



Letters to the Editor

cially programmed laptop computers at various locations such as post offices, grocery stores, WIC offices, schools, etc., and pre-screen applicants, dispel common misconceptions and help out with the necessary forms and documentation. We help approximately 300 individuals a month to get this critical benefit.

To find out if you or someone you know is eligible for the Food Card, and how to apply, please call Betsy Pabon and her staff at Sunnyside Community Services, (718) 784-6173, extension 414.

Cordially,
Judith Zangwill
Executive Director
Sunnyside Community Services

Why Food Additives?

To The Editor:

In its over concern for health coverage and industrial pollution, our government pretends to have a serious regard for our well being, but what about our food supply?

Poisonous fluoride and chlorine are added to our water and our foods are laced with dyes, flavor enhancers, MSG, aspartame, hydrogenated oils (transfats), preservatives and unknown compounds we can neither identify nor pronounce. So many of these are linked to cancer and neurological damage as well as being destructive to the immune system in general. Somehow polluted food is considered "safe", or is there a secret agenda, possibly to shorten our lifespans?

In spite of all the doctor's visits and the pharmaceuticals swallowed, we are sicker today than 100 years ago in regard to degenerative diseases such as cancer, diabetes, MS and lupus. Factories are shut down to stop pollution while industrial contaminants are deliberately added to our food, then we are

offered medical coverage to cover illnesses we should never have contracted in the first place!

Above all else, we must ask who benefits from all these contradictory policies and how can we stop them.

Sincerely yours,
Lawrence Burke
Roslyn, New York

Don't Eat Cloned Animals

To The Editor:

I did read that Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has completed its review and is moving towards allowing milk and meat from animal clones and their offspring into the food supply. Ignoring the scientific evidence that cloning poses serious risk to animal welfare, including severe birth defects, painful disease, and premature death, the FDA is close to permitting cloned foods onto our grocery store shelves without labels.

The FDA needs to hear that there are many Americans [who] oppose cloning animals for food. Send your letter now—the comment period closes April 2! For more information, visit www.EndAnimalCloning.org
Severa Agüero
Astoria

Don't Close Bank

To The Editor:

I am sure a lot of people will be upset over the closing of the Sovereign Bank Branch at 51-12 31st Ave., Woodside. Letters were received in the mail stating all our paperwork will be sent to their other branch at 75-25 31st Ave., Jackson Heights. This is not right. This is 23 blocks away. No buses there. How will the many seniors who live in the Boulevard Gardens and the housing projects get there? Most do not have cars and the ones who do don't want to lose a parking space.

Why don't they send all our records to the Broadway Branch on 37th Street which is on the bus line and easier to get to? Or better yet, why don't they close that branch, since there are so many other saving banks along that stretch. There is no other savings bank here, where they are closing this branch.

What are we to do?
This closing is wrong [for] the people of this area. Help us get another bank company who would like to open at this location.

Thank you so much. Love your paper.
Sincerely
Patricia Connor

Comments On 2 Stories

To The Editor:

With the greatest of interest I read the articles featured in the *Gazette* of February 7 and as usual I would like to share my comments of both praise and dismay with the many readers.

I am dismayed and speak with indignation upon two very important issues affecting the quality of life of all New Yorkers. [The utilities] and the PSC have done very poor planning and maintenance work during the past and thus the blackout of last summer was a result of their failure to act to prevent such awful conditions that adversely affected the lives of many New Yorkers during the heat of summer. [The utility] knows how and when to send the bills that have to be paid, but do they know that feeders must be checked and maintained?

The PSC should be overseeing them.
This gross error must not occur again. Also, the situation of the busing is awful especially during the cold of the frigid winter and children have to wait on corners in the cold for buses that do not arrive or cross dangerous streets to get to school.

Poor planning resulted in this situation and there should have been more parent and teacher input when the bus routes were formulated. So many wasted hours of children's school learning time and parents' work time are being wasted.

I praise [state] Senator [George] Onorato for his dedication and devotion as New York state Senator for these many years. He has cared about people of all ages and improved their quality of life.

I congratulate him for being honored by the Variety Boys and Girls Club and he certainly deserves this high acclaim.
Cynthia Groopman
Long Island City

Reduce City's Debt

To The Editor:

"Lawmakers Blast Budget Cuts For NYC From Washington, Albany" (John Toscano - February 7) was informative, but missed part of the story not being told by our public officials.

Moving tax dollars from New York City to both New York state and Washington in essence redistributes the wealth from the haves to the have nots. The late Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan documented how New Yorkers sent more money to Washington than we get back. Many of the 50 states could make the same argument. This imbalance also holds true in the distribution of state aid from Albany to the 62 counties of New York state. Within New York City, residents of Brooklyn, Bronx, Manhattan, Queens and Staten Island (or each of the 59 community planning boards) don't always get back the same amount of

money sent to City Hall, Albany and Washington. You could take this analysis down to the local census tract level. Since this imbalance will never change, we would be better off leaving tax levies at the most local level of government. There will be significant savings in administrative costs and a greater percentage of locally generated revenues remaining in our communities.

The real question is how New York City manages the billions of dollars already being received from Washington and Albany every year. Does NYC submit grant applications on time? Are current federal and state funded programs being completed on time and within budget? Ha[s] NYC Comptroller William Thompson (who is a 2009 Mayoral candidate) conducted audits of each respective municipal agency to see if NYC is doing a good job managing current federal and state aid programs? Ha[s] New York City Council Speaker Christine Quinn (also a potential 2009 Mayoral candidate) conducted public hearings to do the same?

It is also difficult for our Washington and Albany legislative delegations to make the case for more money when NYC is proudly boasting of a multibillion-dollar budget surplus this year.

New York state is number two nationally among the 50 states with each resident responsible for \$3,115 of the \$50 billion dollar total debt. Uncle Sam's national debt is now over \$9 trillion!

The current municipal debt is now \$55 billion. Each resident is responsible for \$6,223, making the Big Apple number one nationally. Being number one in total and resident municipal debt is nothing to be proud about. Each year a greater percentage of the NYC budget will have to go toward debt payments rather than funding current badly needed essential services such as Police, Fire, Sanitation, Education and other Social Services. Why have NYC Council Speaker Quinn [and] NYC Comptroller Thompson never developed any plans to reduce this long term debt?

Shouldn't we learn from past mistakes and attempt to reduce both borrowing and long term debt instead of allowing them to grow year after [year]? The combined City, State and Federal debt adds up to over nine trillion dollars. Is this the inheritance we wish to leave future generations which could result in their bankruptcy?

Perhaps government at all levels needs to do a better job with the billions of dollars in taxpayer generated revenues already available, rather than pick the pockets of taxpayers for even more!

Sincerely,
Larry Penner
Great Neck, New York

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