

Harry Chapin Legacy Month

Double Your IMPACT

Harry Chapin founded Long Island Cares with a powerful dream: **to end hunger on Long Island.** 46 years later, his legacy continues to guide everything we do.

This July, every gift is being matched by our board of directors, up to \$150,000, doubling your impact.

Your support honors Harry's legacy and helps bring his dream of a hunger-free Long Island one step closer to reality.

Donate
today!



**\$10 = ~~8~~ meals
12**



Summer 2026



Long Island Cares, Inc. The Harry Chapin Regional Food Bank



Carrying
Forward
a Legacy
of Care

For MJ, volunteering at Long Island Cares feels like a natural extension of values she has carried throughout her life.

Growing up in the 1970s, she was a fan of **Harry Chapin**, not just for his music but for his commitment to fighting hunger. She followed his philanthropy and knew about Long Island Cares from its earliest days. As a nurse, caring for others was always central to who she was, and throughout her career she witnessed firsthand the difficult choices many families face.

"I had patients tell me they weren't taking their medication because that month they had to choose between medicine and food," she recalls.

When MJ retired, she knew she wasn't ready to stop serving her community. Combined with her lifelong love of cooking and feeding others, volunteering with Long Island Cares felt like the perfect fit.

"Food is love in my family," she says. **"If we're happy, we cook. If we're sad, we cook."**

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A Message from our President and CEO

Summer brings new possibilities. With longer days, families spend more time together, and there are more opportunities to connect with our communities. I'm reminded that meaningful change often begins when people come together to help one another.

Compassion, collaboration, and community are at the heart of Long Island Cares and part of Harry Chapin's legacy. His belief that each of us can make a difference still guides our work today.



This **Be a Hero Edition** celebrates that spirit by honoring the everyday heroes who make our mission possible: volunteers, donors, partners, and neighbors who step up when it matters most.

For many Long Islanders, summer brings new challenges. When school ends, thousands of

children lose the breakfasts and lunches they count on during the year. Families also face higher costs for food, housing, transportation, and healthcare. Uncertainty about federal nutrition programs adds more worry for neighbors already struggling to get by.

Being Hungry for Change means believing we don't have to accept hunger. It's about bringing people and resources together, leading with compassion, and working together to build stronger, healthier communities. This work belongs to all of us, and every person has a role to play.

The stories in this issue show that belief in action. You'll meet MJ and Dan, whose volunteer work keeps Harry's vision alive. You'll learn how our Aspara'Gus Mobile Food Truck helps children and families access nutritious meals in the summer. You'll also read about community leaders and partners who are making food more available, preserving dignity, and helping neighbors find stability during tough times.

As we celebrate Harry Chapin Month, we are reminded that every volunteer shift, every donation, every meal provided, and every act of kindness brings us closer to our shared vision of a hunger-free Long Island. Harry believed that ordinary people could make an extraordinary difference when they chose to act, a lesson that remains just as important today.

Thank you to our donors, volunteers, community partners, staff, Board of Directors, and supporters. You make this work possible.

We remain **Hungry for Change**, and together, we are building a hunger-free Long Island.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in green ink that reads "Katherine M. Fritz".

Katherine M. Fritz President & CEO, Long Island Cares, Inc. – The Harry Chapin Regional Food Bank



"Every person has a role to play in building a hunger-free Long Island."

Meeting Families Where They Are

Program Highlight

Long Island may be small in size, but the need for food across our communities is immense. And, while food may seem abundant, access to it is not always easy.

Right here on Long Island, there are communities considered **food deserts**, places where grocery stores and fresh, nutritious food are limited or simply too far away to reach easily. For many families, transportation is another obstacle. Gas is expensive, cars are costly to maintain, and without reliable access to a bus or train route, even getting to the nearest grocery store or pantry can become overwhelming. During the sweltering summer months, long walks in the heat can also become dangerous, especially for children and older adults.

So what happens when families can't get to the food they need?

That's where our Mobile Breakfast Food Truck, affectionately named the Aspara'Gus Mobile Food Truck after our beloved mascot, steps in. Traveling directly into neighborhoods across Long Island, the truck meets families exactly where they are, delivering free breakfast and lunch to children and their families over the weekend.

When school lets out for the summer and free school meals disappear, the need doesn't go away. In many cases, it actually grows. The Mobile Food Truck helps ensure children still have access to nutritious meals during the summer months, while also supporting families when many food pantries are closed on weekends.

For the parents wondering how they will stretch one more grocery bill, for the child who should never have to worry about where their next meal will come from, and



for the families doing everything they can just to get by, the Aspara'Gus Mobile Food Truck is there.

Sometimes, being a hero means meeting people where they are. 🌱

Carrying Forward a Legacy of Care continued from cover

Six months ago, MJ and her son, Dan, began volunteering at Long Island Cares' headquarters in Hauppauge, where they help sort and pack food for neighbors facing food insecurity.

"I've always liked helping people," says Dan. "I wanted to find something that helped my Long Island neighbors the most. And everyone, everyone needs food."

What keeps them coming back is not only the mission, but the people. They speak warmly about the friendships they've formed with fellow volunteers and the shared sense of purpose that fills the warehouse.

And, for MJ and Dan, the work is about more than packing boxes. It's about preserving dignity.

Since I was young, my family has instilled in me that by helping others, it makes me a better person. No one should go to bed at night feeling hungry. Having healthy, good-tasting food every day isn't a privilege, it's a necessity."

—Dan

"When I pack up food, I try to make it look nice," MJ says. "I think about the person who's going to receive it."

Both are struck by the contrast between the abundance many people see every day and the reality that thousands of Long Islanders face.

"It's hard to imagine food insecurity exists when there's so much around us," says MJ. "Something that seems so available can be so difficult for some people to access."

They believe ending hunger requires all of us to play a part, no matter how small that contribution may seem.

"I'm one person. Dan is one person," MJ says. "But if we all work together, we can do so much."

For MJ and Dan, being a hero doesn't mean doing something extraordinary. It means showing up. It means giving their time, treating every neighbor with dignity, and understanding that small acts of kindness can have a lasting impact. Through their volunteer service, they are helping carry forward Harry Chapin's vision of a community where no one has to choose between food and basic necessities. 🌱

**Interested in becoming a volunteer?
Learn more today.**



Save the Date!

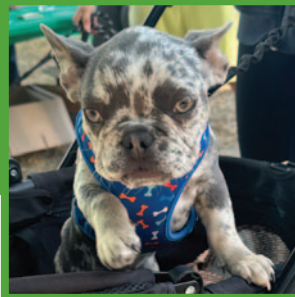
Sunday, October 11, 2026
Belmont Lake State Park

5K & PawsWalk

to support Long Island Cares' Programs and Pet Pantry

Join us as we walk, wag, and run our way through a fun-filled day in support of our Baxter's Pet Pantry.

Every step taken helps provide pet food and supplies to families who need a helping hand, because no one should have to choose between feeding themselves or feeding their pet.



A Pantry Built on Choice, Dignity, and Community

Our Hero

Long Island Cares believes that no one should have to choose between putting food on the table and honoring their faith or dietary needs. Access to food should come with dignity, and that means ensuring neighbors can receive foods that align with their traditions and culture.

That commitment is reflected in the **Eisler United Pantry**, the newest Member Agency in the Long Island Cares network. Located at the **Chabad of Oyster Bay** in Woodbury, the all-kosher pantry helps ensure that individuals and families who keep kosher have access to food that meets their needs.



For Long Island Cares board member **Alan Z. Fromm**, helping transform a small kosher pantry into a growing community resource has become a meaningful part of his retirement.

Alan's life has been shaped by resilience. He survived the September 11 attacks while working at the World Trade Center and was later featured in the HBO documentary *Hard Times: Lost on Long Island*, which explored the impact of the 2008 recession on local families. Through those experiences, he learned: When people face difficult times, having a community that offers support while preserving dignity makes all the difference.

After retiring, Alan visited the Chabad of Oyster Bay and discovered a small pantry serving kosher food to local residents. He immediately saw its potential to grow into a stronger, more sustainable resource.

"As a Long Island Cares Board Member, I knew this pantry could grow and reach even more people as part of our Member Agency network," Alan says.

Alan helped guide the pantry through the process of becoming an official Long Island Cares Member Agency, filling out its application, ordering its inventory of kosher foods, and recruiting volunteers who now help keep it



running. He now runs the pantry day to day while continuing to expand its reach.

The Eisler United Pantry operates Mondays and Thursdays from 9 a.m. to noon and Wednesdays from noon to 3 p.m., providing food assistance in a welcoming and culturally familiar environment.

Alan takes a holistic view of food insecurity. Alongside a volunteer, he is helping grow fresh vegetables in a garden that will add to the pantry's offerings. His long-term goal is to expand what the pantry provides so it can meet more of the community's needs, including eventually offering kosher meat.

"Meat is expensive at the grocery store. But when you look at kosher meat, it's about four to five times more expensive than regular meat. So that is something, as we expand, I'd really like to get for the community members," Alan says.

To help address that need, another Long Island Cares board member, **Melissa Buonadonna of ShopRite**, connected Alan with **Wakefern**. Through that partnership, Alan was able to purchase gift cards at a discount. The gift cards will help families purchase kosher meat and other specialty foods that may not yet be available through the pantry as it continues to expand its offerings.

The Eisler United Pantry now stands as more than a food resource. It reflects a shared belief that everyone deserves access to food that meets their needs and respects their traditions, with dignity at the center of every meal. 🌱

**"The pantry is a lifeline for so many.
It's more than a food pantry.
It's a place of compassion and unity."**

—Rabbi Shmuel Lipszyk,
Executive Director of the Town of Oyster Bay Chabad



The Sound of Community Support



Founded more than 60 years ago, the **Island Hills Chorus** brings together women from across Long Island who share a passion for music, friendship, and community. The women's a cappella barbershop chorus performs at libraries, senior centers, community events, and local gatherings throughout the region. Over the years, they have also taken the stage at iconic venues including **Radio City Music Hall** and **Madison Square Garden**.

For more than four years, the chorus has called Long Island Cares home. Using our **Center for Community Engagement**, members gather weekly to rehearse, connect, and share their music with audiences across Long Island.

What began as a rehearsal space has grown into a partnership rooted in giving back. Through food drives, donations, and performances at Long Island Cares pro-

grams and events, the Island Hills Chorus has become a dedicated partner in the fight against hunger.

"Giving to our Long Island community is what Island Hills Chorus is all about,"

—Marianne Fulfaro, Island Hills Team Leader

"Every Thursday night at Long Island Cares' Community Center, we come together not only to rehearse, but to keep that mission going. Whether performing at the United Nations, elder-care facilities, libraries, schools, or community festivals, we aim to share the power of music. Our food donations, monetary support, and performances at Long Island Cares events are part of how we contribute to the effort to end hunger," said Marianne Fulfaro, Island Hills Team Leader.

Long Island Cares is proud to provide the chorus with complimentary use of our Center for Community Engagement, and we are equally grateful for the many ways they support our mission. We know hunger can't be solved alone. **It takes people willing to show up for their neighbors again and again.** The Island Hills Chorus has done exactly that, demonstrating that anyone can be a hero by sharing what they have—whether it is their voice, their time, or their commitment to helping others. 🌱



To date, the group has donated more than **2,300 pounds of food** and enough funds to provide **5,309 meals** to neighbors in need across Long Island.

From Survival to Stability Ray's Story

When Ray graduated high school, he went straight into the workforce. He built a life around steady, hands-on work. He worked in logistics for **The Salvation Army**, coordinating pick-ups and deliveries of essential items for veterans. He even went on to own a limousine company.

But life changed quickly. Ray found himself experiencing the depths of homelessness.

He eventually went to **New Hope**, a stabilization center under **Mercy Hospital**. While there, he met someone who told him about subsidized housing, an opportunity he knew he needed in order to rebuild his life.

Ray was able to secure housing. He began seeking additional support, but not every experience felt supportive.

"There is a certain vulnerability when you ask for services, whether it's welfare or going to a hospital,"

he says. **"Many people can make you feel less than and look at you sideways."**

And food insecurity was one of the additional battles he was facing where he just couldn't get the help he needed.

"I was white-knuckling hunger," he recalls. **"It was a lot of peanut butter and jelly, noodles here and there."**

See Ray is a senior citizen living with significant mobility challenges. He walks with a cane and needs surgeries on both knees, as well as a hip replacement. Without access to a car, and with limited mobility, everyday tasks like getting to appointments or obtaining groceries can be difficult.

Eventually, Ray connected with **Long Island Cares**.

Through us, he utilizes our **Mobile Food Pantry**, which delivers nonperishable food, personal-care items, household supplies, and pet food directly to homebound individuals, including seniors, veterans, and people with medical conditions that make travel difficult. And the support Ray feels is unmatched.

"I've visited their headquarters as a guest speaker. I've visited the Freeport food pantry. I get the Mobile Food Pantry services. Everyone has been so kind and sweet to me. I can wear my heart on my sleeve and not worry that it's going to be crushed."

—Ray

Because Long Island Cares helps provide Ray with groceries and stability, he can focus on what comes next—his goals for the future, including the surgeries he needs.

With that basic support in place, he is able to shift his energy from day-to-day survival to rebuilding his health and moving forward with his life. 🌱

Learn more about our programs.



Volunteers packing for our neighbors who use our Mobile Pantry services.



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To know is to care. To care is to act.
To act is to make a difference.

— Harry Chapin Founder, Long Island Cares, Inc.

Stay connected!



Some gifts make an impact today.
Others continue to inspire for years to come.

Leave your mark in the fight against hunger with a Long Island Cares Commemorative Brick. Whether honoring a loved one, celebrating a milestone, or recognizing your family, business, or organization, your engraved brick will be permanently displayed at our food bank headquarters in Hauppauge—a lasting symbol of your commitment to helping others.

Every brick purchased helps provide food and critical support to Long Islanders facing food insecurity. Your tribute becomes more than a name etched in stone—it becomes part of a community effort to ensure that no neighbor has to face hunger alone.

Every brick tells a story. What will yours say?



Leave Your Mark
in the Fight Against Hunger



Thank you to all of our Corporate Heroes!



Partners In Caring

