

The Rhode Island Voter

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



March 2012

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League Day at the State House 2012

Stephanie Chafee to Speak to League on Hunger in RI

The League of Women Voters of Rhode Island will hold its annual League Day at the State House on April 12 from 3:30-6:30 at the Governor's Reception Room at the State House. Featured speaker at the event will be Rhode Island's First Lady Stephanie Chafee, who will discuss hunger in Rhode Island.



Stephanie Chafee

League Day at the State House has been redesigned this year to allow more time for members to meet one another, to tour the State House, and to hear a report from the LWVRI's Advo-

cacy Committee. Refreshments, including hors d'oeuvres, sweets, and beverages, will be available from the opening of the program. We will organize tours of the State House and visits to the legislative sessions. There will be opportu-

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Funding our schools and feeding our children—What's the connection?

Turn to page 6 to learn more about the "School-Food Connection: How greater participation in food programs in a community can increase financial support to schools."

Drawing Lines in Rhode Island

Redistricting in Rhode Island, 2011

by Susan Escherich, Co-Chair, Redistricting Subcommittee

On December 22, 2011, Rhode Island's Reapportionment Commission voted to send Senate Proposal E, as amended, House Proposal D, as amended, and Congressional Proposal F as amended to the Legislature. (These three proposals can be seen at reredistricting.com, although they are very difficult to read as the maps are oversize and the print small.)

The goal of dividing the state into two congressional districts with equal population was achieved. To accomplish this it would have been necessary to shift only 7,263 people from one district to the other, but in fact, 125,276 people were shifted between the two districts, purportedly at Representative David Cicilline's (D-Congressional District 1) request. This shift resulted in removing the Republican-dominated area of Burrillville, which voted Republican in 2010, from Cicilline's district, and replacing the numbers needed by expanding District 1 into areas of South Providence that may be seen as more friendly toward Democratic Party candidates.

Another of the goals of the commission was to keep the difference between populations in state legislature districts to plus or minus 2.5 percent. This goal was met, but with the creation of some very awkward districts, some of which combine areas with very dissimilar needs.

The third goal of the redistricting process was to create

districts in which minority populations would have a chance to elect someone from their group to represent them. The redistricting commission's consultant, Kimball Brace of Election Data Services, ended up creating one more Senate district in which the majority or the population are members of a single minority, for a total of seven so-called "majority minority" districts, and maintaining the same number of House districts, for a total of eleven. Because Rhode Island's Hispanic citizens are concentrated in a number of areas, the consultant had hoped to create as many as five voting districts where Hispanics would form a majority or near majority in the district, thereby giving them a better chance to elect an Hispanic candidate. The Black population of Rhode Island is scattered, and the best the consultant could offer was one district with a near majority of Blacks. The maps, however, were voted on even though information on voting patterns in minority populations had not been submitted to the commissioners.

The legislature had not passed legislation to assign prisoners at the Adult Corrections Institution to the voting areas where they had last resided. As a result, the prisoners were assigned to the districts where the prison is located—distorting the size of the population in those districts and misrepresenting

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We Start 2012 with Something for Everyone

by *Derry Riding LWVRI President's Report*

A big thank-you to those who have responded to our annual appeal! Your donations are critical to the work of the League in lobbying and carrying forward our shared League vision. Your moral and financial support is vital to the continuation of the League. Reading this issue of *Voter* you will see evidence of that vision, but that work can only go on with your help. If you know of others who might support the League, please contact any of us. If you haven't responded so far, it's not too late: we still welcome all donations.

There are a number of areas where the League—your League—could use help. Look over this *Voter*, and see how you can be more involved in League. If you are interested in following legislation, contact advocacy chair Susan Escherich. If voting and voters service is your thing, then this is your season. Marie Henneidy has begun work on the upcoming candidates forums and Carolin Goldman is heading a committee to gather information on Rhode Island's new Voter ID law. If you have an idea for a fund (or fun) raiser, please contact me—we would love your help.

The legislative rush is on and the bills are being introduced in great numbers. After several years of inactivity, the Choice Coalition is back in action. LWVRI has reaffirmed our membership in the Coalition and several members are trying to attend the meetings at Planned Parenthood. If you are interested in volunteering for the Choice issues, please contact Susan Escherich.

Redistricting maps have been approved based on the 2010 census and the work of the Legislative commission. Many League members plunged right in to help us be a presence at twenty of the twenty-one hearings, which was appreciated by the commission members, commission staff, legislative staff, and, we hope, our members and the citizens of Rhode Island. Thank you to those who braved bad weather (in the fall – not winter) Local redistricting is still being completed, so it may not be too late to watch the process.

It isn't clear yet what will become the focus in the leg-

islature for bills that the League is watching. Obviously, the budget is foremost on everyone's mind. Many legislators will also be thinking forward to the fall elections as they take votes on issues, so something unexpected might come to the forefront. Last year, efforts to update the Access to Open Records were not successful, so those bills are on the plate this year for the League and others to work on, and we will be there!! The legislative website pages are still being improved, but more still needs to be done. So, Open Government efforts with a Coalition with Common Cause and others is still important. There is also a bill to be introduced for a Rhode Island response to the Citizens United Supreme Court case decision. There has been a press release, but the bill hasn't surfaced on the legislative listings to date. We have interviewed for our lobbyist and an announcement will be forthcoming

In closing, the League isn't all about working and local meetings: join us for League Day at the Statehouse, see information elsewhere in the newsletter. I'll be there and look forward to seeing many of you!

LWVRI Ed Fund at Work Sophia Academy

Since 2001, Sophia Academy, a non-denominational private middle school for girls, has been giving girls, grades 5 through 8, a rich, nurturing education. With a student-teacher ratio of 15:1, strong mentoring, and a curriculum focused on empowering girls to see themselves as leaders, the school has watched its graduates, most of whom are members of a minority and all of whom are from low-income families, go on to high school, with zero percent dropping out.

Over the past six years, the LWVRI Education /foundation has supported Sophia Academy through a variety of grants. In April, the eighth-graders from Sophia Academy will be going to Washington, DC, to see their government in action. As part of the Sister Mary Reilly Justice and Gender Seminar, the girls will be studying economic justice, focusing internationally on human trafficking and sweatshops, domestically on high school dropout rates and teen pregnancy. Ed Fund Board members were recent guests at the Academy's annual Founders' Day Tea.

Learn more about the many projects funded by the LWVRI Education Funds at www.LWVRI.org

The League of Women Voters of Rhode Island

172 Taunton Ave., Suite 8, East Providence, RI 02914
www.LWVRI.org 401-434-6440

Derwent Riding, 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; join at www.LWVRI.org or call 401-434-6440 and help promote informed citizen involvement in government.

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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 \$2,015 from 32 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 25, 2012. 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.

Kathy Abass, Newport
Vincent Arnold, Middletown
Julia Califano, Barrington
Hollie Courage, Providence
Trudy Coxe and James
Gaffney, Cranston

Rosemary Day, Middletown
Joanne DeVoe and Tom Padua, Warren
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Nancy Nadeau, Lincoln
Pearl Nathan, Providence
Derwent Riding, Bristol
Jane Sherman, Providence
Carolyn Stouffer, East Greenwich
Roberta Thompson, Barrington
Susan and Roger Wells, Newport

Be Part of the Action This Fall!

2012 LWVRI Voter Service Planning Underway

by Marie Hennedy

ABC6-TV and Rhode Island Public Radio are ready to co-sponsor with LWVRI this fall a series of live-broadcast candidate forums, featuring the races for U.S. Senate and both Congressional Districts. Marie Hennedy, Jane Koster, Joan Retsinas, and Pam Ancheta have initiated negotiations regarding scheduling, financing, formats, sites, and timelines.

Now is the time for all good people to come to the aid of our League! Your help is needed. The forums will be held on three nights in the week prior to the November 6 election tentatively scheduled for Thursday, October 25 (Congress

District 2), Tuesday, October 30 (U.S. Senate), and Thursday, November 1 (Congress District 1). The venue will probably be the Rhode Island Foundation's auditorium at One Union Station in Providence. Would you like to help greet the folks who attend our telecasts? Or, perhaps you'd enjoy escorting a candidate to a pre-debate meeting room to prepare for a briefing before the big event. Our media panelists will also need to be met and escorted to a conference room where they can decide the content and order of the evening. And should pre-primary debates be called for, we'll need volunteers to help the week before that September 15 election.

So, if being there and making democracy work appeals to any and all would-be and inveterate political junkies out there, do line up your assignment by calling or e-mailing me at 884-3976 or mariehennedy@verizon.net.

Will You Step Up? It's Time for Board Nominations

It's almost spring, and time for nominations to the LWVRI Board of Directors for 2012-2014. Those nominated will be voted on at the LWVRI Council meeting on June 16, 2012. Those whose terms are expiring are: Jane Rankin, Second Vice President; Jane Koster, Treasurer; and Directors Pam Ancheta, Hollie Courage, and Caroline Stouffer. If YOU would like to be on the board, or if you can suggest someone who you think should be on the board contact the nominations committee—Joanne DeVoe, Jane Rankin and Susan Wells. Please be in touch, we want to hear from you. Contact Joanne, joanned@qis.net, or 247-3004.

Joanne DeVoe

Award to Honor Joan Arnold

The League of Women Voters of Newport County announces the establishment of the Joan C. Arnold Civic Participation Award. Joan C. Arnold was a long-time member of the League and served in many other organizations in the community. This award will honor those who exhibit the same persistence as Joan in bringing relief to those in need or improving the quality of life in Newport County. The deadline for applications is April 1 and the award will be announced on May 1. The application is available at www.LWVRI.org.

that of the prisoners' home districts.

The first month of hearings was taken up by the commission meeting in each of Rhode Island's counties to hear people's concerns. Since there were no proposals to react to, there was very little public attendance at these first meetings. After maps were made public, the commission held meetings again in the various counties. Other than state senators and representatives affected and representatives of the Congressmen's offices, very few of the public spoke. Common Cause and the League of Women Voters were the most regular attendees and speakers at the county meetings. The Urban League and the ACLU spoke at meetings in Providence. Consistent themes among these good government groups were the need to have data before voting, the importance of creating as many minority majority districts as possible, the importance of keeping neighborhoods and towns together and of not creating small voting districts that are costly for municipalities to administer.

After the vote, it appeared that partisanship had triumphed once again, which was hardly surprising considering the makeup of the commission. Of its eighteen members, the Legislative majority leaders each appointed four members of their party and three members of the public, some of whom were former legislators or donors to their party. The minority leaders were able to appoint four members to the commission. In any event, very few of the commissioners appeared to pay attention to the data handed them by the consultant at the hearings, and few, other than public member and former representative Ray Rickman, asked questions. He politely stressed again and again the need for majority minority voting districts. Another frequent questioner was Rep. Joseph A. Trillo of Warwick, who was greatly concerned about protecting his base of voters. The consultant, at one point, invited a lawyer to address the group on what instances of partisan redistricting had provoked lawsuits in the past. One example was Tom DeLay's egregious efforts in Texas. While several meetings had been billed as "working meetings" at the State House, there was, in fact little discussion during them. Even though the commission was subject to

Rhode Island's Open Meetings and Open Records Acts, votes were taken on material that had just been given to the commissioners at the meeting, without any time for them to study either the maps or their effects. This gave the impression that they were not, in fact, making the decisions themselves.

Rhode Island will end up paying Election Data Services \$629,420 to run the redistricting process again this decade. The state could have asked the U.S. Census Bureau for free TIGER files. TIGER is the acronym for Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing. Software is available that can merge Census demographics with the TIGER files to analyze the data and create maps. Forty-seven states did ask for and receive the TIGER files, and if Rhode Island had done so, it might have been able to complete the job without hiring a consultant. Also, starting the process early in 2011 would have provided time to get the data needed for complete analysis before the commission voted on the maps.

The LWVRI will be working with Common Cause and other interested good government groups to support an independent, non-partisan commission with broad-based community, civic, and minority representation as the preferred redistricting body in 2021. One change that has been suggested is to begin the process earlier in the year, so that the pressure of time doesn't preclude reasoned decisions. This year's process took only ten weeks.

After the first round of public hearings, the League also testified to the commission requesting that no material be voted on that had not been distributed to commission members and to the public at least 48 hours in advance. The Open Meetings Act requires that decisions should be discussed and voted on in public. We hope a non-partisan coalition can come closer to the goal of representing the interests of citizens rather than protecting incumbents the next time around. Finally, to save money in this financially beleaguered state, other methods for the preparation of maps in a public, transparent fashion should be investigated.

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



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.

Tell us your interest: OBSERVER CORPS GOVERNMENT PRIVATIZATION

ADVOCACY EDUCATION VOTER ID VOTERS SERVICE MEMBERSHIP RI SCHOOL FUNDING FORMULA

Join on line or send a check payable to LWVRI and mail form to LWVRI, 172 Taunton Ave, Suite 8, E. Providence, RI 02914.

Voter ID—Ending Fraud or Voter Suppression?

by Carolin Goldman, LWV West Bay and Chair, LWVRI Voter ID Committee

During last year's legislative session, the State of Rhode Island enacted Voter ID legislation. Beginning with the April 24 primary elections, Rhode Island voters will be required to show identification in order to vote. The types of identification that will be acceptable at the polls will be narrowed over the next few years until everyone will be required to have a photo ID.

The League of Women Voters is opposed to Voter ID laws. The League believes that democracy only works as well as its elections processes and that right now voting rights are under attack. Leagues throughout the nation are fighting back against restrictive voter ID laws and voter registration systems and shorter early voting periods. The League believes all eligible voters should have an equal ability to vote.

At its last board meeting, the LWVRI established a committee to gather information to determine the effect of Rhode Island's new Voter ID law. Our effort at this point will be focused on understanding how the law operates, how much it costs taxpayers, how other aspects of the law will affect voting, and the amount of fraud adjudicated. Copies of the regulations are available on the Secretary of State's Website. Recent articles in the *Providence Journal* have also covered the issue (<http://news.providencejournal.com/breaking-news/2012/02/ri-elections-bo-3.html>). The League's national Website (www.lwv.org) also includes more information in general about voter identification and the move toward voter suppression.

Sens. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.), Richard Durbin (D-Ill.) and Bill Nelson (D-Fla.) recently sent a letter asking the non-partisan Government Accounting Office of Congress for the review of new laws in at least fourteen states. The Senators requested the study because they felt it was needed "to ensure that all citizens have the opportunity to exercise their constitutional right to vote and are not unreasonably hindered or burdened in that process."

Senator Sanders's Web site noted further that "Some of the new restrictions are tantamount to poll taxes. New state identification laws, by one estimate, will have a direct impact on 21 million American citizens who do not have a government-issued photo ID. The majority of those people are young would-be voters, the elderly, African Americans, Hispanics, and those earning \$35,000 per year or less." In the letter the senators also asked the GAO to examine data

on voter fraud and any prosecutions or convictions for voter impersonation, the main reason given for the new laws.

I am interested in hearing from any Leaguer who is interested in this issue or who has questions about it. Our focus at this point will be collecting data so that we will be well armed with facts when there is an opportunity to change the new law.

I can be reached by my e-mail (green2912@aol.com) or by phone (884-7875).

League to DOJ: Act Forcefully

On December 13, 2011, Elisabeth MacNamara, President, LWVUS, issued a statement following a speech delivered by Attorney General Eric Holder in Austin, Texas, at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library. The *New York Times* reported: "Declaring in a speech that protecting ballot access for all eligible voters 'must be viewed not only as a legal issue but as a moral imperative,' Mr. Holder urged Americans to 'call on our political parties to resist the temptation to suppress certain votes in the hope of attaining electoral success and, instead, achieve success by appealing to more voters.'"

MacNamara responded, "We are so pleased that Attorney General Holder appeared before the American voters tonight in the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library & Museum to tackle head-on the growing momentum behind anti-voter laws. It was President Johnson who signed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 into law, and at the time said: 'This act flows from a clear and simple wrong. Its only purpose is to right that wrong. Millions of Americans are denied the right to vote because of their color. This law will ensure them the right to vote. The wrong is one which no American, in his heart, can justify. The right is one which no American, true to our principles, can deny.'"

"These anti-voter laws are passing state legislatures at an alarming rate. They are cloaked as an attempt to bring integrity to our elections systems yet many are now seeing them for what they really are: an assault on voters and one of the greatest self-inflicted threats to our democracy in our lifetimes. The new laws threaten to silence the voices of those least heard and rarely listened to in this country – the poor, the elderly, racial and ethnic minorities, the young and persons with disabilities.

"While we applaud Mr. Holder's speech, we are disappointed in the Department of Justice's record on voting rights enforcement. The League of Women Voters calls on the DOJ to act more forcefully and without delay to ensure fair elections in 2012."

To learn more about the flood of new voter ID legislation, visit the League Website (www.lwv.org) and search "ALEC" (the American Legislative Exchange Council) or "Voter Protection."

**"...democracy
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The School-Food Connection

How greater participation in food programs in a community can increase financial support to schools.

The League of Women Voters social policy position strives to secure equal rights and equal opportunity for all and to promote social and economic justice and the health and safety of all Americans. The League of Women Voters supports programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families. In addition, the League supports income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter. The League further supports policies and programs that promote the wellbeing, development and safety of all children.

This concern for promoting the well being of children in our community, as it happens, dovetails nicely with the state's new school funding formula. One of the factors in the formula that Rhode Island will use in determining the state share of support to a district is the poverty level of the community. In addition, school districts will be given additional support for children who live in poverty. The mechanism for determining the number of children in poverty is qualification of students for the federal Free and Reduced Price Lunch (FRPL).

This is the school funding-food connection.

The LWVRI Financing Education Advocacy Committee hopes that this workshop will serve as a template for future workshops throughout the state. The workshop, which is open to the public, is from 5:30 to 7:00 P.M. March 20 in the Rotary Room of the Newport Public Library. It is open to the public and will be of interest to all citizens of Newport County.

Information on Rhode Island's funding formula is available at RIDE's Web site (<http://www.ride.ri.gov/Finance/Funding/FundingFormula/>).

If you have questions about the meeting, contact Susan Wells (swells229@yahoo.com or 846-9537).

Over the next year or so, the League is hoping to reach out to communities and explain how enrolling children in the FRPL can help increase the amount of state aid to a school district while reducing the number of hungry children in the schools. It's truly a win-win for communities. The amount of state aid to schools will increase and the number of children receiving FRPL will grow.

LWVUS Joins Coalition Opposing Keystone XL Pipeline

In January, following President Barack Obama's decision to deny the Keyston XL Pipeline a permit, LWVUS President Elisabeth MacNamara issued a statement supporting his action. "Today's step by the Obama Administration to deny the Keystone XL Pipeline was the right decision... The pipeline was just too big a risk to allow it to go forward," she said. "Putting the Keystone XL pipeline over the Ogallala Aquifer, which provides agricultural and drinking water to so many in the Plains states, was an incredibly bad idea. The majority of any jobs created would be short term and short lived. The damage to such an important water supply would last for centuries.

MacNamara added that approval of the pipeline would be inconsistent with meaningful action on climate change."

Congress is now considering legislation that would preempt America's environmental laws to approve a pipeline for which a route does not exist. Pending legislation would effectively turn Congress into a permitting authority, bypassing a robust environmental and safety review and approving a project for which a route has not yet even been determined. The League believes that with such a precedent the next Congress could approve a project in any state while preempting the health, environmental, and safety laws that protect your citizens and your state's farmlands. The League has written to the Senate urging all members to oppose any and all attempts to pass legislation that would short circuit the laws that balance development with protecting our country for future generations. Further, the League feels that Congress should not be in the business of short-circuiting environmental and safety reviews to permit the individual pet projects of big oil.

The Reuters News service reported on February 27 that TransCanada Corp, a Canadian company, has decided to proceed with part of a U.S. pipeline — the southern leg from Oklahoma to Texas. The company will still need permitting to begin that construction.

Tar sands oil is the most carbon-intensive source of oil on the planet — the production process alone generates three times as much global warming pollution as conventional crude oil. Developing tar sands is also destroying important forest lands that act as a carbon reservoir, further contributing to climate change. The Environmental Protection Agency has estimated that the Keystone XL tar sands pipeline would contribute an additional 27 million metric tons of CO₂ annually — or the same amount of global warming pollution created by adding 4.8 million vehicles to the road.

Moreover, the pipeline would do little for U.S. energy security. Its main purpose is to make this oil available for export. Keystone XL would divert Canadian oil from refineries in the Midwest to the Gulf Coast. These refineries are in Foreign Trade Zones where oil may be exported to international buyers without paying U.S. taxes.

The facts reveal this pipeline was never in America's national interest. Clean energy and fuel efficiency is the path forward for economic and energy security in America. By rejecting the Keystone XL pipeline, President Obama helped move America down a cleaner, safer path.

Visit www.lwv.org for more information on the League's efforts in opposing the pipeline.

League Day at the State House with The First Lady of Rhode Island Stephanie Chafee

April 12, 2012 Reserve Today!

Register Today—Seating is limited, so please register early. Please RSVP by April 6. Bring a guest!

Cost: \$15; Students: \$5. Please send this form with payment if you want to attend the dinner. The price includes the program and reception with hors d'oeuvre, sweets and beverages.

YES! I will join you for League Day at the State House with Stephanie Chafee

Number attending _____ @ \$15 per person; Students \$5 each

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 at the State House, *continued from page 1*

nities for members to meet with the LWVRI Board and the Board of the LWVRI Education Foundation. The Advocacy update is scheduled for 4:45. Mrs. Chafee will speak at 5:30 followed by a question and answer period. You must register to attend. Cost of the program is \$15. The registration form is found above. Deadline in April 6. Bring a friend!

Stephanie Chafee, a Rhode Island native, earned a B.S. in Nursing from Boston University, an MBA from the University of Connecticut. She was also awarded an Honorary Doctor of Humane Letters from the University of Rhode Island. A registered nurse, she was one of the first nurses in Rhode Island to work exclusively with HIV/AIDS patients. She also helped found the Rhode Island Free Clinic in South Providence, which provides healthcare to the uninsured, and she was featured as one of the “25 Models of Promise” in Shirley Sagawa’s *The American Way to Change, How National Service and Volunteers are Transforming America*.

America may be a country of great wealth, but many in the United States go to bed hungry every day. In 2010, 14.7 percent of households (or 48.8 million people) were food insecure at least some time during that year. Food insecurity is defined as a household that is uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food to meet the needs of all their members because they have insufficient mon-

ey or other resources for food. In Rhode Island, according to the National Center for Children in Poverty source (<http://nccp.org/>), 11 percent of families are considered “food insecure.” In 2011, 165,753 Rhode Islanders were enrolled in the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) in Rhode Island ([ers.usda.gov](http://www.ers.usda.gov) quoted at <http://www.uri.edu/endhunger/HungerFacts.html>).

The Rhode Island Food Bank notes that 41 percent of its client households report that they have such limited income that they much choose between paying for food or paying rent and that 20 percent of the clients have a household member who has been laid off in the past year and remain unemployed.

Mrs. Chafee, a co-founder of Women Ending Hunger, is well versed on the subject of hunger in America. Women Ending Hunter strives to improve access to government and food bank nutrition services and educate the public on nutrition awareness.

We will be collecting donations for local food banks at the event. Please bring items such as peanut butter, jelly, cereals, pasta sauce and similar items.



LWVRI
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E. Providence, RI 02914

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Coming Up—League Events

March 12, 10 A.M.

LWVRI Board Meeting. East Providence Library.

Tuesday, March 20, 5:30-7 P.M.

Funding Our Schools-Rhode Island's Role in Supporting Local Education. The LWV Newport County and the Alliance for a Livable Newport will host a forum on the new RI Funding Formula and Race to the Top funding at the Newport Public Library.

Saturday, March 24

Deadline to register to vote in Presidential Primary. Details at www.LWVRI.org.

Sunday, April, 1

Deadline for applying for the Joan C. Arnold Award Details on page or at www.LWVRI.org.

April 9, 10 a.m.

LWVRI Board Meeting. East Providence Library.

April 12, 3:30-6:30 P.M.

League Day at the State House with RI's First Lady Stephanie Chafee. See page 1 and registration form on page 7, or visit www.LWVRI.org.

April 24

Presidential Selection Primary. Most polls open at 7 A.M., but there are exceptions. Polls close at 8 P.M.

Saturday, April 28, 10 A.M. — NOON

LWV West Bay forum: "Charter Schools in the West Bay: an Informational Forum. William Hall Library, 1825 Broad Street, Cranston.

Monday, April 30

Deadline to apply for Susan B. Wilson Award. Details at www.LWVRI.org.

Saturday June 16

LWVRI Council. More information in the spring *Voter*.