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STATE FUND TO HELP WITH UTILITY BILLS NEEDS OVERSIGHT - LEADERS SLOW TO ACT

ProCAP nightmare just one part of the problem

As most Rhode Islanders are now aware, the Providence Community Action Program is under investigation for questionable business practices. But it has been largely-ignored by the media that the implementation of our utility legislation (known as "The Henry Shelton Act") includes a provision that the Governor, the House Speaker, and the Senate President appoint an advisory board to oversee the Division of Public Utilities. Despite the recommendations and repeated calls for action by the Wiley Center, this committee has not yet been appointed. Without this crucial piece of the puzzle, the long-term success of oversight of the state's LIHEAP-enhancement fund is questionable. To add to the confusion, the acting Director of the Office of Energy Resources, Kenneth Payne, has left his position as of December 2, 2011.

Without swift and decisive action from our state leaders, the arrearage forgiveness and other portions of the legislation could be jeopardized. Please call Governor Chafee at 222-2080, Speaker Fox at 222-2466 and Senate President Paiva-Weed at 222-6655 and ask them to appoint the Ratepayer Advisory Board.

WILEY CENTER LEADER WINS MEDAL AT NATIONAL VETERANS WHEELCHAIR GAMES

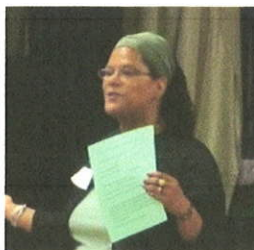
The National Veterans' Wheelchair Games in Pittsburgh, PA was the setting in early August for the medal ceremony of our long-time and invaluable Woonsocket Chapter member Roger Harris ("The Woonsocket Rocket!")

This event is the largest annual wheelchair sports competition in the world, offering seventeen different sports to Veterans who use wheelchairs due to spinal cord injuries, amputations and neurological diseases. The Games promote rehabilitation through rigorous competition in such events as basketball, rugby, softball, and others, according to their website.

Roger's bronze medal was in the field discus event, and was the result of a lot of hard training and "maybe just a little good luck."

We are impressed, but never surprised, by Roger's achievements and we wish him the best as always. He would like to thank those who have supported him in this effort.





WILEY CENTER WELCOMES SAKINAH ABDUR-RASHEED

In September, with the help of a generous grant from the Women's Fund of RI, the Wiley Center was able to enlist the efforts of a new organizer, Sakinah Abdur-Rasheed. She comes to us from an impressive background in community outreach and activism at a number of distinguished and diverse agencies. We are grateful to have her on board as we work to educate and empower the public on the opportunities available through the newly-passed utility legislation, and grateful to the Women's Fund – as always - for their commitment to our organizing efforts on behalf of low-income households. Please contact Sakinah about facilitating a workshop on the provisions of the Henry Shelton Act.

AN APPEAL TO OUR MEMBERS:

Perhaps you called us after many desperate attempts to keep your lights from being shut off, and found that one of our staff or volunteers was the first person to speak to you with respect, or the first to offer you information that was helpful... perhaps someone even accompanied you to a hearing at the Division of Public Utilities to help guide you through the often-humiliating hearing process. Maybe you learned about your legal protections from utility shutoff, or that it was the Wiley Center who fought for legislation that increases those protections for households with infants, senior citizens, unemployed workers and the disabled.

We need your help as well - please consider a small end-of-year donation to enable us to continue our work. No contribution is too small. And please join us at a chapter or leadership meeting to learn more about our work and how you can help organize within the community.

QBII – A Night To Remember

Thanks again to all the good sports who participated in our second annual Quiz Bowl fundraiser on September 23. Our hosts, the Pawtucket Red Sox, and our emcee, Steve McDonald, helped to make the night a great success. Congratulations again to Rubicon II for pulling off a victory in the face of some serious competition. Next year's event is tentatively scheduled for Friday, September 28 – stayed tuned for details!

HO-HO-HOPE YOU CAN MAKE IT ON YOUR OWN

Despite the appeals of many Wiley members, RI Department of Human Services Director Sandra Powell refused to release food stamp (SNAP) benefits prior to the Thanksgiving holiday, reaffirming that struggling households should not be allowed the freedom to choose how to budget their benefits or the joy to celebrate in the manner that others do. We heard reports of families who filled a shopping cart just days prior to Thanksgiving, only to learn at the checkout line that they did not have a sufficient balance to cover the expense. Add humiliation and rage to deprivation, Director Powell. And Happy New Year to you, as well.

If you would like to try to persuade Ms. Powell to reconsider her decision prior to the week of Christmas, she can be reached at 462-2121. Join us at a meeting to help us work on this and other issues that affect struggling households in Rhode Island.

OPPORTUNITY AWAITS -

If you have an ability to organize and a passion for justice, we may have an opportunity for you. Henry Shelton, our founder and long-time director, would like to mentor a bilingual lead organizer for a year to 18 months. Successful candidates will be self-starters with a desire to learn from one of the legends of social justice in Rhode Island.

Please send a resume and cover letter to:

**George Wiley Center
32 East Avenue,
Pawtucket, RI 02860**

Or email to volunteer1@georgewileycenter.org with the subject line "opportunity."

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Return Service Requested



Would you like to win a complimentary pair of tickets to our Quiz Bowl fundraiser next fall?

Enter your suggestion for a name for our newsletter for a chance to win!

Send entries by telephone, email or US mail.

Winner(s) will be announced in our next issue.

Upcoming Dates - everyone is always welcome:

Providence Chapter Meeting December 15, 2011
6pm @ St. Michael's Rectory, 239 Oxford Ave, Providence

Holiday Open House: December 22, 2011, 10am-1pm.
Please stop in and say hello.

Blackstone Valley Chapter Meeting January 3, 2012
6pm @ 32 East Avenue, Pawtucket

Leadership Meeting Saturday, January 7, 2012
10am @ 32 East Avenue, Pawtucket

Aquidneck Island Chapter Meeting January 18, 2012
10am @ Florence Gray Center

Happy Holidays and a Peaceful New Year to all!

Thank you for your continued support.

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.georgewileycenter.org
