



Assemblywoman

**Barbara
CLARK**

Reports to the People

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Dear Friends:

One of the greatest legislative challenges we face is how to assure that working families are not asked to bear too much of the burden caused by governments attempting to cut their budgets. As a result, I am pleased to report that in the last 2013 session we were not only able to extend a cut in the middle-class tax rate for 10 years but we were also able to provide a \$350 tax credit per child for families with incomes between \$40,000 and \$300,000 dollars. According to the United States Census over 70% of the working families in the 33rd Assembly District fall within this category.

In the same vein, in this session, I co-sponsored legislation that increased the advance notice time from 10 to 60 days that must be given to childcare providers before either a reduction in eligibility for child care assistance or an increase in any parents' co-payments can take place. This will prevent working families from being suddenly faced with losing their child care in a manner that does not provide sufficient time to arrange suitable replacement.

I am also happy to report this session yielded success in our fight to restore \$90 million dollars to the Office for People With Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD). When viewed in light of the state's head-long rush to transfer as many people with developmental disabilities from state-run institutions into community residences operated by non-profits, this restoration was absolutely crucial. Without it the risk that this grand project of relocation will fail is unacceptably high.

Even with the OPWDD restoration I remain concerned that the sweeping plan for community-based relocation is taking place without both meaningful community input and adequate oversight. I continue to stress that moving people who require supported housing into communities without providing the essential support and oversight will ultimately neither benefit the clients nor the communities into which they are immersed.

This session additionally yielded incremental progress in the ongoing foreclosure crisis. While finding senate support for my bill to allow people to re-acquire their homes for a period of one year after a final foreclosure judgment remained a challenge, I did join a number of other colleagues in shepherding into law a requirement that banks obtain a Certificate of Merit before being allowed to proceed with foreclosure. The intent here is to move homeowners out of the nightmare of foreclosure into settlement conferences as quickly as possible.

Barbara M. Clark

Good deeds and good works recognized



Assemblywoman Clark and Linda Leest.

SNAP's long time leader retires

On June 30th my good friend and partner in the cause of assuring that older adults live out their lives as fully as possible, Linda M. Leest, retired as CEO/President of Services Now for Adult Persons (SNAP). Over the 28 years Linda worked at SNAP she and I worked together to address a variety of issues on countless occasions. Based on our extensive interaction I can say without reservation she will be missed.

Although SNAP's new CEO/President Paula Miceli has some large shoes to fill, I am confident that she is more than able to do so. In her previous job, in the Office of the Queens Borough President, I also had the good fortune of working with her. As such, there is little doubt that she and I will work effectively together in facing the challenges ahead.

National NAACP gives Jamaica Branch the coveted Thalheimer Award

In July, at the NAACP's 104th National Convention the Jamaica Branch was chosen to receive the organization's top award for branches, the Thalheimer Award. This annual award recognizes Branches and State Conferences for outstanding work in implementing the priorities and goals of the organization such as civil rights compliance, health advocacy, educational equity, economic and political empowerment. Coming in the wake of the Supreme Court's decision striking down a key provision of the Voting Rights Act, and immediately before the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington – this award was especially timely and particularly significant.

Both the decision and the award highlight the central role the NAACP has historically played and must continue to play in the area of civil rights. It is one of the pivotal organizations that have helped to bend the arc of the moral universe toward the justice of which Dr. King so eloquently spoke, but has yet to be reached. It is an organization deserving not only of our praise, but our support!

My congratulations go out to President Leroy Gadsden and the members of the Jamaica Branch NAACP. I would like to also acknowledge those members who represented the southeast Queens community at the convention: the Honorable Elmer Blackburne and his wife Laura D. Blackburne (General Counsel for the NYS Conference), Candace Prince, and Brenda and Richard Gibbs.

Neighbors and friends doing the wo



Assemblywoman Clark and the painters of Veteran's Park.



Flanked on her far left by Honor Society Advisor Peggy Gittens and Sheryl Liles and on her right by Mrs. Dawson, Mr. Ried and Lady Unezor, Assemblywoman Clark reads The Cambria Heights School of Excellence's Delphin Greene clean-up team.



Cambria Playground before.



Cambria Playground's littered, faded and broken sprinklers at the beginning of the day.



An army of volunteers attack the perimeter fence at Queens Village's Veteran's Park.



With brush in hand, Service Employees International member Millicent Peterkin labors for the people. Steven Peterkin, son of Millicent Peterkin, was in attendance as well in painting the fence at Queens Village Veteran's Park.



The excellently painted benches at Delphin Greene Park await the residents of Cambria Heights.

At the end of this year's annual clean-up and beautification effort, perhaps the most exciting thing was not only the number of younger participants but also the energy, eagerness and ultimately the effort these young folks brought to the task. Under the guidance of their adult mentors, they went about their work in a spirit that should stand as a shining example to us all.

I was pleased by the agency assistance provided to us. Our friends at the Long Island Railroad painted over graffiti that had long marred significant stretches of their 99th Avenue retaining wall. Sanitation supplemented this effort by sending a clean-up crew to clean up those stretches of 99th Avenue that consistently prove too tempting to those among us who selfishly think that disposing of their refuse is more important than blighting our communities. But it was at the three parks that we chose to concentrate our public-space effort where the display of civic spirit was most exciting.

At Cabel (Cambria Playground) Park the Laurelton Lyons contingent of 8 to 18 year-old Leos did their mentor Yannick Humphry

proud by expertly placing paint on the fences and the benches and not themselves nor the ground. In keeping with a long family tradition of clean-up participation, the Mojica family, Maria, Norberto and Norberto Jr. had first gone to Veteran's Park, near their home in Queens Village. They then drove all the way across the district, to Cabel, to help out. Also, at Cabel, the distinguished President of the Cambria Heights Civic Association, Stephen Taylor and wife Carleen, demonstrated their commitment by, without hesitation, taking to their knees in order to assure that the sprinklers were painted with professional care.

This effort mirrored itself at Delphin Greene (PS 176) playground. For this I applaud a diligent contingent of students, parents and teachers from the Cambria Heights School of Excellence. Indeed, "excellent" is the best word to describe the job they did painting benches, cleaning the kiddie park and removing rubbish.

And finally two of the more extraordinary examples of civic commitment came to the fore in the painting of the entire fence encircling

Work of community



The Cambria Playground clean-up crew: with Carleen Taylor on the far left and Yannick Humphrey on the far right, the intrepid Laurelton Leos surround Assemblywoman Clark and Cambria Heights Civic President Stephen Taylor.



and rusting



Cambria Playground's sparkling clean sprinklers at day's end.



*benches of the freshly
in Greene playground
Cambria Heights.*



NYC Department of Sanitation worker cleaning grassy areas along 97th Avenue.

Queens Village's Veteran's Park. The first revealed itself in the efforts of my one-time intern Anael Luc Camille. To our surprise Luc arrived early with his two daughters, who were about his age when he first interned for me. To his surprise we then drafted him to supervise what we knew would be the most difficult job of the day, completing the painting in the allotted time. He succeeded with an extraordinary assist from the Queens Village Lyon's Stella Gray. When completion was threatened by a shortage of paint, Ms. Gray volunteered to go and purchase, with her own money, enough paint to finish.

When you represent an area as diverse as the one I represent, public spaces, especially parks and playgrounds, take on added significance. They provide the space in which we all come for enjoyment regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or national origin. For this reason I owe special thanks to all whose extraordinary effort made this annual event a whopping success. It is an honor to represent people like you.

2013 Scholar Athlete Award recipients



Taiquan Johnson, a graduate of Campus Magnet's Humanities and Arts High School; Attending Delaware State University.

Dashawn Stukes a graduate of Campus Magnet's Business, Computers and Entrepreneurship High School; Attending Nassau Community College.



Jean-Marc Bazile a graduate of Campus Magnet's Math, Science Research and Technology High School; Attending Mansfield University.

Nia Hyman, a graduate of Campus Magnet's Law and Government High School; Attending SUNY's Alfred State College.



Romario Fletcher, a graduate of Pathways College Prep; Attending the State University of New York at Canton.

Over the years, a song that begins with the line, "I believe the children are our future" has remained one of my favorites. It speaks to the reasons that the day each year I have the recipients of my Scholar Athlete Awards into the office to receive their awards is for me one of the brightest days of the year.

These awards are funded by proceeds from the annual New York State Black, Puerto Rican, Hispanic and Asian Caucus Gala. My criterion has always been that the awardee be a high school athlete who has also excelled academically.

This year's five awardees again confirm my belief that with determination and hard work any one of our students can earn the accolades afforded great athletes and the rewards afforded top scholars. To them, their parents, teachers, principals and coaches I offer my sincere congratulations and profound appreciation.

SENIOR NEWS

Homebound Meals are Available for Delivery

Thanks to a program administered by the Services Now for Older Adults (SNAP), those of my constituents who are both homebound and at least 60 years old can have "a daily hot, delicious and balanced lunch meal" delivered to their home.

Those who are interested can call SNAP at:
(718) 454-2385

New Registration Requirements for Basic STAR Tax Exemption

The newly enacted state budget now requires all homeowners receiving the Basic STAR exemption to register with the Department of Taxation and Finance. This change does not affect homeowners receiving the Enhanced STAR exemption.

Beginning on September 16, and continuing until October 4, letters will be sent to those of my constituents who must register. Included will be instructions as to how to go about registering. Registration will continue until December 31, 2013. Failure to register will result in loss of the STAR exemption. Therefore Basic STAR recipients should pay particular attention to these deadlines.

Perhaps the easiest means of registering is through the Tax Department's online website: www.tax.ny.gov

It is, however, also possible to register by telephone at:
(518) 457-2036

**Invest 2 hours a month in your local Parents Association.
The return on your investment is a better education for our children.**

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In memory of Paulina Rodriguez

On November 18, 2012, 24-year-old Paulina Rodriguez was tragically killed in an automobile accident at the corner of 227th Street and 115th Avenue in my district. Immediately thereafter I joined the effort to have a traffic light placed at that intersection. On May 15th, I joined Paulina's mother, Paula Rodriguez, Councilman Leroy Comrie along with other city officials and community residents at a press conference on that corner highlighting the fact that we were finally able to have the Department of Transportation place a traffic light there.

For years I have argued that the long unbroken stretches of streets like 115th Avenue that traverses the 33rd Assembly District required more rigorous traffic control measures. It therefore saddened me that a death had to occur before, at least on this corner, one was put in place.

Over the years my efforts at seeking enhanced enforcement have been complicated by the sheer size of the 105th Precinct. Having to cover that large an area with a shrinking police force has meant that the ability to address traffic issues has been diminished by the need to address other

more pressing enforcement issues. As it relates to the safety of both pedestrians and motorists, this has made the issue of traffic control an especially challenging one.

With this in mind, in the last session, I successfully co-sponsored legislation authorizing New York City to place speed cameras in areas around schools. Hopefully, by the end of this five-year pilot program it will be demonstrated that the program significantly reduced the need for attendance at occasions that are as terribly sad as was this press conference.