



*The Voice of  
Woodhaven*

# Fighting for Woodhaven

How the fight against the  
MTA's proposed cuts is  
shaping up – Pg. 4

## Inside:

- WRBA Tackling Out-of-State License Plates - Pg. 2
- The 2010 Census - Why It Matters to Woodhaven - Pg. 3
- What's Happening Around Woodhaven? - Pg. 5

The Woodhaven Residents'  
Block Association

"The Guardian of Woodhaven"  
Established 1972

84-20 Jamaica Avenue  
Woodhaven, NY 11421  
718-296-3735

woodhaven.residents@gmail.com

President -	Edward K. Wendell
1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Janet Chan-Smith
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Alexander Blenkinsopp
3 <sup>rd</sup> Vice President	Roger Hennin
Secretary	Arlene Annunziata
Treasurer	Vance Barbour
Financial Sec'y	Maria Thomson
Director	Fred Mandahal
Secretary/Mgr	Linda Fogal

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**How do I apply for HEAP?** - Questions regarding the HEAP program should be directed to your Local Department of Social Services Office or the NYS HEAP Hotline at 1-800-342-3009.

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PUB**

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to the WRBA Office – Checks preferred.



## From the Desk of The President

Happy New Year! And welcome to the new and improved Voice of Woodhaven. We've undergone a few changes in our newsletter of late, much of it necessary because of the budget crunch that has left the WRBA with very little funds to work with. Simply put: we're broke.

So we're taking advantage of the situation and trying to actually do more, with less. The biggest casualty has been our newsletter, which we used to either print, or place in the Chronicle. But large print runs have become real expensive, as was the 2-page spread in the Chronicle. So we've re-positioned the newsletter as an online magazine that will come out 6 times a year. For now. We'll be reviewing our finances each month in the hopes we can afford a nice printed version sometime soon. For now, see [www.projectwoodhaven.com](http://www.projectwoodhaven.com) for the latest newsletter.

The Woodhaven Residents' Block Association will be launching a new website this spring – our old one got hijacked. The new website will be located at: <http://woodhaven-nyc.org/> and, once that's up and running, the newsletter will be available there as well.

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Edward K. Wendell and I am the new President of the WRBA. It is a position I am very honored to hold – and I trust that I won't let you down. I find myself surrounded my good, experienced folks on the board – and I will rely on their guidance and wisdom to point me in the right direction.

But I also plan to go with my gut sometimes, and my gut tells me that we need to shake things up a bit – and I believe that you'll find me taking an approach that leads us to try some new things, while at the same way, get back to the basics that made this organization work so well in the past.

We'll be looking to hold some public events over the next few months – not meetings. Fun events designed to bring our neighbors together. Like they had in the older days. Dances. Movie Nights. Low cost events where we can have fun and get to know one another while reaching out to others in our community to join us.

We've been very fortunate that our elected officials have been spending so much time with us at our Town Halls. Especially our new Assemblyman, Mike Miller, who has been a constant presence at our meetings. We'll miss him when we move back to Wednesdays – he won't be able to attend as he'll be in Albany, fighting for us.

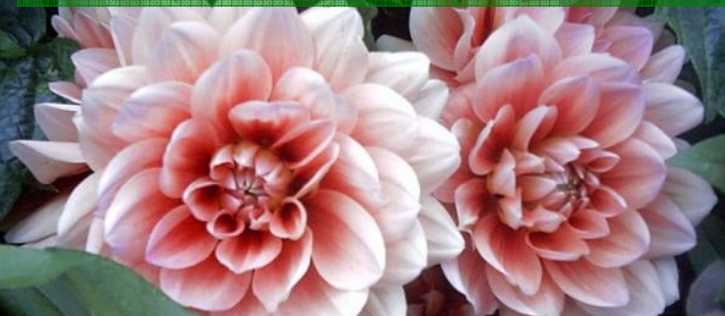
Once again, on behalf of the Woodhaven Residents' Block Association, we wish you a happy, healthy and prosperous 2010.

**Edward K. Wendell – President, WRBA**

### Notice:

Starting in March, we will be moving our Town Halls back to the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday evening of every month. Our next Town Hall will be on Wednesday, March 17<sup>th</sup> – yes, St. Patrick's Day – at 8 PM. We'll be meeting, as usual, at the Volunteer Ambulance Corps.

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## WRBA Tackling Out-Of-State Vehicles

A few months ago, we asked the residents that attended one of our Town Halls to come up with a list of issues that bother them – and near the top of that list was the high number of cars with out-of-state license plates parked on our streets. We were aware that conventional attempts to address this issue had been tried over the years – and failed. So we needed a new approach, and after a few brainstorming sessions, we hit upon what seemed like a novel approach.

And so, we came up with a plan and announced it with the following press release, written by our Communications Director, Alex Blenkinsopp:

*The Woodhaven Residents' Block Association announced a program to report out-of-state vehicles that have remained parked on a Woodhaven street for extended periods of time.*

*Woodhaven residents should call the WRBA if an automobile with license plates from outside New York has been parked on their street for more than a month. After gathering information from the caller, the WRBA will contact the appropriate agency from the vehicle's state to inform them of the vehicle's whereabouts and to ask them to investigate whether the vehicle is appropriately registered.*

*"Parking has historically been hard to find in Woodhaven," said WRBA Director Vance Barbour. "If these vehicles' owners are dodging local state regulations, and skipping out on paying fees to New York State like the rest of the community pays, we owe it to our residents to call it to the attention of the proper authorities."*

*The announcement, which came at the WRBA's open meeting this past Saturday, is a response to many Woodhaven residents' complaints about out-of-state vehicles taking up parking spaces and potentially evading the law.*

*"This is just one initiative in what's sure to be an exciting year of progress," said Edward K. Wendell, the WRBA's new president.*

*(continued on Page 6)*

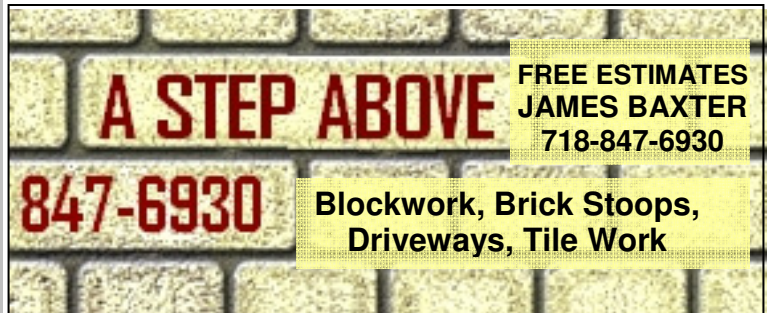


Work has begun on the Seuffert Bandshell, work that is sponsored by Elizabeth Crowley of the City Council. Recent visitors to the park have found the area fenced off and all of the old benches removed.



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# The 2010 Census – And Why It Matters to Woodhaven!

The 1<sup>st</sup> census after the American Revolution was taken in 1790, under Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Since then, there have been 21 censuses (every 10 years). The last national census was held in 2000 and the next census is scheduled for 2010.

It's been estimated that Woodhaven was undercounted by close to 40% in the 2000 Census. That led to less funding, closed hospitals, closed firehouses, less firemen, less cops, less money for our infrastructure, etc.

On the national level, the census helps determine how many seats each state holds in the House of Representatives. But closer to home, an accurate count of residents helps to determine how more than \$400 billion dollars of federal funding each year is spent on infrastructure and services like:

- Hospitals
- Job training centers
- Schools
- Senior centers
- Bridges, tunnels and other-public works projects
- Emergency services



The Richmond Hill Census Committee has handouts in multiple languages.

Why were we so undercounted? For starters, people are lazy. They get the census in the mail, drop it on their "To Do" pile, and never get back to it. Well, this year, the census is a short form and takes minutes to complete, so no excuses!

It's been said that each uncouncted resident results in a loss of **THIRTY THOUSAND DOLLARS** over a ten year period for a community. 30K! Time is running out – Richmond Hill already has a Census Committee. **We need to get on the ball** – if you're interested in helping, let us know! We can't do it without help.



## Classic Photo Corner



The American Legion marches down Jamaica Avenue on Memorial Day in 1967. Many long gone businesses, including the Haven Theater, are visible in the background.

*(Photo courtesy of the American Legion, Post 118)*

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## The WRBA Joins With Our Elected Officials to Fight For Services

Like a bad penny, the MTA is back with another round of threatened cuts to services that impact Woodhaven. This time around they are proposing to do away with the Express Z Line train service, and the Q56 Bus.

As soon as this plan was announced, our local elected officials mobilized, led by our new Assemblyman, Mike Miller. A press conference was held at Mr. Miller's new office on Woodhaven Boulevard (just North of Park Lane South).



Joined by our Council Members, Elizabeth Crowley and Eric Ulrich, as well as the WRBA's Maria Thomson, the group spoke out against the MTA's plan.

"Cutting the Q56 Bus doesn't make any sense. Why would you cut the mode of transportation that the majority of the people in the neighborhood use? Do we expect elderly people, some who walk with assistance, to climb 20 or 30 steps to get up to the elevated line?" Assemblyman Miller asked.

Elizabeth Crowley stated that these cuts are "too drastic and they will be devastating to our community. All too often, New Yorkers are asked to have to get by, by paying more for less. And that's exactly what the MTA is doing with this plan." Eric Ulrich blasted the MTA, stating that the cuts were "a direct slap in the face to the working men and women of this city. I believe that it targets the most vulnerable populations: the senior citizens and the children."

And finally, the WRBA's Maria Thomson (also of Woodhaven's GWDC and WBID) spoke to how these cuts will impact the businesses on Jamaica Avenue and the community as a whole.

Throughout January our elected officials burned the phone lines, and the WRBA coordinated a letter-writing campaign – and it appears that our voices were heard, and that plans to kill the Z Train and the Q56 have been shelved. But Assemblyman Miller warned us not to celebrate prematurely.

"We still need to remain on guard as there's always a chance they could change their minds," Mr. Miller said. "There will be public hearings to discuss the potential cuts and Woodhaven will still need a strong showing to ensure our current services remain intact."

Indeed. For just as this good news was welcomed, we received the bad news that one of our local firehouses may yet again be marked for extinction. Such is life – just as soon as one fight seems to end, another begins.

*Stay tuned!*

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# What's Happening Around Woodhaven?

There's always something going on around Woodhaven – here we show you a little bit of what's been happening, and a little bit of what's on tap.

## Theater Returns to Woodhaven



Theater returned to Woodhaven as the **First String Players** put on a performance of the classic macabre comedy "Arsenic and Old Lace." Performed over a weekend at **St. Luke's Church** on 85<sup>th</sup> Street, the play was a smash hit, attracting 3 robust crowds, guaranteeing that we'll be seeing more of this talented troupe.

## Woodhaven Historical Society Meets Monthly



Leonora Lavan (right) and Rose Kavanaugh of the Woodhaven Cultural & Historical Society, which meets on the last Wednesday of the month at 1 PM in Emmanuel United Church of Christ Meeting Room at 91st Avenue and Woodhaven Blvd. The next meeting is on **February 24th**, and the topic is "Italian Comedy" presented by Sociology Professor Salvatore Promeggia.

## 102<sup>nd</sup> Pct. Community Council



Queens DA Richard Brown was the special guest at January's 102<sup>nd</sup> Precinct Community Council meeting, which meets on the 3rd Tuesday of every month. The next meeting will be on **February 16th** at 8:00 PM at the Moose Hall 87-34 118th Street

## Greater Woodhaven Development Corp.




Captain Armando De Leon of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Precinct addresses the attendees of the GWDC meeting, held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of every month at St. Thomas the Apostle School. The next meeting of the Greater Woodhaven Development Corporation will be held on **February 23<sup>rd</sup>** at 7:30.

**Flashback!** Below is Schmidt's Candy, circa 1941. Today, Schmidt's retains it's classic old-fashioned style as it enters its 85<sup>th</sup> year in Woodhaven!



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# WRBA Tackling Out-Of-State Vehicles (continued)



*photos courtesy Joe Virgona*

The reaction to our press release was instant. NY1 came to town, as did WPIX-11. In fact, WPIX-11 did a live broadcast from Woodhaven, and they included interviews with WRBA's Edward Wendell and Maria Thomson as well as our Assemblyman, Mike Miller.

Lisa Colangelo of The New York Daily News also did a nice write-up, saying (in part):

Members of the Woodhaven Residents Block Association will now track cars with non-New York plates and report them to their home states if they are parked in the same spot for extended periods of time.


"We started looking for outside-the-box solutions for some of the quality-of-life issues," said Edward Wendell, president of the association. "One resident said she hasn't been able to get a parking spot on her block for over a year."

During a recent meeting of the block association, members were asked to air their top gripes about the neighborhood. They rattled off a list that included illegal dumping, illegal conversions and late-night house parties, Wendell said. But parking remained one of the biggest problems.

"This has been going on for a long, long time," said Maria Thomson of the Greater Woodhaven Development Corp. "We feel that if they park in New York streets, they should have New York license plates."

The block association is asking residents to contact them if they see a vehicle with out-of-state plates parked on the street for more than a month. They will contact the state's motor vehicle agency, via phone and mail, and ask them to investigate whether the vehicle is legally registered.

It's a novel approach – and just one of the ways we're working collectively with you, our residents, to make Woodhaven a better place to live.



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