Seniors, Agencies Protest Budget Cuts for Services for the Frail and Homebound Elderly

By Luke Adams

Sunnyside Community Services joined members of the Council of Senior Centers & Services of NYC, Inc. at City Hall last week, delivering over 17,000 signed letters to Mayor Bloomberg protesting the recent 30% cut in senior services for frail and elderly New Yorkers.

Annual Turkish Friendship Dinner

By Luke Adams

On Wednesday December 15th the Turkish Cultural Center of Queens held their 8th Annual Friendship Dinner at the Historic Flushing Town Hall (Built in 1862). The Friendship Dinner, organized by the Turkish Cultural Center, is dedicated to the Commitment to Diversity: an evening of dialogue and sharing. Elected officials, educational institutions, business and community centers and religious organizations joined the dinner.

The president of TCC said that he is “very happy and proud to bring the leaders of the community together for a dinner. It is important that we get together, talk, learn and grow together. We all share the same hopes and aspirations for the future.” Their special guest was NYS Senator Toby Stavisky, who chairs the Education Committee. This year, the Friendship Dinner is dedicated to “Universal Education: Finding ways to contribute to the Education of the Youth.”

Tenants to Hold Candlelight Vigil to Call on Cuomo and State Legislature for Stronger Protections

The Real Rent Reform Campaign, a coalition of tenant, community, and labor groups, will gather with allied elected officials on the steps of City Hall to demand reform of the rent laws.

Saving 35% off Christmas 10% off everything else Friday - Christmas Eve

Save 35% off Christmas 10% off everything else Friday - Christmas Eve:

The place to find a perfect gift for everyone in your life!

Open until 9pm starting Monday, Dec. 20th
44-08 Queens Blvd, www.aprilglass.com
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VAN BRAMER DELIVERS OVER 3,000 CANNED GOODS TO LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES IN NEED

Generous community response to Holiday Food Drive helps feed families in need this holiday season

On Tuesday, December 21st, Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer continued distributing collected canned goods from his first Holiday Food Drive with the Center of Hope Food Pantry in Queensbridge and the Salvation Army Food Pantry in Astoria. The month-long food drive collection brought in over 3,000 canned goods and non-perishable food items to help local food pantries supply food for families in need this holiday season.

To kick off the distribution efforts, Van Bramer joined President and Founder of the East River Development Alliance and Senior Pastor at the Center of Hope International Bishop Mitchell Taylor at Center of Hope Food Pantry to help community volunteers pack and distribute the donated items to local families in Queensbridge. Van Bramer’s hands-on efforts continued at the Salvation Army Food Pantry in Astoria, where he also joined local volunteers to help pack and bag donated items for their weekly distribution. Distribution efforts will continue throughout the week and the Holiday Food Drive is expected to be an annual event.

(continued on page 5)

John V. Daniels Jr. VFW Post No. 2813 presents Youth Essay Awards in Woodside

by Marvin R. Jeffcoat, SFC, USA (RET) / Photos by Principal John Dolan, St. Sebastian’s RC School

Youth Activities Chairman Vincent Renda and Commander Marvin R. Jeffcoat presented Voice of Democracy and Patriots Pen Awards at St. Sebastian’s RC School in Woodside. Ms. JoAnn Dolan St. Sebastian’s Principal led the assembly in prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance to kick off this year’s ceremony. St. Sebastian’s hosts this academic awards ceremony annually each December.

Tenants to Hold Candlelight Vigil to Call on Cuomo and State Legislature for Stronger Protections

The Real Rent Reform Campaign, a coalition of tenants, community, and labor groups, will gather with allied elected officials on the steps of City Hall to demand reform of the rent laws and policies. The rally will demand another round of weakening amendments as the price of real rent protection for New York State tenants. But the rent and eviction protection laws have already been damaged enormously, and tenants are demanding that the laws must be not only renewed, but strengthened.

The State Legislature and Governor Cuomo must repeal vacancy decontrol, which encourages harassment of long-term tenants and contributes to skyrocketing rents and gentrification. Hundreds of thousands of units have already been damaged enormously, and tenants are demanding that the laws must be not only renewed, but strengthened.

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On the evening of Monday, January 3, 2011, at 6:00pm, tenants will hold a candlelight vigil on the steps of City Hall to welcome Governor Cuomo into office. This evening marks the start of a new year in the New York State legislative session that will determine whether millions of tenants will continue to be protected under rent regulation. The state rent protections laws and the state laws protecting tenants in coop and condo conversions are due to expire on June 15, 2011. Reversing New York’s affordable housing crisis is pivotal to restoring the state’s economy.

The pro-landlord forces in Albany will demand another round of weakening amendments as the price of real rent protection for New York State tenants. But the rent and eviction protection laws have already been damaged enormously, and tenants are demanding that the laws must be not only renewed, but strengthened.

The State Legislature and Governor Cuomo must repeal vacancy decontrol, which encourages harassment of long-term tenants and contributes to skyrocketing rents and gentrification. Hundreds of thousands of units have already been damaged due to this destructive provision, exacerbating the already severe housing crisis. As apartments are deregulated, more and more tenants lose the right to a guaranteed lease renewal and to relatively affordable annual rent increases. And as owners of Mitchell-Lama and Section 8 buildings buy out of affordable housing programs, the State must ensure that these tenants are provided with the same rent and eviction protections as rent regulated tenants.

In a region where the scarcity of affordable housing gives landlords significant power, particularly during economic times, tenants are standing up to keep their homes and neighborhoods.
State Senator George Onorato
12th Senatorial District
NYS Senate

SENATOR-ELECT MICHAEL GIANARIS NAMED DSCC CHAIR

Senate Majority Conference Leader John L. Sampson announced that he has appointed Senator-Elect Michael Gianaris as the new Chair of the Democratic Senate Campaign Committee, taking the first step toward building a political operation that will culminate with the election of a broader, stronger Democratic Majority.

Heading into a Presidential election year, when increased Democratic turnout is expected to bolster efforts to retake Congress and expand the number of Democratic seats in the State Senate, Gianaris’ expertise as one of the Party’s most prolific fundraisers and political strategists will be an invaluable tool to ensure victory.

“Mike Gianaris is a dynamic fundraiser and effective leader who will work with our members to win more Democratic seats. With his energy and expertise, Senate Democrats are gearing up for a successful election cycle,” said Senate Majority Conference Leader John L. Sampson. “I’d also like to applaud outgoing DSCC Chair Jeff Klein whose leadership was instrumental in key victories this year. Jeff will continue as Deputy Leader for the Conference and will focus his efforts on our legislative agenda over the next two years.”

Senator-Elect Gianaris said: “There is much work to do in the months ahead, but we will leave no stone unturned in our efforts to forge a clear path to victory for any upcoming special elections as well as for 2012. I thank Senator Sampson for this opportunity and accept this responsibility with deep humility and profound purpose. I look forward to working with all of our members to produce the success that the people of New York State deserve.”

On Sunday December 19th Love Came Down at Christmas and found its way to Queen of Angels auditorium, that’s all I could think of as I watch these children as they put on a play recounting the story of the Nativity of Jesus. I am sure every parent was proud as they sat watching their child take part in this story of the first Christmas. Credit must be given to all the hard workers in seeing this Christmas pageant was put together; Linda Kasakyan – director, Nalina Christian, Gloria Malatesta, Catherine Femia, Robert Murphy, Patricia Campbell, Susan Carroll-Flavin, Francis Schmidt and Father Bryan Dowd. See the pictures of the wonderful children who performed in this story of Christmas.
Good things come to those who wait! How about a summer cruise as a holiday gift to look forward to? Only $500 per cabin reserves a cabin assignment to Bermuda on the magnificent....

**“Norwegian Gem”**

Join the August 21 7-day Sunnyside Chamber of Commerce cruise on the world famous ship!

Rates based on 2 in a room. Add $352.36 per person for Taxes & Port Charges Inside rm $734 PP | Outside rm with Window $894 PP | Outside rm with Balcony $1094 PP

Call or stop by Fridays from 10am - 5pm to chat with Luke Adams, formerly of Don Bar at Cumber Travel, 58-20 Roosevelt Ave, Woodside 718 457 1000 or call 718 794 8431.

Sunnyside Goes to Bermuda!

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**A Very Crowley Holiday Party (Without the Crowley)**

by Luke Adams

Above: Assemblywoman Marge Markey greeted me with a warm welcome and with her was a travel mate of mine, Bea O’Dea, who I haven't seen since Kenya or was it Egypt, this was a good start to the party! Left: District Leader John Smyth was updating his sister Mary on suggestions for family Christmas gifts.

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**Annual Turkish Friendship Dinner**

by Luke Adams

Sunnyside Chamber Executive Board Members Patricia Dorfman and Regoberto Cordoso are greeting by children dressed in Traditional Costumes. The children gave their guests candy and a printed ‘wise saying’ wrapped in a scroll.

Sen. Toby Stavisky with Mr. Furkan Kosar, President of the Turkish American Council.

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**VAN BRAMER DELIVERS OVER 3,000 CANNED GOODS TO LOCAL FOOD PANTRIES IN NEED**

“Economic hardship should never lead to hunger in our communities,” said Van Bramer. “I would like to thank our local food pantries and volunteers for all of their hard work and dedication and our generous community for extending their hearts this holiday season to help feed families in need.”

Bishop Mitchell G. Taylor, President and Founder of the East River Development Alliance and Senior Pastor at the Center of Hope International remarked, “Residents of public housing in Western Queens are very grateful for Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer’s generosity this winter. Your support at our food kitchen is greatly appreciated.”

Left: Council Member Jimmy Van Bramer joins local volunteers to help pack donated food at the Center of Hope Food Pantry in Queensbridge. President and Founder of the East River Development Alliance and Senior Pastor at the Center of Hope International Bishop Mitchell Taylor and Van Bramer.

Local volunteers help pack donated food at the Salvation Army Food Pantry in Astoria.
QUEENS LIBRARY AT WOODSIDE CELEBRATES CENTENNIAL

Community Celebrates with Entertainment and History

Queens Library at Woodside is 100 years young! The community joined New York City Councilmember Jimmy Van Bramer, New York State Assemblywoman Margaret Markey, Queens Library CEO Thomas W. Galante and government and community leaders in celebration on Thursday, December 16.

The festivities included entertainment and refreshments. Catherine Gregory presented “A History of the Woodside Library.” “The walls of this building have withstood the test of time helping inspire bright minds for over one hundred years,” said Councilmember Jimmy Van Bramer. “I am honored to celebrate this historic milestone for the Woodside Library and look forward to its continued success.”

Assemblywoman Margaret Markey said: “The Woodside Library has been a shining treasure for generations of residents and this centennial is a reminder of the important role that a library plays in the life of a community. As successive waves of immigrants from every continent have arrived in Woodside over the past 100 years, the staff at the Woodside Library has also had the extra responsibility of introducing newcomers to a new community, a new language and a new culture and I salute them for their outstanding work.”

Queens Library served the Woodside community with a traveling library collection housed in a general store as early as 1908. It was officially designated a branch library in 1910. The current building was built in 1933 but stood empty until 1937 due to the fiscal restraints of the Great Depression. It has been enriching lives from that location ever since.

Library Proclamation: Queens Library CEO Thomas W. Galante; Assemblymember Margaret Markey, City Councilmember Jimmy Van Bramer with proclamation from New York State Assembly.

Statements…

FINAL PASSAGE OF THE JAMES ZADROGA 9–11 HEALTH AND COMPENSATION ACT

BILL NOW GOES TO THE PRESIDENT FOR HIS SIGNATURE

Congressman Joe Crowley (D-Queens, the Bronx), one of nine chief deputy whips, is the only member of Congress who lost a family member on September 11th, Battalion Chief John Moran.

“Today, I rise as the cousin of Battalion Chief John Moran. My cousin, along with almost 3,000 others, died on September 11, 2001. His last known words were to the driver of the New York City Fire Department vehicle. As he was dropped off at World Trade Center Tower 2, John said, ‘Let me off here. I am going to try to make a difference.’ Nothing can replace the loss of my cousin or the thousands of others who were killed that day. Nothing can replace the loss of those who have perished since. But, today we can make proud his memory and the memory of all those who served on September 11th and the days following. Enactment of the James Zadroga 9-11 Health and Compensation Act upholds the commitment to those who served our nation honorably, tirelessly and without pause. Today, I am proud to stand before my colleagues as the cousin of Battalion Chief John Moran, and I am proud, in the words of John, to ‘make a difference’ for the many heroes who have suffered long enough because of their service to our great country.

U.S. Senators Kirsten E. Gillibrand (D-NY) and Charles E. Schumer (D-NY) said: “The Christmas Miracle we’ve been looking for has arrived. Over the last 24 hours, our Republican colleagues have negotiated in good faith to forge a workable final package that will protect the health of the men and women who selflessly answered our nation’s call in her hour of greatest need. We are pleased to announce that we crafted an agreement that will allow this legislation to pass the Senate, and the House, this afternoon. We thank our Republican friends for coming together to fulfill America’s moral obligation to the heroes of 9/11.”

The senators added: “This has been a long process, but we are now on the cusp of the victory these heroes deserve. We would not be here without the strong leadership of Majority Leader Reid, Congresswoman Maloney, Congressman Nadler, Congressman King, Congressman Weiner, Congressman Crowley, Congresswoman McMahon, the entire New York Congressional delegation, and most of all, the many brave first responders and community survivors.”

Wishing You a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!
Now that 2011 is almost here, you may want to make some New Year’s resolutions. Planning to volunteer? Go to the gym more often? Learn a new language? All worthy ambitions, of course, but this year we should also consider some financial resolutions as well.

Which resolutions should you make? Here are a few ideas to consider:

1. Boost your retirement accounts. No matter how old you’ll be in 2011, one way to protect your financial future is to make sure you’re a year closer to retirement than you were in 2010. And that’s why you’ll want to increase your contributions to your retirement accounts. If your salary is going up in 2011, boost the amount you defer for your 401(k) or other employer-sponsored retirement plan, such as a 403(b) plan (if you work for a school or other tax-exempt organization) or a 457 plan (if you work for a state or local government).

2. Tax-deductible contributions, tax-deferred growth of earnings and several investment options, these types of plans are tremendous ways to save for retirement. And try to “max out” your traditional or Roth IRA, too.

3. Look for opportunities. With the sluggish economy of the past couple of years has obviously been a cause of concern for everyone, some have seen one “silver lining” in that many people, concerned about over-spending, have shed some of their debt load. The less money you have to spend on your debts, the more you’ll have available for your future.

4. Maintain adequate cash levels. As an investor, you’ve got at least two good reasons for maintaining enough cash in your portfolio. First, having adequate cash available means you’ll be ready to act quickly to take advantage of good investment opportunities. And second, by having a cash cushion, you won’t be forced to liquidate long-term investments to pay for short-term needs such as a major car repair, a new furnace, a big doctor’s bill, and so on.

5. Reduce your debts. While the sluggish economy of the past couple of years has obviously been a cause of concern for everyone, some have seen one “silver lining” in that many people, concerned about over-spending, have shed some of their debt load. The less money you have to spend on your debts, the more you’ll have available for your future.

6. Don’t over-react to market swings. Over the past few years, we’ve seen plenty of sudden, sharp swings in the financial markets, and you’re likely going to see more of them in 2011. Don’t over-react to either the “ups” or the “downs” of the market. Over-reacting leads to short-term thinking — and successful investors are the ones who can maintain a long-term perspective.

7. Rebalance when necessary. At least once a year, review and rebalance your portfolio, as necessary, to make sure it still reflects your goals, risk tolerance and family situation, all of which can change over time.

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Ringing in New Year’s financial resolutions can be easy to do when you have a clear strategy to follow and work toward your financial goals. Whether you are just starting out or want to learn something new, the workshop will give you real-world strategies that are easy to follow.

Call today to reserve space for yourself and a guest at this educational workshop.
Queens County Clerk Gloria D’Amico passed away this past Tuesday, Dec. 21st, after a long battle with Cancer. Starting out as a worker for the Queens Board of Elections in 1972, she worked herself up to Chief Clerk of the Board of Elections. In 1991 she became the Queens County Clerk as well as held the position of Commissioner of Jurors. Her dedication to the County of Queens will never be forgotten. May she rest in peace.
Betty's Bus to Yonkers Casino
Feb 2nd, $20, $15 back—Ladies Day $7 extra for gambling
Meet at 57th St. & Woodside Ave. by 9am Sharp! 718-786-6885

THE SUNNYSIDE WOODSIDE LIONS CLUB ANNUAL HOLIDAY GATHERING
Wed., Dec. 29th – 7pm
Queen of Angels Hall, 44 St & Skillman Ave
RSVP to Norberto 347-239-5476 or Luke 718-784-8437
Cost $25.00 per person, $30.00 at the Door

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