



THE CONNECTION

www.energycare.org • (314) 773-5900
 Founded by Sister Patricia Ann Kelley, CCVI

BLIZZARDS AND BLESSINGS

The bitter cold and snow of this winter will not soon be forgotten. Mid-December brought a cold snap where temperatures were below average for 13 straight days, sometimes almost 20 degrees colder than normal. And don't forget the almost 4" of snow we received that month.

Then, the beginning of 2014 came with even more dangerous weather. On Sunday January 5, St. Louis received about 10.5" of snow, on top of a few that had already fallen the previous Thursday. Some outlying areas in Illinois received as much as 15" of snowfall. Reduced access to services due to poor road conditions, as well as the greatly increased danger of hypothermia during periods of single digit or even negative temperatures can make things even more difficult for our elderly, housebound clients. While City and County government opened "warming shelters," these can be difficult for the elderly to use because of limited mobility and restricted access to transportation.

We are glad to report that many people were much better prepared for the severe weather because of the services you support.

From September to December we visited clients in their homes a total of 333 times to provide various services. During these visits, we delivered 133 heaters, 84 do-it-yourself weatherization kits, we weatherized 52 homes, and provided in-home counseling to help find solutions for clients' energy-related needs. With the need so great this year and the two coldest months of the winter still ahead at this writing, we are well on track to serve more people than normal, beating all of our targets. We are blessed that your support is making this happen.

Volunteers are helping EnergyCare reach more families with weatherization efforts this winter.

Lead service provider Jana believes much credit is due our numerous volunteers. She says *"I've been very impressed with the work of our volunteers this year. We've had many more than in previous years."* This is good news since Jana is seeing an uptick in calls for weatherization services this year than in years past, so our volunteers are needed now more than ever.



Weatherization helps keeps homes warmer and more comfortable, as well as reducing heating bills, which makes a big difference to people surviving on low incomes. Your generosity provided Jesse and Susan with home weatherization services earlier this year. Susan said *"Thank you for doing this weatherization work for us. It's hard for us to stay warm."*

MISSOURI STATE TAX CREDITS AVAILABLE

EnergyCare has once again been approved by the State of Missouri for participation in the Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP). The NAP allows EnergyCare to offer a 50% tax credit for qualified gifts over \$500 made by people receiving business, farm, royalties or rental income. The tax credits are available to qualified donors on a first come, first served basis. **If you are interested in NAP tax credits, please contact James at 314.773.5968 ex 23 .**

THE PEOPLE WE SERVE

Patricia is a real person who has received assistance from EnergyCare. She is representative of the many low-income elderly, disabled, ill or very young people EnergyCare helps year in and year out. Service provider Jana Lakebrink describes her experience working with Patricia.

Meet Patricia. She is a 60 year old woman who suffers from diabetes and has a learning disability. She does not let that stop her from doing what needs to be done, especially when it comes to taking care of her four grandchildren. Her number one priority is making sure they have the things they need.

Right now, Patricia is struggling. She recently lost everything in a house fire and she and her grandchildren had to move. Now that she is housed again, she is desperately trying to get her home back in order, but she doesn't have any gas service because of a large bill she owes. Being on a fixed income is making it hard for her to keep up with every day expenses.

Patricia called EnergyCare looking for any possible help. She remembered that we gave her "three real pretty blankets last year"

but unfortunately, they were destroyed in the fire. Our lead service provider, Jana, referred Patricia to a few other places to find assistance that we could not provide and scheduled a home visit to bring her a heater and some blankets. Patricia was very happy for whatever we could do for her.

When EnergyCare's service providers arrived at Patricia's home just before Christmas, she was looking forward to the visit.

Patricia was most grateful and shook the team's hands as they left.

Jana said, *"I was happy we could help her family stay warmer this winter and provide some relief as she tries to get back on her feet."*

ENERGYCARE MISSION STATEMENT

EnergyCare promotes healthier, safer home environments and independent living by providing year-round energy-related services in St. Louis communities for low-income households with persons who are elderly, disabled or chronically ill, and young children.

Our vision is that EnergyCare will:

- › Continually strive to meet energy-related needs of the community it serves;
- › Empower clients through education;
- › Draw attention to the energy-related needs of the people we serve;
- › Improve our clients' quality of life by promoting efficient use of energy in the home;
- › Promote human dignity through personal interaction with the people we serve;
- › Provide services that are a model of collaboration.

We believe that EnergyCare values:

- › All people are responsible human beings;
- › Clients' desire for self-determination and independence;
- › Social responsibility, financial accountability, and good stewardship;
- › Interpersonal relationships with all stakeholders;
- › Conservation of natural resources

MEMORIALS

Alfred J. Mitchell	George Postol
Aloisia Bartolowits	Gilbert Gennari
Bernard and Virginia Benz	Harvey Lehrer's sister
Blanche Lamkin	Hugo and Albestina Meyer
C.R. Zucchero	Humbert and Mary Ghio
Carol Gund Wolken	James Shurig
Catherine Fuhry	Jane Thole
Charles D. Goodhart	Jeremiah Hill
Chas W. Miller	Joanne Williams
Chuck Mason	Joe and Marilyn Preis
Clifford M. McNames	John M. Olson
Connie Gettemeyer	John Michael Roehm
Cosimo R. Zucchero	Joseph and Frances Laramie
Don and Larry Ottersbach	Kelly
Don Reilly	Larry Ottersbach
Doris Wilson	Larry Toenjes
Dr. Saul Silvermintz	Leo and Ida Meyer
Edward and Stella Koziatsek	Leonard Kopsky
Edward Bolesta	Margaret Platten

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CONNECTING WITH OUR CLIENTS

To help us better understand the people we serve, EnergyCare's Board recently decided to start regular client surveys, and they included it in our Strategic Plan. We carried out surveys in April and September last year and gathered a lot of knowledge. These surveys help us understand how well we are serving our clients and how effective we are as stewards of the funds that you graciously entrust to us. The most important things we learned were:

- **The people we serve face real hardship** - one in five can't afford to fill their prescriptions and the majority struggle to get enough to eat.
- **They are very positive about the services you support** - when asked to give EnergyCare's services an overall rating out of 5 the average was 4.9. Good, but still room for improvement!
- **They are happy to tell us when things could be better** - for example they said we needed to do follow up calls after furnace repairs to make sure the problem was fixed. Needless to say we followed their advice.

Some of the things people said moved us and reminded us why we are committed to this mission. Barry T said *"It was a difference between freezing to death and not."* Sharon S told us, *"It was a great help because you guys were the only ones to really help me and I couldn't find any help elsewhere at the time."* By listening to the people we serve we learn how to make sure that your donations are making the greatest difference. We plan to keep doing client surveys after each winter and each summer, and we'll keep you updated about what we find out.

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Once every decade or so, Nature delivers a cruel reminder of how vulnerable each of us are to extreme weather. The blizzard of January 5th dumped nearly 12" of snow on Eastern Missouri. Streets and highways were impassable. Entire cities closed their doors and could provide only vital emergency services.

The area was gripped by bone chilling temperatures and accompanying wind chills that rivaled Alaskan winters. Daily life routines such as school or work were disrupted for a few days in prudent favor of avoiding life threatening injury or illness. The very real possibility of frostbite and hypothermia were carried on the cold winds of an Arctic Clipper.

Here at EnergyCare we provide basic human services designed to keep area low income residents safely warm in their own homes during typical winters. It's common this time of year for our service providers to brave icy side streets and trudge through snow to deliver a portable heater and blankets to a family who cannot afford to warm their home. Dedicated volunteers venture out on cold mornings to donate their time and energies to weatherize inadequately heated homes for elderly or disabled persons. These are the things that EnergyCare has done for 30 years to help those who can no longer help themselves.

I found it to be quite humbling when Nature ushered in 2014 by slapping all of us with a cold dose of reality. Admittedly, it was only a couple of days of major inconvenience. But during that brief period the entire area experienced what our poor neighbors routinely face each prolonged winter. Suddenly the caregivers were as vulnerable as those we serve. This unusual severe weather event was a stark reminder of how much the poor elderly, ill and disabled need our help to survive another winter. As always, we can't do what we do without your help and for that we are grateful. Thank you.

NEWS AND NOTES

- EnergyCare's Board of Directors currently has a small number of vacancies. If you or someone you know would be a good Board Member, or you'd like more information please call Dennis at 314-773-5968 x 23.
- Welcome to Justine, who has joined EnergyCare's Development Office. We're really happy to have her on board!
- Since the last issue of *The Connection* we have completed the evaluation of the 2013 Summer Program: you'll be glad to hear that 99% of people who received services reported being able to stay safely cool.
- The National Weather Service designated November 20, 2013 as Winter Weather Awareness Day. The Department of Health and Senior Services states that in the winter of 2012-2013 there were 22 cold-related deaths in Missouri, up from 12 in in 2011-2012.

Join us at Incarnate Word Academy
for

Trivia Night 4

to benefit EnergyCare

March 8, 2014

**Doors at 6:00pm, Play begins at
7:00pm**

\$20/person, \$160/table of 8

**Free mulligan for every blanket
donated at the door**

**Visit the website or call James at
314-773-5968 x23 to register!**

Since the last issue of **The Connection**, EnergyCare has received memorial and tribute gifts honoring the following:

MEMORIALS

(Continued from page 2)

Mary Spengel
Roger Tharp
Norbert Lohe
Patrick Leonard and Patrick Gregory
Peter P. Dolan, Leonora and Larry L. Dolan, Sr.
Phil and Hazel Merker
Phillip Sgroi
Richard and Rosemary Hagerty

Robert Kaiser, Sr., Robert Kaiser, Jr., Lucille Kaiser, and Arthur Campbell
Richard Hermann
Richard W. Darragh
Robert and Virginia May
Ruth and Dean Kelley
Shelly Becker
Sister Dolores McGhee, D.C.
The Bill Family
The Deceased Members of Reaching Out - St. Louis
The Oliver Family
Theresa Heins

Thomas and Betty Ann Clancy
Thomas Mullen
Timothy P. Korobey
Tom and Jim Kelley
Vern Hoff
Walter Wuertz
Warren Glickert

Jack Hannigan's 100th Birthday
Frieda Karas' 91st Birthday
Cate Dolan
Charlotte Meatte
Jacqueline Hooper's birthday
Roz, Rick, and Lincoln Huntley
The Roe Family
The Staff at St. Anthony's Hospital
Allison, Jim and Jake Jennewein, with thanks for a loving family
Sr. Pat Kelley, CCVI

TRIBUTES

John Evans' birthday
Mary Dietz
Robbie Hoffman



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www.energycare.org

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Thank you!

Your support kept hundreds of people safely warm during
the recent severe weather.

Find out more on page 1...