

## MAYOR'S COLUMN

Spring 2009 signals the beginning of the Federal government's 2010 Census process, commencing with an address canvassing operation that will extend through mid July. The goal of this phase is to obtain complete and accurate street addresses to update the government's geographic database and master address file.

A census worker with a hand held computer may knock on your door to verify the address and determine if there are additional addresses in the building. The canvasser will be wearing a badge and carrying a distinct Census 2010 bag.

The census, actually mandated by the Constitution, has been conducted every ten years since 1790. The purpose is to count everyone living in the United States, regardless of age or citizenship.

Following the initial canvas, a form, taking approximately ten minutes to complete, will be mailed to every address. A second questionnaire will be mailed if no response is received to the initial request for information. If no responses are forthcoming, a census worker will be dispatched to personally visit your home.

Participation in the census is extremely important. Census figures are used to distribute the Congressional seats to states, define state legislative districts, and apportion billions of dollars in federal funds to state and local governments.

It is important to note that federal law prohibits the sharing of any information supplied on the census form with any other government agency or court of law.

If you have any questions or concerns about the census itself or the qualifications or authenticity of the census workers, please call Village Hall or the Police Desk.

Spring also signals the beginning of the Village's clean up of our parks and open spaces. Also, the asphalt plants have now opened so pot holes will be repaired in the coming weeks. We have begun to repaint crosswalks throughout the Village as well as sprucing up Sagamore Park and Maltby Field. Sagamore Park will be closed the week of April 20<sup>th</sup> so that our DPW staff can do some significant refurbishment.

It is not just Village workers assisting in our beautification efforts this spring. Our three garden clubs – Bronxville Beautification Committee, the Working Gardens and Boulder Ledge – have been collaborating on plantings and improvements to avoid any duplication of effort. This year as we all work together we hope it will be a case of "many hands make light work."

You will also see our volunteer gardeners pruning the area adjacent to the railroad underpass on April 21 from 9 to 1. In addition, on Saturday, May 2, the Junior League of Bronxville will be partnering with the Bronx River Park Reservation Conservancy and the Westchester Parks Department to sponsor "Pitch in for Parks" to clean up Scout Field on Midland Avenue. Anyone age 5 and above is encouraged to attend this very family oriented event to help spruce up the park.

In keeping with the spirit and beauty of spring, please consider using organic products on your property. Organic gardening is now easier, more cost effective and safer than petro chemicals to achieve a beautiful and healthy lawn. Organic products nourish the long term health of the soil so they can be applied any time of year. In contrast, petro chemicals treat plants in the short term and only in specific seasons so more frequent applications are actually needed to produce a green, not necessarily healthy lawn.

Organic products currently on the market are priced within a plus/minus 10% margin of traditional chemical products and provide long term nourishment to vegetation, not only on one's own property but that of your neighbors. The cost of pouring chemicals on a lawn which then leaked onto adjacent property and ultimately into the water supply is a long term cost borne by the entire community. As stewards of our Village for residents in the years to come, please consider the long term benefits of switching to organic products. With a little patience and just a few planting seasons, an organic garden will ultimately be superior to a chemically produced one. I want to thank Patrick Gasparro of Nature's Cradle in Eastchester for educating me and lending his voluntary expertise to the Village staff on this very important topic.