

5/29/07

Mayor's Column

Even a bit of rain could not dampen the spirits of Bronxville's 87th Annual Memorial Day Parade and commemoration. Led by Grand Marshals Elaine and Virgil Conway, the parade ended with a memorial ceremony on the steps of the Bronxville School. The Conways, who have given their time and talents to the Village for decades, join a long list of distinguished citizens who have led the parade. Last year's Grand Marshal, decorated war veteran Howard Lenard, marched in the parade and assisted in the ceremony honoring all veterans.

Clergy from all our area churches – St. Joseph's Church, Village Lutheran, Christ Church and the Reformed Church participated in the commemoration.

A very large crowd lined Pondfield Road to view a record number of antique cars thanks to the efforts of Donald Gray, President of the Bronxville Historical Conservancy. Our Eastchester Volunteer Firefighters brought their antique pumper and we thank them for their loyal support of our parade.

Thanks to the efforts of resident Cindi Callahan, we added horses from California Road's River Ridge Stables and the Westchester Invaders, a dance and drill team, who brought their energy and enthusiasm for a second year. Mark Foley, the one man band, joined us again this year as well.

A special thank you goes to our local organizations including the Boy and Girl Scouts, Senior Citizens, League of Women Voters, the Hospital Auxiliary, Daughters of the American Revolution, Junior League, Eastchester Volunteer Ambulance Corps and the students of all our local schools who are the heart of the parade every year. The Boy Scouts even brought their band and a bugler this year. Our goal is to continue to add more and more groups to represent their organizations. The Young Republicans and the Young Democrats came out in force and I believe we saw some of our future leaders marching on Pondfield Road.

I thank everyone for their participation and enthusiasm. Thanks to the involvement of so many different groups, Memorial Day continues to be the highlight of the Village year.

Though appreciating the fun and festivities of the entire weekend, the true meaning and spirit of the day was continued with a special tribute at the School. Mr. Lenard read the roll of deceased veterans since last year's ceremony and SHA!capella and Dale Walker sang patriotic songs. Dale's participation always adds extra significance since she is a direct descendant of World War I war hero Leonard Morange for whom our westside park is named. The local Brownie troops and Cub Scouts assisted representatives from all our area organizations in laying commemorative wreaths at the base of the flag, which flies at half mast in honor of all deceased veterans.

In my remarks I took the opportunity to remind citizens that our freedoms are the direct result of the sacrifices of all our veterans. I concluded with a reading about Flanders Field, a poem written by a WWI Canadian officer upon seeing all the Allied graves in Belgium.

To all our veterans – on behalf of all of the citizens of Bronxville, we are deeply humbled by and grateful for your service. Your courage and sacrifice guide and inspire us. God Bless America.