

WOODSIDE HERALD

SERVING SUNNYSIDE-WOODSIDE AND LONG ISLAND CITY

VOL. 93 NO. 6

WOODSIDE, L.I.C., N.Y. FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 2026

FREE



WESTERN QUEENS GROWTH MEETS TENANT CRISIS



AS BRONSTEIN BUILDINGS DRAW FIRE



A recent economic snapshot from the New York State Comptroller's Office finds Sunnyside, Woodside, and Long Island City continue to drive Queens' economy while many households face persistent housing pressure, a reality tenants say is compounded by unsafe living conditions in some buildings.

The report identifies western Queens as an area of rapid development and employment growth, particularly in Long Island City, where housing and commercial construction have accelerated. At the same time, it documents a high share of rent-burdened households — residents spending 30 percent or more of income on housing. Sunnyside is cited as having a significant concentration of such households, with Woodside showing similar strain.

Against that backdrop, tenants gathered February 2 outside 42-09 47th Ave in Sunnyside to demand repairs and accountability from Bronstein Properties, LLC. The Bronstein Tenant Union, joined by Chhaya CDC, the Queens Tenant Coalition, Assemblymember Claire Valdez and Councilmember Julie Won, called on the landlord to complete overdue repairs, stop displacing tenants and maintain safe, affordable housing. Tenant Sonu Kumari showed hazardous apartment conditions to officials and the press following the rally.

Tenant organizers say Bronstein owns more than 100 buildings and has accumulated over 17,792 Housing Preservation and Development violations, with more than 197 evictions since 2017. Some residents at 43-09 40th St have been without gas since April 28, and tenants allege retaliation and harassment by building staff. Two fires reportedly broke out in Bronstein buildings last year.

The rally featured testimony describing mold, leaks, mice and insect infestations and unsafe living conditions, alongside a building-wide rent strike at 43-09 40th St that began October 1. Organizers say tenants are collaborating with Attorney General Letitia James on an investigation.

Yvette Allen-Janis, speaking about Kumari and her sister, said they were hospitalized with bacterial infections and that an orderly told the family, "This is where they bring people to die."

Dalia, a tenant at 43-09 40th St, said collective action forced management to negotiate partial abatements, but major repairs remain incomplete, with some apartments still lacking gas, exposed pipes and confirmed lead hazards. Amanda Raker, a tenant at 43-17 48th St, described ceiling collapses and long-delayed repairs, saying aging building systems are being handled without adequate professional support.

Council Member Julie Won said, "With nearly 18,000 HPD violations and 200 evictions since 2017, Bronstein Properties is one of the most notorious and predatory landlords in New York City... Bronstein must immediately restore all essential services, complete repairs... stop tenant harassment, and maintain affordability so tenants can stay in their homes." The comptroller's report notes western Queens reflects a citywide challenge in which economic growth has not eliminated affordability concerns. For tenants facing rising housing costs and unsafe conditions, organizers say the issue is no longer abstract policy but daily reality. The Bronstein Tenant Union says it will continue organizing across multiple Queens buildings to demand safe, healthy and affordable housing and an end to retaliation and neglect.

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VOLUNTEER POSITION

WOODSIDE HERALD

Sunnyside, NY 11104

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WHY YOU SHOULD GET HELP FOR YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

by Stan Popovich

Many people underestimate the impact that mental illness can have on an individual or family. It can be difficult to admit that you have a mental health problem in your life. Secondly, it can be just as difficult in getting the people you know to understand your situation without making any kinds of judgments. As a result, here are six reasons why you should make your mental health an important priority in your life.

1. **Your situation will improve if you get help:** Your anxieties and fears can be challenging to manage and more than likely you will need some help. Just as you talk to your doctor about your regular health, you should not be hesitant in seeking help for your mental health. If left untreated, your anxieties and fears may not go away.

2. **Drugs and alcohol are not the answer:** Drugs and alcohol can make your problems more complicated. Many people have said that drugs and alcohol will only add more problems to your situation. Be smart and learn how to cope with your mental health issues by talking to a qualified professional. There are many health professionals in your area that can give you some ideas on where you can go for assistance.

3. **You will save time and money:** Eventually, you will have to confront your fears and mental health issues. Save yourself the time and heartache and confront your problems now rather than later. You will save months of struggling by getting help right away. The sooner you get assistance the faster you will start getting some relief.

4. **You are not alone:** Everyone deals with fear, stress, and anxiety in one’s life whether your friends and others care to admit it. In addition, do not be embarrassed that you are getting help. We all learn new things from others on a daily basis and learning how to manage your anxieties is no different. In addition, your goal is to get your life back on track and not to get everyone’s approval. If people start asking you questions, just say your dealing with stress. Most people can relate to dealing with stress and anxiety!

5. **Do not make the mistake of doing nothing:** There are many people who struggled with anxiety and other mental health related issues, and they tried to ignore their problems. As a result, some of these people struggled on a daily basis and eventually things became more difficult. It can be scary asking for assistance, but the key is to take things one day at a time.

6. **You have a variety of options:** There are many mental health support groups, organizations, and counselors in your area that can help get your life back on track. Talk to your doctor to get more details on where you can go for some assistance. Help is available but you must be willing to make the choice of getting better. Remember that every problem has a solution. You just have to make the effort to find the answers.

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QUINN MINUTE – REVISITING THE CLASSICS

by Rix Quinn

Most students read “Romeo and Juliet” by Shakespeare, then ask (1) Where did those people learn to talk so cool? and (2) Wasn’t this the same plot as “West Side Story?”

The play centers around Romeo Montague and Juliet Capulet (a name that rhymes). Juliet’s dad arranges for his daughter to marry a big-shot named Paris, and sets up a costume party where they can meet. Romeo shows up in disguise, thinks Juliet is hotter than a blowtorch, and grabs a kiss. Then he follows her home, stands under her window, and blathers all sorts of gushy stuff that lovesick guys have quoted for centuries.

Juliet adores Romeo right back, even though the families hate each other. But, what the heck...they’re both 14, so they decide to marry! Romeo convinces a friendly friar to tie the knot immediately.

Then, in events more twisted than a contortionist’s colon, Romeo’s friend and Juliet’s cousin slice-and-dice each other. Romeo tries to bust up this knife battle, but accidentally kills the Capulet kid, and goes into hiding. Then the friar hatches a plan. He gives Juliet a sleeping potion to make her “appear dead.” When her family carries her to the tomb, the friar will fetch Romeo to rescue Juliet, and they can escape! But news of Juliet’s “death” reaches Romeo before he learns about the trick. Heartsick, he buys poison, then races to her tomb so they can dirt nap together.

When Juliet wakes up to find Romeo deceased, she stabs herself. The warring families find the fallen lovers, and the philosophical friar explains that the couple wished only love, which reunites their families.

I’ve left a lot out, but the basic message is: (1) don’t kiss strangers in costume, (2) never fight if you can avoid it, and (3) middle school is way too young to marry.

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THE WILLIAM ELLSWORTH ARTIS LIVING LEGACY

by Dr. Sharon M. Cadiz

For the past few years, I have made a point of recognizing an often overlooked artist and sculptor of the Harlem Renaissance period named William Ellsworth Artis. In 2024, I was delighted to discover that the Metropolitan Museum of Art included him in an exhibition entitled: “The Harlem Renaissance and Transatlantic Modernism.” When I visited the museum to see the exhibition, it was only the second time that I had seen any of his work outside of online photographs. The first occasion was during an exhibition highlighting the work of his distinguished mentor; the sculptor Augusta Savage, at the New York Historical Society some years back where I recall seeing one of his pieces. This year I am seeking to showcase the work of William Artis because he was not only a gifted sculptor, but an inspirational teacher. It is his role as a teacher that gives even more depth and dimension to his life and work. By guiding the development of future artists, he demonstrated the continuity that was symbolized in his mentorship with Augusta Savage.

Over the past year, the William Ellsworth Artis Legacy Committee was formed with the blessings and best wishes of his niece Dr. Shirley Davis Jones who sparked the effort with her book entitled, “Uncovering Uncle William: A Search for Meaning in Art.” The Committee members have begun to catalogue information about his achievements and gather details about his work. They have cited the fact that “through these achievements, Artis became part of a generation of Black artists who expanded the cultural narrative of America—asserting that African American creativity was not only relevant but essential to the nation’s artistic identity.” I can attest to the fact that his work, described by the Committee as having “emotional depth, technical precision, and respect for the dignity of his subjects,” is extraordinarily moving; especially in pieces like “A Mother’s Love.” In addition, the Committee points out that his “Students remembered him as a patient guide, a disciplined craftsman, and a mentor who taught them not only technique, but character. His classrooms nurtured curiosity, excellence, and pride—values that extended far beyond the art studio.”

The members of the William Ellsworth Artis Legacy Committee have devoted their valuable time and effort to a deeply held vision that their work will help to show the “transformative power of art; the importance of cultural heritage and the responsibility to educate and inspire.” They plan to do this by “preserving and locating the artworks across institutions and private collections; promoting his contributions through exhibitions, scholarships and community partnerships; developing educational programs for youth and emerging artists; and sharing his story with broader audiences to inspire cultural pride and creativity.”

Because my husband and daughter are artists, I have firsthand knowledge of how important inspiration, support, inclusion, and a sense of possibility are in nurturing the interests and aspirations of those pursuing a career in art. Like Artis, both my husband and daughter have taught art classes and contributed, in their respective ways, to future artists. This expansion of creativity serves us all and is at the root of human development from the earliest cave drawings to the innovative, modern forms of artistic expression. The meaning of a living legacy is, in essence, the sustainable aspect that occurs not with the glorification of a single artist; or the price that a work of art might garner, but the life giving potential to lift us; connect us; and carry us through the best and worst of times. I invite you to celebrate the work of William Ellsworth Artis; and the community of creative people who enrich our lives through their gifts and service.



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STREET CO-NAMING CEREMONY



Saturday
February 7, 2026
1 p.m.



New York Irish Center
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Long Island City, NY 11101



New York
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JULIE WON
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Annual Black History Month Celebration

Wednesday, February 25, 6pm
Refreshments at 5pm and program at 6pm
Helen Marshall Cultural Center at Queens Borough Hall
120-55 Queens Boulevard, Kew Gardens, NY



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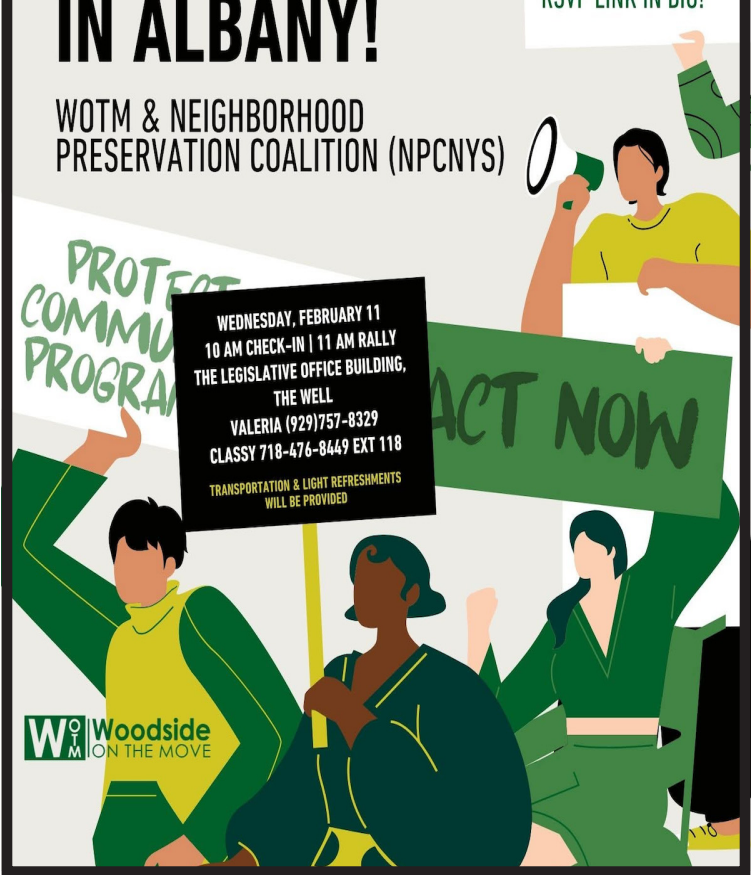
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NYC

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SCAN FOR



WARMING CENTERS

For the latest locations and hours contact 311 or visit: on.nyc.gov/warmingcenters

Woodside ON THE MOVE

51-23B Queens Blvd Woodside, NY 11377

woodsideonthemove.org

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02/10

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Housing Legal Consultation
10am - 4pm | 51-23B Queens Blvd.
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02/24

Tuesday

Know Your Rights
6pm - 8pm | 51-23B Queens Blvd.
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02/26

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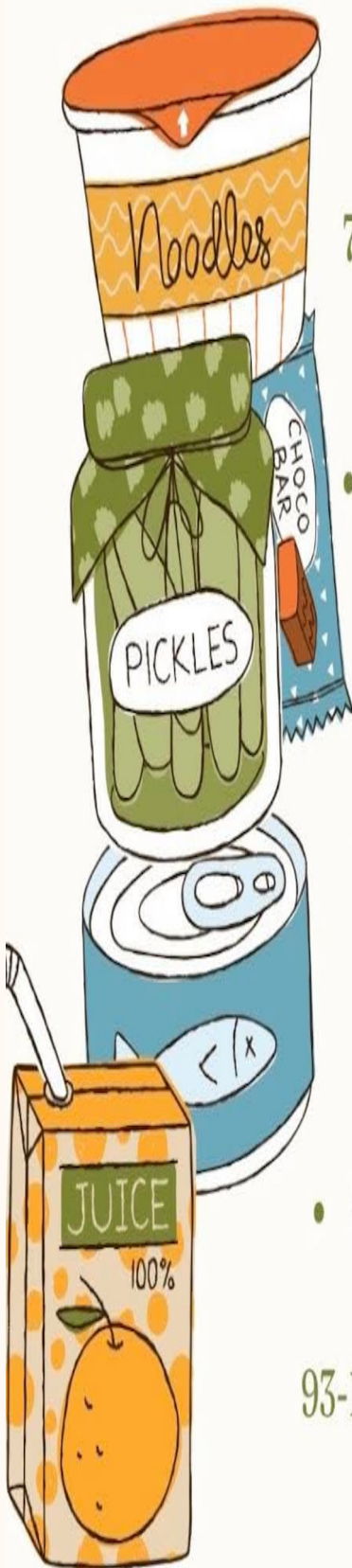
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