

EDITORIAL

Will you help the hungry?

■ **MEMBERS OF THE EDITORIAL BOARD** are experienced journalists who offer reasoned opinions, based on facts, to encourage informed debate about the issues facing our community.

How well do you know your neighbors? Chances are at least one is hungry.

On Long Island, about 58,500 children are food insecure, according to Long Island Cares, among about 2.2 million statewide. Island Harvest estimates the number of food insecure children on Long Island to be 100,000.

You can make a difference, and you can get started on Saturday by participating in the National Association of Letter Carriers 2025 Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive.

Each year, thousands of Long Islanders rely on the generosity of their neighbors to help feed themselves and their families. This year, that need is even more urgent after the federal government announced it would slash about \$1 billion in aid to help hunger advocacy groups nationwide. Even before the cuts, food providers nationwide faced dire circumstances. On Long Island, considered a wealthy region by many indicators, a family of two working adults with two children needs to make about \$155,000 annually before taxes to be considered self-sufficient, according to the MIT Living Wage Calculator.

Once again, our letter carriers are trying to help. The campaign has collected almost 2 billion pounds of food in 31 years. All you have to do is put nonperishable food out for collection, like you would a letter. This year's date is Saturday, May 10. Leave your donation in a bag near your mailbox to be collected by your letter carrier. Pretty easy. And remarkably beneficial.

Food banks on Long Island, even with generous donations and support from corporations, government and individuals, must scrape and claw to help every needy person. Volunteers



RICK KOPSTEIN

Headquarters of Island Harvest, which will be hurt by federal cuts.

schedule food pickups at supermarkets and restaurants, coordinate giving times suitable for hungry people, and scour neighborhoods to find donatable food. The need is great, and hunger never goes away.

In addition to donating food and money, you can help by pressing elected officials to provide more money and expand food donation programs for those in need. For the National Association of Letter Carriers drive, visit naalc.org/community-service/food-drive.

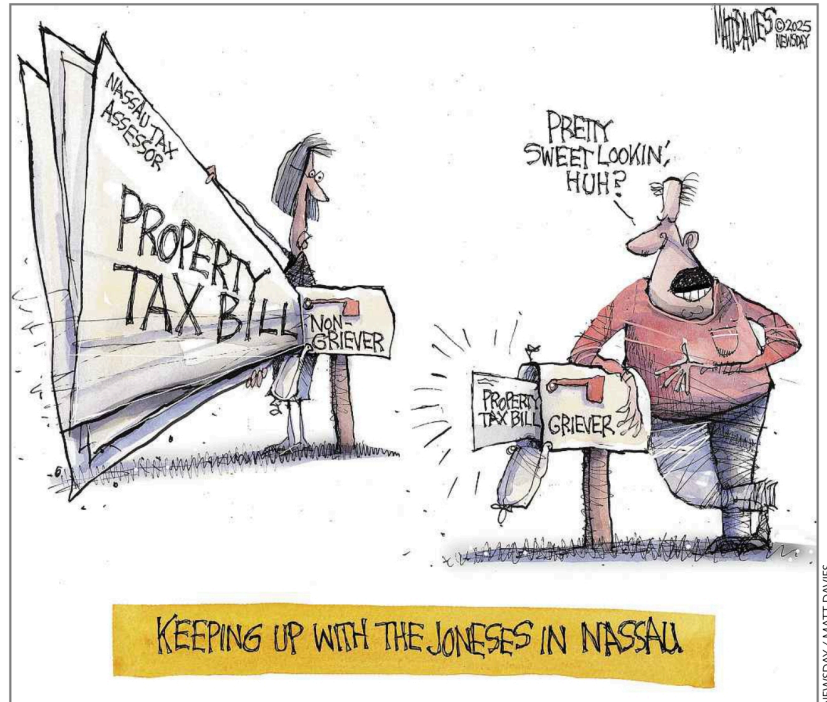
Randi Shubin Dresner, president and chief executive of Island Harvest Food Bank, told the editorial board that this year may be the most difficult because federal cuts will impact the ability of companies to donate. Shubin Dresner said the usual challenges faced by nonprofits will be exacerbated by the trickle-down impact of government cuts. Nonprofits are "one big ecosystem," she said.

There are plenty of other ways to help feed hungry Long Islanders. Search online or visit islandharvest.org or licares.org. Don't wait until the holiday spirit sets in at year's end. Now is the time to help. Long Island is stronger because of our collective ability to help neighbors.

Imagine looking into the face of a hungry kid and saying, "Not today. Maybe tomorrow?"

Please give. Help a hungry child, family, senior or veteran less fortunate than you. Make Long Island better by being part of the solution.

MATT DAVIES



NEWSDAY / MATT DAVIES

■ **EDITORIAL CARTOONIST MATT DAVIES'** opinions are his own. You can see more of his work at newsday.com/matt

LETTERS

Let's act now to rid us of our toxins

As a nurse, mother, and nature lover, I worry about the health risks of PFAS ["Known as 'forever chemicals,' PFAS found in LI water," News, April 28] and phthalates, often used to make plastic more flexible ["Plastic linked to heart disease," News, May 2]. These chemicals are found in everyday products and are used in plastic production.

We need legislation to address the issue of toxins in our water and environment. State legislators have the opportunity this year to pass two bills that will help.

The Packaging Reduction and Recycling Infrastructure Act will prohibit the use of 17 specific chemicals, including PFAS and phthalates, from use in plastic packaging. Another bill will prohibit the use of PFAS in several everyday items such



WOLFRAM STEINBERG

Experts say using glass containers instead of plastic can minimize health risks.

as textiles, cookware, and cleaning products. Our health, and the health of our planet, requires we act now.

— JENNIFER VOGT, EAST NORTHPORT

While I had heard about the harmful side effects of chemicals in plastic, the May 2 article provided crucial details, especially the link to heart disease. I was surprised, though, in the

"What Newsday Found" summary box that the most important part of this article, simple changes we can do to minimize our exposure, was found only within the article and not included in the summary of notables.

If displayed more prominently, readers would have clearly learned the benefits of "using glass food containers instead of plastic ones. Plastics . . . should not be microwaved or heated because chemicals can leach into food" and "people should not drink from bottles that have been heated by the sun, strive to reuse coffee cups and simply avoid buying plastic products when possible." Perhaps these caution flags can now be heeded by more readers.

— JANE WARD, LONG BEACH

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