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Press Release

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LIRR

IMMEDIATE

"All Aboard" MTA LIRR For The 'Great Long Island Commuter Food Drive'

LIRR Customers Can Donate Canned Goods and Other Non-Perishable Items To Aid Needy On Long Island

MTA Long Island Rail Road is teaming up with two of Long Island's best known charities to co-sponsor the "Great Long Island Commuter Food Drive" during the month of September.

On five consecutive Wednesdays beginning September 2, representatives from Long Island Cares and from Island Harvest will be at 23 LIRR stations in Nassau and Suffolk to collect donations of food and other items from LIRR customers and employees for the disadvantaged of our region. Both organizations say that the nation's economic woes have added significantly to the needs of families and individuals on Long Island.

"MTA LIRR is proud to co-sponsor the 'Great Long Island Commuter Food Drive' and make its train stations available as collection sites for Island Harvest and Long Island Cares, two non-profit organizations that have worked long and hard to ease the burden of those in need," said LIRR President Helena E. Williams. "At the same time that Railroad customers are donating food and other necessities, the LIRR is urging the Railroad's 6,800 employees to do the same."

Canned goods and other non-perishable foods, personal care products, baby food, diapers/wipes, household supplies, school supplies and pet food are the types of items most appreciated by those in need.

The Great Long Island Commuter Food Drive is part of a nationwide effort to help the hungry during September, which has been designated National Hunger Action Month.

Volunteers from Long Island Cares and Island Harvest will be on hand to collect donations each Wednesday from 5:30 AM to 12:30 PM. Donations can be made on Wednesday, September 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd and 30th at the following LIRR stations in Nassau County: Baldwin, Bellmore, Freeport, Hempstead, Hicksville, Long Beach, Lynbrook, Manhasset, Massapequa, Merrick, Mineola, Port Washington, Rockville Centre, Syosset, Valley Stream, Wantagh and Westbury.

Commuters can also give donate at the following LIRR stations in Suffolk County: Amityville, Babylon, Huntington, Patchogue, Port Jefferson, and Ronkonkoma.

Long Island Cares was founded in 1980 by the late singer/activist Harry Chapin in response to the needs of hungry Long Islanders and it is continued today by his wife and partner Sandy Chapin, chairperson of the charity that runs The Harry Chapin Food Bank. Long Island Cares is a critical link in getting food to over 550 community-based agencies in Nassau and Suffolk Counties: food pantries, soup kitchens, senior centers, day care centers and homeless shelters. For more information, go to www.licares.org

"We are extremely grateful to the MTA Long Island Rail Road for their support during these critical financial times for so many Long Islanders," said Paule Pachter, Executive Director, Long Island Cares. "The Great Long Island Commuter Food Drive is a meaningful way to call attention to the issue of hunger in our neighborhoods and for commuters to help so many of our neighbors in need."

Fighting hunger and touching lives, Island Harvest serves as the bridge between those who have surplus food and those who need it, supplying hundreds of community-based nonprofit organizations on Long Island with critical food support to help stem the advancing tide of hunger in local communities. Island Harvest has delivered 57 million pounds of food, supplementing more than 44 million meals, since its inception in 1992. For more information visit www.islandharvest.org or call 516-294-8528.

"Island Harvest is also grateful to the Long Island Rail Road for its commitment to helping get vital food resources to those who need it most," said Randi Shubin Dresner, President and CEO of Island Harvest. "On behalf of over 260,000 men, women and children on Long Island who face going hungry each day, we thank the LIRR, its employees and customers for their support in our fight against hunger."

For additional information on the Great Long Island Commuter Food Drive go to www.mta.info/lirr.