in our area and subsequent assessments for the title proceedings.

At the first hearing on this matter several weeks ago, our objections drew a postponement to give the Sewer Engineer's Office time for further study.

We are pleased to announce as a result of this postponement, the Engineer was able to change the course of the proposed sewer so that it would not enter our community.

The termination of these proceedings in this manner sets at ease the minds of many of our people and the association is proud of the part it took in bringing them to a successful conclusion.

### April, 1947: Shelter

Work on the extension of the Hillside Avenue Subway is now under way. This will bring the subway just one station further east. When the subway will be extended to its ultimate terminus at the City Line is a question that cannot be answered at this time, but it may be many, many years.

When the work now in progress is completed, many of the bus lines will use the new station (Midland Parkway) as their terminus, thereby transferring the conditions now prevailing at 168<sup>th</sup> St., to the new station - no shelter for passengers waiting for the buses.

The Creedmoor Civic Association has asked the Board of Transportation whether it isn't possible to use the mezzanine level of the new station as a sort of waiting room. Some consideration must be given the bus riders who are compelled to stand in line in all kinds of weather.

## 1950s

### June, 1957: Street Names

Residents of Moline Street, Lyman Street, and Gettysburg Street should use those names at all times. 234<sup>th</sup>, 235<sup>th</sup>, and 236<sup>th</sup> Street do not exist in our community according to official city maps. City departments use the official city maps and considerable delay may be encountered when in need of assistance from the police or fire departments or in need of an ambulance or Consolidated Edison if you give your address as 234<sup>th</sup> St., or 235<sup>th</sup> St., or 236<sup>th</sup> St.

October, 1957: Goodbye: We take this opportunity to bid a fond goodbye to the oldest resident of our community, Mrs. Elizabeth Walter, who in 1894 with her late husband, Charles, set up their home at a spot now known as 238-09 Braddock Ave and farmed the land on which many of our homes are located. She has moved to her new home in Hicksville.

January, 1959: In some official circles there is considerable agitation to have the City Sales Tax increased from 3% to 4%. If you are opposed to such an increase, you had better write Mayor Wagner and tell him how you feel about it.

## 1960s

January, 1962: It was an especially happy holiday season this year for our community baker, Joe Reinwald. His 87 year old mother came over from Germany. Joe hadn't seen her for 10 years and it is the first time in her life that she has been more than 20 miles from her home and it is the first time Mrs. Reinwald, Jr. met her mother-in-law.

## 1970s

### September, 1973: Civic Draws Plan: How to Get the City Down on the Farm

While some are content with turning the clock back one hour in the fall, Creedmoor Civic is attempting to turn the clock back to around 1840 when Bellerose was still verdant pastures and fertile farmlands. Not that the Association is tilting at windmills in its latest battle with forces working to destroy our community. Now that the State Department of Mental Hygiene is expected next year to declare the farm of Creedmoor State Hospital as surplus land to be disposed of, the Association is seeking to prevent a repetition of the monstrous North Shore Towers now being built on the old Glen Oaks Golf and Country Club property. These 33-story towers are even now visible from Braddock Avenue and 239<sup>th</sup> Street, although they are not yet finished.

The 58 acres in question constitute what is probably the last open farmland left in the City which still resembles a farm, although it is no longer being cultivated... Creedmoor Civic in a letter to the Department of Parks has suggested that the property be acquired by the City and converted for use as the Parks Dept. nursery....

## 1980s

### January, 1980: H.J. Breininger Dead at 85

Queens Village and Bellerose area residents mourn the loss of one of its most notable civic leaders, H. Jacob (Jack) Breininger who died on December 26 at the age of 85. Active almost to the end, Jack Breininger had suffered a heart attack several weeks before his death and was recuperating at Terrace Heights Hospital when he succumbed. Jack was a resident of Lyman Street since the homes were built in 1927.

Jack became active in civics right from the start. Using the name the builder had given to his subdivision, Creedmoor Homes, Jack and several other early residents formed the Creedmoor Civic Association in 1927. He became its fourth president in 1936 and remained in office until he stepped down in 1963; a period of 28 years!...

## 1990s

### June, 1995: Pigeon House Get City Attention at Last

The Moline Street house that is owned by the City and unoccupied has drawn enormous press attention in the last three weeks. It was featured in a lead story in the last three issues of the Glen Oaks Ledger, and could be seen on New York 1 cable news station when they covered Mayor Giuliani's Town Hall meeting in Fresh Meadows at which the house took up much discussion time. But at last, the City and its component agencies have taken action to ameliorate the problems...