



## Preparing for Winter 2011 - 2012

October 3rd marked the official beginning of EnergyCare's 25th annual **Winter Warming Program**. Begun in 1986 by EnergyCare Executive Director, Dennis Kelley, the Winter Warming Program provides a package of services to qualifying low-income St. Louis city and county residents, designed to protect the most vulnerable from the potentially dangerous effects of extreme winter weather, as well as to help them manage their winter energy costs.

Owing to the continuing economic difficulties in the St. Louis area, EnergyCare will help as many people as possible, even though we will need to strictly prioritize our efforts, targeting those who are most medically at-risk for hypothermia-related illness.

Therefore, this winter EnergyCare will target a minimum of 100 low-income households with a medically at-risk individual or individuals for a weatherization service designed to prevent the escape of heat from, and the infiltration of cold outside air into, the home. This will be achieved using effective, proven low-cost methods.

In addition to the direct weatherizations, 50 weatherization kits will be distributed to households with individuals who, after training, will be able to do the installation on their own.

For households which have been disconnected from their primary heat-

ing source, 150 portable electric heaters are available for distribution, as well as hundreds of blankets, both conventional and electric. These blankets will come to EnergyCare through the **Blanket St. Louis** blanket drive which will be conducted over the winter. (Please see related article on page 3 of this issue.)



EnergyCare staff member weatherizing a window in a client's home.

Volunteer groups from various schools, social and church groups have already signed up to assist EnergyCare in the weatherization of our clients' residences. This opportunity is available on a limited number of Saturdays throughout the winter, but we still have several Saturdays throughout the winter that are available. If you have a group who would be interested in this type of "hands on" volunteer service, please contact us via email or a phone call.

Additionally, in cooperation with Laclede Gas Company, EnergyCare will make arrangements for the minor repair of malfunctioning furnaces for 15 low-income elderly homeowners in St. Louis City and County.

EnergyCare's Winter Warming Program will run through the end of March 2012. We are hoping for our readers' support of our efforts on behalf of medically at risk St. Louisans this winter. Thank you for your concern and caring for our low-income elderly, disabled, homebound or seriously ill neighbors!

## Recapping Our Summer Services

It was a long, hot summer this year, and EnergyCare's service provider staff of three was extremely busy helping as many clients as possible. The phone seemed to never stop ringing. EnergyCare logged a total of 8,841 calls from people seeking help trying to keep cool or needing other forms of assistance. More than 1,200 people, alone, called requesting an air conditioning unit, and unfortunately our supply this summer was extremely limited. This fact meant that a strict protocol for prioritizing needs had to be observed, so that the available units went to those who needed them most. By the end of the summer program, a total of 206 air conditioning units, virtually all the units available, had been installed in the homes of home-bound elderly, ill, or disabled individuals, as well as families with very young, at-risk children.

While EnergyCare wasn't able to honor all of the requests that came in for help, a total of 4,951 people did receive direct services from this agency, including referrals to appropriate agencies where assistance for their need could be obtained, as well as information.

Service providers made more than 280 home visits to assess needs and deliver services including visits to 53 homes to service or inspect previously installed EnergyCare air conditioning units. In addition, 15 households received energy assistance grants to help pay down outstanding bills and insure that the utility would remain connected. We are grateful to everyone who was able to help us financially this summer! Without your help, it would not have been possible! Thank You!

## 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;
- \* Advocate for client's needs;
- \* 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 as 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.

## The People We Serve

*Katherine and Willie are real people who have received assistance from EnergyCare. They are representative of the many low-income elderly, disabled, ill or very young people EnergyCare helps year in and year out. Service Provider, Jana Lekbrink describes her experience working with them.*

Katherine and Willie are an elderly couple living in north St. Louis city. Both of them suffer from major health problems. Katherine needs to use an oxygen generator to aid her with her breathing problems. Although she is able to get around with the generator, it is difficult for her to leave her home. Katherine's husband, Willie, has had a major stroke which has left him totally bed-bound. They are fortunate to have some family in the area and are able to call on them for assistance, they had confidence that they could reach out to EnergyCare for some additional help which their family was unable to provide to them.

During the month of July, with high temperatures, the small air conditioner unit in their bedroom stopped working. Being on a fixed income, they did not have the means to purchase a new unit that they needed to survive the heat. Steve Baer and I set out to their home

to install a new window air conditioner for the couple. Both Katherine and Willie were extremely grateful for our help. While we were at their home, we told them about EnergyCare's other assistance programs. They expressed their interest in our weatherization program and we made arrangements to weatherize their home in the fall.

In late September, EnergyCare renewed its partnership with Villa Duchesne High School, and with the help of the 14 volunteers from the school we were able to weatherize Katherine and Willie's house. Now they will be safely warm inside their home this winter and, hopefully, save on their heating bill. The volunteers did a wonderful job. We look forward to them coming back to help out another family. Katherine welcomed the girls into her home with open arms and appreciates all that EnergyCare has done for her family.



## Spotlight On Our Volunteers

In late August, EnergyCare was once again pleased to host a group of 17 young women and men, incoming freshmen from Washington University. They were participants in the University's *Leadership Through Service Program*, which is a constituent element of their orientation to



*Incoming freshman from Washington University assisted EnergyCare through the Leadership Through Service Program.*

Washington University and the St. Louis area.

These young people, representing several States and foreign countries, joined hands with one another and us to help with some needed work around EnergyCare's offices. One group helped through the assembly of weatherization kits for distribution to low-income households this winter. Another helped in the assembly and preparation of an out-going mailing. And, since the maintenance of the outside of our building had been put off owing to the busy schedule this summer, the largest part of the group helped by "getting their hands dirty," cutting the grass, policing the grounds and trimming the shrubs.

We are most grateful for the hard work these students put in around the building! The grounds looked fantastic when they were finished! We wish them much success in their studies and

in their futures!

In mid-September, EnergyCare was the recipient of yet even more volunteer generosity. A group composed of six students and staff members from Maryville University offered their time and talent to assist EnergyCare's preparation for the 2011-12 Winter Warming Program, as part of the annual "*Maryville Reaches Out*" program.

These wonderful people braved EnergyCare's dark basement, and went right to work measuring, cutting and folding vinyl and assembling even more weatherization kits, which will be distributed to low-income households with an able-bodied resident who can do the installation.

We are grateful for the assistance of both groups! Their efforts will produce a warmer winter for many more of our low-income neighbors. All of these friends of EnergyCare help to show the truth of what we always say:

***"Volunteers Expand the Possibilities!"***

## ***Eighth Annual Blanket St. Louis Drive Set***

The ***Eighth Annual Blanket St. Louis*** blanket drive has been scheduled for November 1, 2011 through March, 2012. Organizers have set a goal, this year, of collecting 700 new and gently used blankets for distribution among EnergyCare's low-income elderly, homebound, disabled, medically at-risk clients and families with very young children.



***Blankets donated to EnergyCare by FirstBank employees during the 7th Blanket St. Louis***

the drop-off sites (*places and hours when donations may be made*) will be posted on our website ([www.energy-care.org](http://www.energy-care.org)), as well as on our **Facebook** page.

If you, or a group from your church, synagogue or school, would like to hold a blanket drive to benefit EnergyCare through the *Blanket St. Louis* drive, please call us at (314) 773-5900, and



***Some of the blankets gathered by the student body of Incarnate Word Academy***

We have already contacted a number of places and people to see if they would be willing to host blanket drives, or serve as drop off points for the *Blanket St. Louis* drive this year. As they are firmed up, details about the location of

we will give you information about how to set the drive up. We invite everyone to help us "warm hearts and homes" this winter through the *Blanket St. Louis* blanket drive!

## ***Views From The Executive Director***

The days are getting shorter and the nights are growing chilly. Before we know it, winter will be returning to the St. Louis metropolitan area. Sounds like it's time to kick off the EnergyCare Eighth Annual Blanket St. Louis campaign!

Each fall and winter, EnergyCare invites local individuals, schools, places of worship, businesses and other groups to organize blanket collections to benefit the low-income families we serve. We're looking for donations of new and "gently" used blankets to distribute to needy older adults and families as we visit their homes and apartments during the cold of winter.

We try to identify and reach-out to families who are struggling in winter with little or no heat in their homes. We employ a variety of methods to keep them safely warm. As funding allows, we pay delinquent home heating bills to keep the furnace on, or in some cases, facilitate the restoration of a heating utility that was involuntarily shut off. Where possible we weatherize peoples' homes or provide a weatherization kit to seal out chilling draughts and to keep valuable heat in homes. For most families without heat, we provide safe portable heaters and warm blankets.

A blanket might be an insignificant thing, but it can help us do a big job. A gift of a blanket can be a symbol of hope to a young mother struggling to keep her sick child warm. A gift of a blanket can mean comfort on a dark, cold night to a physically disabled person. A gift of a blanket may mean security to an older person facing the remainder of life on their own.

Recently I heard a story: when weaving a blanket, an Indian woman intentionally leaves a flaw in the weaving of that blanket to let its soul out. Help keep someone warm this winter. Grab your friends, family and co-workers and join the Eighth Annual Blanket St. Louis campaign. Let a little bit of your soul out!



## ***A Gathering of Angels (In Action)!***



EnergyCare is most grateful to a special category of people who, by their special gift of \$250 or more, help to ensure that its package of services are available for those who are most susceptible to the effects of seasonal extremes. We call the special friends our "**Angels in Action.**"

We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge those who made a special effort to help our low-income neighbors this past summer. "Earning their wings" are the following first-time ***Angels in Action***: **Donald and Sheryl Schanche**, and **Judith A. Willard**

"Re-gilding their halos" (*2 to 5 repeat gifts*) this past summer were: **Mary Ellen Harrison, Ruth L. Siteman, Francesca E. Di Rollo, Sr. Louise Roseman, Georgia Reinhardt, and W. Joseph Connolly.**

"Preening their wings" (*6 to 15 repeat gifts*) were: **Mary Louise Ernst, Susan M. Barrett, Joan M. Stepzinski, Steven and Jacqueline Rouff, Anita M. Maddox, Richard and Kathleen Gund, Charles and Dorris Goodhart, Mary C. Mulligan, Marilyn G. Trentman, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Van Der Tuin, Mike and Carol Wolken, Constance A. Deschamps, Sara Jean Glickert, Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Schorr, Nancy F. Kalishman, Dr. Edwin L. Anderson, MD, Deacon and Mrs. Richard Schellhase, Elizabeth Carver, and Sid and Julie Holthaus.**

Bring our Angelic Choir to full complement were our "Archangels" (*16 or more repeat gifts*): **Joanna May, M. Eileen Witterschein, Anita and John O'Connell, David and Roberta Imig, Mrs. Lynne N. Johnson, Ellen V. Barrios, Dr. and Mrs. Victor Clever, Marilyn A. Woebeking, David Scrivner, Edward O. Bramman, John and Maryfrances Lang, and Harold and Ruth Sher.** (*Also included in our "Archangel" category are several individuals who chose to remain anonymous.*)

With the prolonged and intense heat and humidity this past summer, we are most grateful to our special friends who were able to reach out and help our most vulnerable and medically at-risk neighbors remain safely cool, in their own homes and free from the effects of hyperthermia. Thank you so much, dear ***Angels In Action!***



2758 Wyoming St.  
Saint Louis, MO 63118-2313  
www.energycare.org

*Improving lives by degrees*

**Return Service Requested**

NONPROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
ST LOUIS MO  
PERMIT NO. 5313

**Remembering EnergyCare in your Will today, helps to provide our services to low-income St. Louis area residents tomorrow.**

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

## **Memorials**

Harry Baker  
Susan Barsch  
Aloisia Bartolowits  
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond E. Bauer  
Antoinette Blumenkemper  
Aimee M. Burns  
Arthur Campbell  
Marvin and Betty Cawvey  
Ben Downs  
Roy and Rita Dreiling  
Gene Fleher  
Martha Blanke Fuller  
Joseph Geers  
Deceased Parents of  
George F. Mockler, III  
Patrick Gregory  
Harvey Henricks

Joseph L. Hickey  
Harold Hirsh  
Christine Ivcich  
Sr. Joselita, CSJ  
Robert Kaiser, Sr.  
Sr. Pat Kelley, CCVI  
Steve Knable  
Deceased of the  
Knebel Family  
Dr. Robert A. Koetting  
Blanche Lamkin  
Joseph and Frances Laramie  
Eugene Leonard  
Sr. Celeste Marie, O.P.  
Robert and Virginia May  
George L. McDonnell  
Bertha McGrellis  
Leo and Ida Meyer  
Steve Morgan

Mary E. Murphy  
LeAnn Pate  
Lt. Aloysius J. Proskey, Jr., M.D.  
Mr. and Mrs. John Quinlan  
B. J. Schneider  
Anne Marie Skoff  
Msgr. Robert Slattery  
John A. Solari  
Tom Taszarek  
Donna Wiese  
Walter Wuertz

## **Tributes**

Fr. Joseph Laramie, S.J.  
*Ordination to Priesthood*  
Zella William, PhD  
*Doctorate in Education/Administration*  
In Thanksgiving