

# The Rhode Island Voter

The newsletter of the  
League of Women Voters of Rhode Island  
172 Taunton Ave., Suite 8,  
East Providence, RI 02914



February 2011

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## Governor Lincoln Chafee to Speak to League on March 30

Governor Lincoln Chafee will address the League of Women Voters at the “League Day at the State House” on March 30 in the Governor’s Reception Room. This annual event brings League members from around the state to Providence to see Rhode Island’s government up close and to hear a speaker address important issues facing Rhode Island.

“We were so delighted that Governor Chafee agreed to speak with us,” said Joanne DeVoe, LWVRI president. “Although as we go to press, the governor has not set a topic, there are many pressing issues of interest to League members—school financing,



**Governor Lincoln Chafee**

redistricting, legislative reform—that the Governor can influence.”

The meeting is open to the public,

*League Day continued page 7*

## Coalition Marks First Victory

As reported in the October issue of the LWVRI *Voter*, the League has joined a coalition of good government groups and business and labor leaders called Citizens for an Accountable Legislature. One of the items on the Coalition’s ten-point program is the on-line listing of legislative votes.

As League lobbyist Greta Abbott reports (see page 3), there were several bills in the last legislative session that would have required the on-line listing, but all failed. In early January, the leadership of both the Senate and the Assembly decided to voluntarily support this reform. At this time, only votes cast in the chambers will be posted. Committee votes are not done electronically yet, but the *Providence Journal* reported that

Senator Teresa Paiva-Weed said efforts are underway to solve the problem.

To view a voting record, go to the General Assembly Web site ([www.rilin.state.ri.us](http://www.rilin.state.ri.us)), click on “Legislation” and then click on “Floor Votes.” Voting is listed by date, so one cannot click on a bill number and see how the vote went. The search is a two-step process: first find the bill number, then see when it was enacted. Once the date is known, the vote on the bill can be found. Even with this extra step, it is a great improvement.

Please contact your representative to let him or her know that you support this new policy and are pleased that it has been implemented.

## Consensus: Leagues Set Meetings on Financing Education

Before the League can take action, members must agree in broad terms on what they think about various aspects of a policy issue. At the LWVRI’s 2009 Biennial Convention, delegates adopted a study on how education in Rhode Island is financed. Specifically, “The LWVRI shall study the financing of elementary and secondary (K-12) education in Rhode Island to determine if it provides equality of opportunity for education through a system of taxation that is sufficient, equitable, flexible, and coordinated among the different levels of government.”

When the League undertakes what in League lingo is called “A Study,” the nature of the issue affects how it will be conducted. Through this process League members become educated on a given issue. Once the research is prepared, the technique most often used for reaching member agreement is consensus by group discussion. An essential element of consensus is that

*Consensus continued page 5*

## LWVRI Names New Lobbyist

Just as the *Voter* went to press, LWVRI President Joanne DeVoe announced that the LWVRI Board at its February meeting named Linda-Jean Briggs as League Lobbyist for the 2011 legislative session. A full profile of Linda-Jean will appear in the next *Voter*.

## *Helps us Welcome our new Governor at League Day at the State House*

by Joanne DeVoe

Hello, LWVRI Members,

**H**appy New Year! We start off the year by announcing that Governor Lincoln Chafee will speak to us at the annual League Day at the State House celebration on Wednesday, March 30, 4:00 P.M.. Sign up to join us and the Governor, and stay for dinner. (See the notice on page 7.)

Greta Abbott, who has served as the lobbyist for the League for the past fourteen years, is leaving that position. The Board of Directors of the LWVRI appointed a committee, which is conducting a search for a lobbyist for the 2011 legislative session. The LWVRI lobbyist position is part-time and involves researching bills and identifying those that relate to issues that the Advocacy Committee has determined are consistent with League consensus positions and have priority for action. Then, in consultation with LWVRI Vice President Derry Riding, who is also chairperson of the LWVRI Advocacy Committee, the lobbyist writes testimony for hearings, and meets with individual legislators to promote League consensus positions. This year, we plan to have the lobbyist draft Action Alerts that we will send to you. When you receive the Alert it's time for you to act and contact your legislators about important pending bills. (If you are not already receiving Action Alerts from the League, it's because we don't have your e-mail. Please send your e-mail to Joan Arnold [vjarnold@cox.net], and she will update your record.) Interviewing for the position began the week of January 24, and we hope to introduce everyone to our new lobbyist at League Day at the State House.

The Education Committee is finishing up its work on its "Study of Financing Public Education in Rhode Island." The research has been published on the LWVRI Web site and is available in hard copies from the local League presidents. Information meetings have been scheduled, and shortly after them, consensus meetings will be held by the local Leagues to

discuss and decide on responses to consensus questions. A full schedule appears on page 5

As I write this, Americans are saddened by the shooting that occurred at a Congressional Representative's meeting outside of a shopping center in Arizona. We are pondering anew the importance of civil discourse to the democratic process. We League members need to remember that fostering an atmosphere of calmness and respect is vital to the exchange of views that must take place in a democracy, especially when we disagree with one another. We need to work hard to make our League meetings places where people want to come to discuss and make decisions about how to live together.

Finally, on behalf of the League, I would like to thank Greta Abbott for her many years of service. The position of League lobbyist is a part-time one, but over the years Greta has given it her full-time attention. In my dealings with RI officials and other advocacy groups in the state, whenever I mentioned that I was from the League, they would respond, "Oh, I know Greta." Greta has been the League's face at the State House, and over the years she has earned the respect of all for her tenacity and understanding of the issues. She has served democracy well.

Thank you, Greta.

Regards,  
Joanne

## **Veteran RI Educator Co-chairs Civic Education Awards Committee**

**T**he League of Women Voters of South Kingston/Narragansett is pleased to announce the addition of Christine Davidson as the new co-chair of the Susan B. Wilson Civic Education Merit Award Committee. Christine will work with the committee's long-standing chairperson, Karen Asher. Christine brings to the committee an extensive career in public education. For fifteen years she was an elementary teacher and assistant principal in Central Falls. She spent the next seventeen years in administration as an elementary school principal in various communities throughout Rhode Island, ending her career in Westerly where she now resides. In Westerly, Christine volunteers at the St. Vincent de Paul Society, The Supper Table, and the Immaculate Church food pantry.

The Wilson Award has been accepting applications and will do so until April 29, 2011. To apply and to get more information about the award, please visit <http://www.lwvri.org/wilsonaward.htm>. A ceremony will be held for awards recipients on Tuesday, June 14, 2011, at 4:30 P.M., in the Governor's Reception Room at The Rhode Island State House.

### **The League of Women Voters of Rhode Island**

172 Taunton Ave., Suite 8, East Providence, RI 02914

[www.LWVRI.org](http://www.LWVRI.org) 401-434-6440

Joanne DeVoe, President

Patty MacLeish, *Voter* Editor Jane Marchi, Copy Reader

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization that encourages the informed and active participation of citizens in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy.

Membership in the League is open to any citizen of the United States. Non-citizens may become associate members. Annual dues of \$45 include automatic membership in Local, State and National Leagues. Membership forms are available at [www.lwvri.org](http://www.lwvri.org) or call 401-434-6440. Please join us and help promote informed citizen involvement in government.

The Rhode Island *Voter* is published four times a year: August, October, January and April. Periodic postage paid at Providence, R.I. and additional mailing offices.

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# End of Year Lobbyist's Report

by Greta L. Abbott

This report contains my comments on noteworthy legislation during the 2010 session at the General Assembly. In all, the League weighed in on more than fifty bills during the year. A very few bills passed during the session, and all were not necessarily those the League favored.

Outstanding among the latter was the bill entitled "Contracting Standards for Renewable Energy," known as the Deepwater Wind Demonstration Project. The bill would allow the construction of eight wind turbines off the coast of Block Island as a demonstration project, but, in doing so, the bill circumvented the legislative process of requiring the prior approval of the Public Utilities Commission (PUC). The League did not have a position on the Project itself, but focused its opposition on one aspect of the bill, the bypassing of Rhode Island law that requires the approval of the PUC before the project goes forward. After many heated hearings and several amendments, the bill became law. Spearheaded by the Attorney General and many interest groups, court challenges ensued to stop the implementation of the law. The court challenges continue despite newly elected Attorney General Peter Kilmartin's lack of interest in further pursuing the issue.

Bills making the Coastal Resources Management Council conform to the Separation of Powers (SOP) requirements again failed to pass out of committee. After more than five years of testifying on SOP bills relating to the CRMC, both bills in 2010 were "Held for Further Study." The League supported both House and Senate bills, which were not perfect but quite acceptable.

Two bills in the House and one in the Senate relating to the elimination of the straight-party lever were heard in 2010. Despite heavy lobbying in support of these bills by the Coalition to Make Every Vote Count (of which the League is a member), no bills passed

One bill that the League has opposed for several years, and continues to remain in committee is voter identification. The bill would require a photo ID at the time of voting. The

League has opposed the bill on the basis of its selective enforcement as it violates the state's equal protection clause.

Of the six League-supported bills requiring online listing of legislators' voting records in real time none passed in 2010. However, early in 2011 leadership in both chambers decided to voluntarily post the votes online. As I prepare this report, only votes that were formally registered when the machines on the floor were "locked" will be recorded. Votes of latecomers who wish to be recorded will either not be included or the system will need revision. I have been told that votes taken in committees will soon be available online.

The League supported and the General Assembly passed legislation allowing candidates of viable emerging parties, such as the Moderate Party, to receive public matching campaign funds. Unfortunately, Governor Carcieri vetoed the bill, and the legislature did not override his veto. The reason given for his veto was the 2010 date of enforcement. The Governor felt that it would have penalized those candidates from "emerging parties" in 2010 who would not benefit from the measure.

Three important bills the League has supported for many years went nowhere in 2010: the Access to Public Records; the Judicial Selection of Magistrate, and the Fair Elections bill. The Access bill would require more openness in reporting on police records, particularly initial arrest records. The Judicial Selection bill would require that magistrates be appointed using the same process of merit selection, as pertains to all other judges in Rhode Island. Fair elections would allow voluntary public financing of general officers and legislative candidates for state government. These bills have been reported on in several prior years.

## Postscript

Readers, this is my last Legislative Report to you as I shall no longer be your lobbyist. I have enjoyed serving you for fourteen years, and hope that I have engendered a greater interest in the important legislative issues of Rhode Island.

Join Us! Become Part of Making Democracy Work

I want to help Democracy Work! Enclosed is \$45 for my membership in the LWVRI. I have enclosed a check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to the LWVRI. Or, join on line at [www.LWVRI.org](http://www.LWVRI.org)



Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I do not wish to join at this time, but I would like to make a donation to the LWVRI. I have enclosed a check in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to the LWVRI.

I do not wish to join at this time, but please add my name to your mailing list.

Please make checks payable to LWVRI  
and mail form to LWVRI, 172 Taunton Ave, Suite 8, E. Providence, RI 02914

# So, How Does This School Funding Formula Work?

by Representative Edith H. Ajello, Rhode Island House District 3

*After struggling with trying to understand the new Rhode Island education funding formula, I received this e-mail from Representative Edith H. Ajello. After reading her report, I began to think that I finally understood it. I asked her if we could reprint the article, and she agreed. I hope it clears up some questions for you as well.*

*Joanne DeVoe, President, LWVRI*

**M**athematical formulas answer questions. Plug in the variables, and the formula gives the answer. A state school funding formula should answer the question of how to distribute state aid to local school districts in a fair and reasonable way. The variables here are the amount of money needed and the local school district's ability to pay. The answer is what the state share should be for each district.

**Enrollment** is the number of students in the school district.

**Foundation cost** is the current per annum expenditure required to educate a typical student who comes to school ready to learn at grade level. The RI Department of Education has set the foundation cost as \$8,295.

**Weights in a formula** recognize the costs of additional resources for children who arrive unready to learn. The weight for additional resources for children living in poverty in RI's new formula is 0.4.

**Weighted enrollment** is the numerical adjustment to the actual enrollment number to provide additional resources for students who are not learning ready.

## Here's How It Works.

District A has 1,000 students. 500 hundred students are eligible for free or reduced price lunch.  $500 \times 0.4 = 200$ . District A's weighted enrollment is  $1000 + 200$  or 1200.

**Foundation need** is calculated by multiplying the foundation cost by the weighted enrollment.

For District A:  $\$8,295 \times 1,200 = \$9,954,000$ . According to the formula, District A needs \$9,954,000 to educate its 1000 students.

The formula gets much more complicated at this point to determine the state share of the calculated foundation need.

**Share ratio** in RI is a measure of relative tax capacity. A district's share ratio will be somewhere between zero (0) and one (1). The ratio compares the school district's median household income and property tax base to the same numbers for the state as a whole. Block Island, Jamestown, Little Compton, Narragansett, and Newport have an effective share ratio of zero (0). Barrington's share ratio is 26.8%; Providence's share ratio is 83.1%; Central Falls, at 94.8%, is highest.

We now have all of the variables, and here comes the quadratic mean to measure local tax capacity and the state

share.

The district's share ratio is squared and added to the square of the percentage of the district's children living in poverty. The sum of the two squares is divided by 2, averaged. The square root of that number is the state share. Got that?

District A has 50% of its students living in poverty and a share ratio of 66.6%.

Using the calculation outlined above, the state's share to District A would be .587 or 58.7% of \$9,954,000 or \$5,842,998.

## Watch how it works for District A with two more share ratios:

Share ratio of 0 yields state aid of 35.4% of \$9,954,000 or \$3,523,716

Share ratio of 26.8% yields state aid of 40% of \$9,954,000 or \$3,981,600

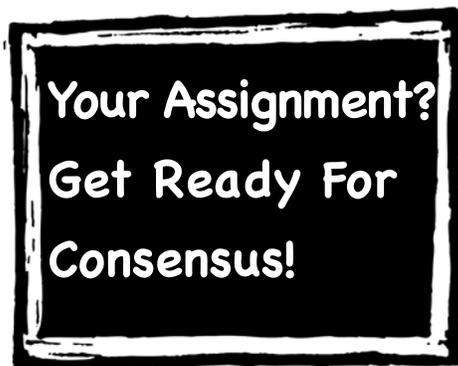
So that's the RI school funding formula.

I'd have preferred a formula that includes weights for English Language Learners and for children who require special education services.

I'd have preferred a formula that measured tax capacity more directly and transparently than this quadratic mean. The use of the percentage of students living in poverty in this quadratic mean guarantees a minimum state share for any district that has any students living in poverty, regardless of the comparative wealth of the local district tax base. Any minimum state share should have been held for a discussion that considered affordability for state and local tax payers as well as the desirability of a minimum share. No other state includes the number or percentage of students living in poverty in the measure of local tax capacity, or two places in a formula.

On balance, I think the glass is well more than half full. Last to enact a school funding formula in the 21st century, Rhode Island was the first state to legislatively enact a formula without adding enough money so that every district got at least a small increase in state aid. We couldn't afford such a formula on top of level funding, nor would that have been responsible. Our formula will shift funds from over-funded districts to under-funded districts. Getting that shift was the hard part. The next hard part will be maintaining the discipline necessary to stick to the formula.

Importantly, Providence is projected to receive \$30 million more per year at the end of the phase-in than it will receive this year.



## Preparing for Consensus

Would you like to participate in the Financing Education in Rhode Island consensus? We won't kid you and say, "It's easy," but it's not difficult and you will learn

much about this important topic.

To prepare for consensus, our first stop might be the article by Assemblyperson Edith Ajello on the facing page. Reading it will give you some good background on the vocabulary used when discussing education funding and a basic idea of the new Rhode Island funding formula. Next, head to the League Web site. Click on "Calling All Members: and that will take you to the Education Study Outline. It provides an introduction to the study and links to the articles prepared by the study committee. Don't have access to the Internet? Contact your local League president, who will arrange to get the materials to you. If you're a member at large, contact education study chair, Mickie Boneau at 946-9245.

To further prepare you for consensus, there will be a series of information meetings throughout the state. A study committee member will be present at each meeting to answer questions about the readings. Most Leagues will hold their consensus meetings about a week after the information meeting. You do not have to attend the information meeting in your area; all are open to the public. The consensus meetings, however, are open only to League members.

Must you read all the materials in order to participate? No, not at all. It would be helpful to read the articles that will help you understand the history of school financing, tax

policy and its effects on communities, and the basics of the new funding formula.

The more you know about the topic, the more you will be able to participate in the consensus discussion.

Mark your calendar now and plan to attend your consensus meeting.

### Information Meetings:

**LWVRI: Saturday, February 26, 10:30 A.M. - 12:30 p.m.**  
William H. Hall Library, 1825 Broad St. Cranston.  
Contact Mickie Boneau, 946-9245.

**LWV Newport County: Tuesday, March 1, 5:00 - 7:00 p.m.**  
in the Rotary Room at the Newport Public Library,  
300 Spring St. Contact Patty MacLeish, 864-7542.

### Consensus Meetings:

**LWV Providence: Monday, February 28, 7:30 P.M.** at the home of Joan Retsinas, 344 Taber Ave., Providence, 272-0422 First hour, information meeting, second hour, consensus meeting.

**LWV West Bay: Tuesday, March 1, 11 A.M.,** at the home of Marie Hennedy, 56 Marion St., E. Greenwich.  
Contact Marie Hennedy, 884-3176.

**LWV Bristol & Members at Large: Thursday, March 3, 7:30 P.M.,** at the home of Susan Escherich, 133 Terrace Ave., Riverside. Contact: Susan 433-4896. Short information meeting followed by consensus meeting.

**LWV Newport: Monday, March 7, 5 to 7 P.M.,** at the home of Susan Wells, 229 Gibbs Ave., Newport. Contact Susan Wells, 846-9537.

**LWV So. Kingston/Narragansett: Monday, March 7 7-9 P.M.** at Kingston Free Library, 2605 Kingstown Rd., Kingston, Contact Pam Ancheta, 284-0264.

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### Consensus continued from page 1

members have an opportunity to become informed before being asked to make decisions on the issue under consideration.

Since the study began almost two years ago, the financing education committee has been collecting information on the many aspects of the topic—examining the facts and key pro/con points. The committee is now ready to move onto the next phase. The information that has been gathered is now posted on the LWVRI Web site. Members of the education study committee have scheduled information meetings throughout the state to answer questions and describe the nuances of the topic.

League members who wish to participate in consensus are encouraged to attend an information meeting before participating in consensus. At the consensus meeting, League members will answer a series of questions on the topic. Consensus is not a simple majority, nor is it unanimity; rather it is the overall sense of the group as expressed through the exchange of ideas and opinions. The information meetings are open to all, but

only League members may participate in a consensus meeting. At the end of the meeting, a report is filed with the study committee, and a position is formulated based on the consensus meetings of the local Leagues. Each local board's responsibility is to report its members' areas of agreement and its level of member participation to the study committee.

The study committee will prepare a report and send it to the LWVRI board, who will determine whether consensus has been achieved. Through an interpretive process, the board first evaluates the reports of member views and then determines the broad areas of agreement and disagreement that emerge. The board keeps in mind the importance of wording the position in terms broad enough to enable the League to initiate, support or oppose a variety of specific legislative and executive proposals over a period of time.

It's a very interesting and educational process, but most important, with a position the League can take action.

# Thank You to Our Donors

The League of Women Voters of Rhode Island cannot survive without the support of its members and friends. This year, our fund-raising letter brought in \$2,205.00 from 34 members—representing every League in the state—and from friends of the League. These funds will be used to keep the State office running and to pay our lobbyist. The list includes gifts received as of February 2, 2011. There's still time to give! Send your contribution to LWVRI, 172 Taunton Ave., Suite 8, East Providence, RI 02914. If you feel that your name should be listed here and it is not, please contact our treasurer, Jane Koster at 423-1465.

Pam Ancheta, South Kingstown

Joan Arnold, Middletown

Edith Borden, Little Compton

Carol Brotman, Lincoln

Nancy Burroughs, Peace Dale

Julia Califano, Barrington

Mary Chace, Riverside

Kim Clark, Warren

Hollie Courage, Providence

Trudy Coxe and James Gaffney, Cranston

Rosemary Day, Middletown

Joanne DeVoe, Warren

Rosemary Forbes-Woodside, Jamestown

Helen Friend, East Greenwich

Mary Alyce Gasbarro, Barrington

Mary Hazeltine, Providence

Lillian Hempel, East Greenwich

Linda and Tom Hines, Narragansett

Linda and Bill Jenkins, Tiverton

Jill Kassis, Portsmouth

Jane and Dick Koster, Jamestown

Marion Lachlan, Barrington

Cornelia Lanou, Providence

Patty MacLeish, Newport

Nancy Nadeau, Lincoln

Mary Nugent, Barrington

Jane Rankin, East Greenwich

Derwent Riding, Bristol

GD Rizy, Middletown

Jane Sherman, Providence

Roberta Thompson, Barrington

Norman Turrill, Providence

Susan Wells, Newport

Jane Willoughby, East Greenwich

Ellen Winsor, Jamestown

Edith Ziegler, Charlestown

## The League and Nonpartisanship

by Susan Gilbert, Newsletter Editor and 40-year League member

*The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan organization, but does lobby for and against legislation. Non-partisanship is a main tenet of the League and it gives the League credibility when it hosts candidates' events. Each year the LWVRI reviews its non-partisan policy ensure that it is meeting the needs of the League and maintains the public's view of the League as non-partisan. It is difficult to explain how we can be both non-partisan and politically active, but this article, originally published in the Voter for the LWV of Berrien and Cass Counties, Michigan, explains it well.*

It is not uncommon for outsiders, and even some members, to question how the League can be nonpartisan yet advocate on positions that, in the slice of time that is now, appear to be partisan. In the highly partisan climate that has developed in recent years, the League is one of the very few political organizations that is not in either the liberal/Democratic camp or the conservative/Republican camp. And we have members of all political persuasions and encourage them to get involved in politics. So members may be partisan but the organization is not. All this is hard for many to wrap their minds around.

The League is nonpartisan in that we do not endorse or support any political party or candidate for office. We don't rate legislators, we don't track their votes and we don't threaten them if they don't vote our way. Voter service is one of our main missions and we publish nonpartisan voter guides and hold candidate forums to help voters educate themselves beyond TV ads.

Education is an important League function, and we try in our meetings and in this newsletter to inform our attend-

ees/readers and stimulate them to think about issues in our world.

However, the League is also an advocacy group, and we have positions on issues that have been developed over the years since our founding in 1920 and are the result of study and consensus of the local Leagues nationwide. These positions are updated from time to time, but are basically consistent. The positions and platforms of the political parties, on the other hand, do change and at times they resemble our League position, or not. But the League doesn't change or drop its positions because they are currently those of one party or the other. And we do speak out!

An example is health care. The League has a position on comprehensive health care for all Americans. President Truman liked that idea too and President Eisenhower delivered a special message to Congress on January 31, 1955 recommending a comprehensive health program for Americans. (Read it [www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=10399](http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=10399).) Lyndon Johnson got Medicare passed and that took the pressure off for awhile. But President Nixon encouraged HMOs as a way to rein in costs and provide health care for more people. Then President Reagan came along and decided the free market was the best way to manage health care, and the Republicans have basically supported this idea since. But clearly both parties have been on both sides of the issue.

The key is not to confuse politics with position advocacy.

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*Susan Gilbert, a forty-year League member, is communications coordinator for the LWV of Berrien and Cass Counties/Michigan.*

# League Day at the State House with Governor Lincoln Chafee on March 30. Reserve Today!

Register Today—Seating is limited, so please register early. Please RSVP by March 21. Bring a guest! Cost: \$30; Students: \$20. Please send this form with payment if you want to attend the dinner. The menu includes a turkey dinner with all the fixings—dressing, gravy, whipped potatoes, butternut squash, green bean casserole, cranberry sauce, rolls, and white chocolate bread pudding.

**THERE IS NO CHARGE FOR THE PROGRAM, BUT YOU MUST SIGN UP TO ATTEND.**

\_\_\_ YES! I will join you for League Day at the State House with Gov. Chafee and for dinner

Number attending \_\_\_ @ \$30 per person; Students \$20 each

\_\_\_ YES! I will be attending the talk, but not dinner. I have enclosed a donation to the League of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ I cannot attend, but I have enclosed a donation to the League of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed please find my check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ made out to the LWVRI.

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to: LWVRI and mail to Jane Koster, LWVRI Treasurer, 449 West Reach Dr., Jamestown, RI 02835.**

Questions? Call Patty MacLeish at 401-846-7542.

## League Day continued from page 1

but everyone must register as seating is limited. The event begins at 4:00 P.M. with registration. The Governor is scheduled to speak at 5. Following his talk there will a turkey dinner at the State House. (Details, including dinner menu and reservation form are found on page 7.)

Governor Chafee was elected in November 2010 as an Independent. As a Republican, Governor Chafee had served as senator from Rhode Island from 1999-2006. He was appointed to the U.S. Senate following the death of his father, Senator John Chafee, and ran successfully for the seat in 2000. When he ran as a Republican for reelection in 2006, however, he was defeated by Senator Sheldon Whitehouse. Following that election, he left the Republican Party and was named a distinguished fellow at Brown University's Watson Institute. In 2008 he published *Against the Tide: How a Compliant Congress Empowered a Reckless President*, which described his time in the Senate. In it he wrote presciently, "If one or both parties do not start heeding the center, the voters will make a tectonic shift in politics on their own. They will leave their most partisan fellow citizens behind, in ever-shrinking tents of red and blue."

Please join us to meet with League members from around Rhode Island and to hear Governor Chafee.

## Help Wanted: Citizenship Mentors

Several students in the literacy classes at Rochambeau Library on Hope Street in Providence will be applying for citizenship this winter. Some of those students need intensive interview practice.

**Needed:** Volunteers to help those students one-on-one, allowing the literacy teacher to work with the rest of the class on more basic level skills.

**Training:** The literacy teacher would conduct a practice interview, using the interview script that students must master.

**Times/dates:** Wednesdays from 12:00 noon-2:30 P.M. at Rochambeau Library.

**Contact:** Rosanne Bootz, West Bay LWV, 58 Sunset Drive, East Greenwich, RI 02818; 401-885-5713 or rbootz@aol.com.

A few Leaguers are helping, but the class needs more helpers.

The League of Women Voters of RI  
172 Taunton Ave., Suite 8,  
East Providence, RI 02914

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## Coming Up—League Events

### February 24

*LWVRI Book Group.* Mrs. Adams in Winter: A Journey in the Last Days of Napoleon by Michael O'Brien. Meeting at the Gasbarro residence in Barrington at 1 p.m. Call 816-0331 for information.

### February 26

*LWVRI Education Finance Information Meeting,* 10:30 a.m. -12:30 p.m. William H. Hall Library, 1825 Broad St. Cranston. Contact Mickie Boneau, 946-9245.

### February 28

*Education Finance Consensus Meeting, LWV Providence,* 7:30 p.m. at the home of Joan Retsinas, 344 Taber Ave., Providence, 272-0422 First hour, information meeting, second hour, consensus meeting.

### March 1

*Education Finance Consensus Meeting, LWV West Bay.* 11 a.m., 56 Marion St., E. Greenwich, contact Marie Henedy, 884-3176.

### March 1

*Education Finance Information Meetings LWV Newport County,* 5:00 – 7:00 p.m. in the Rotary Room at the Newport Public Library, 300 Spring Street. Contact Patty MacLeish, 864-7542.

### March 3

*Education Finance Consensus Meeting LWV Bristol & Members at Large,* 7 p.m., at the home of Susan Escherich, 133 Terrace Ave., Riverside, 433-4896, short information meeting followed by consensus meeting.

### March 7

*Education Finance Consensus Meeting LWV Newport.* 7 to 9 p.m., at the home of Susan Wells, 229 Gibbs Ave., Newport. Contact Susan Wells, 846-9537.

### March 7

*Education Finance Consensus Meeting LWV So. Kingston/Narragansett.* 7-9 p.m. at Kingston Free Library, 2605 Kingstown Rd., Kingston. Contact Pam Ancheta, 284-0264.

### March 14

*LWVRI Board Meeting at LWVRI office* 10 A.M. Contact Joanne DeVoe, 247-3004.

### March 24

*LWVRI Book Group.* The Lacuna by Barbara Kingsolver. Meeting at the Gasbarro residence in Barrington at 1 p.m. Call 816-0331 for information.

### March 30

*League Day at the State House with Governor Lincoln Chafee.* Turn to page 7 for reservation form or go to [www.lwvri.org](http://www.lwvri.org).

### June 4

*LWVRI Biennial Convention.* Butler Hospital, Providence. Contact Joanne DeVoe, 247-3004.