



Winter Wrap-Up: Meeting and Exceeding

As the EnergyCare staff sat down late in the summer of 2010 to discuss the goals for the winter, one priority superceded others: help those who cannot help themselves, which meant that we had to be more sensitive to our clients' individual situations. An effort was made to free up more funding by decreasing the number of weatherization kits we put together, so that more material for direct home weatherization would be made available, ensuring that those who needed our service most would be able to receive it.

Consequently, the goals for winter 2010-2011 differed from past winters. The home weatherization goal rose to 100, almost 40 more than 2009-2010. The weatherization kit goal decreased to 50, even though 212 had been distributed the year prior. We decided to put more effort into reaching those who could not, physically, help themselves, while also maintaining our program for those who were physically able to do their own weatherization.

Other goals for the winter included 20 furnace repairs for homeowners, 150 heaters, and a total of 600 home visits (about six home visits per day).

EnergyCare service providers Kenneth Cattage, Jana Lakebrink,

Steve Baer, and Claire Ewersmann had their work cut out for them. Thanks to the help of some fantastic volunteer groups throughout the stormy and dangerously cold winter, EnergyCare was able to help more people than was originally thought possible.

EnergyCare met and exceeded its goal to perform more home weatherizations with a final total of 103 households (*representing nearly 300 people*) weatherized. Also, for those who were in need of immediate heat, 150 personal space heaters were distributed to the seriously ill and elderly, meeting their need.

For those of our neighbors who needed their furnaces looked at, EnergyCare was able to arrange for, and cover the cost of the minor repair of a total of 25 furnaces, exceeding the original goal. Seventy-one "do-it-yourself" weatherization kits were also distributed to families, again meeting the need and allowing more time, money, and energy to assist those in more critical need of help. EnergyCare was also able to meet its ambitious goal of 600 home visits with a total of 601, thus reaching over 1,600 people.

In addition to the distribution of emergency goods, EnergyCare also

had a great winter in the energy assistance department, assisting 106 households (*approximately 295 people*) with their gas and electric bills, helping them to stay warm during their time of need. All told, this winter EnergyCare was able to assist over 1,000 low-income individuals!

After our 27th winter, EnergyCare is continuing to benefit from the generosity of the surrounding community and continuing to grow in its ability to assist those most in need.

All of us here at EnergyCare want to thank those who have helped us over the winter with their time, talent, energy, and financial support! We are deeply grateful for all of you thinking of those in need in our area.



Volunteers from the First Unitarian Church of St. Louis assist in weatherizing a client's home.

Looking Ahead to Summer, 2011

EnergyCare will begin the Summer Cooling Program for the 28th time this May with a familiar but ever important goal of assisting the seriously ill and elderly stay safely cool in the St. Louis heat and humidity. To protect our neighbors, air conditioners will be installed in the homes of those who qualify, and previously installed air conditioners will be serviced if they are not working properly. Depending on funding, EnergyCare may also have the capacity to assist clients with their utility bills.

Over the past three summers, EnergyCare has been lucky enough to have the supplies necessary to install an average of 215 air conditioners, with a huge spike in 2010 of 286 units installed. However, as it stands now, EnergyCare will not have the necessary supplies to assist as many clients as we have in past years.

We need your help! If you have any new or lightly used air conditioning units, smaller than 10,000 BTU's, that you are no longer using, please keep us in your thoughts. Every unit that we

receive can potentially save someone's life and keep them safely cool this summer. So be a lifesaver with EnergyCare this year!

Remember that you can always contact us at changinglives@energycare.org, or you can find us on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn! Thank you all for your continued support of our efforts. Without you, EnergyCare would not be able to meet the needs of our less fortunate St. Louis area neighbors. 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

Ms. Tina 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 Providers, Jana Lakebrink and Steve Baer describe their experience working with Ms. Tina.

Ms. Tina is an older woman who suffers from asthma, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, bronchitis, and arthritis. She often has difficulty breathing and she uses a cane to help her mobility, but the cold weather was keeping her homebound. On January 5th, Jana and I went to Ms. Tina's home in Benton Park to weatherize her windows against the winter cold.

She greeted us at the door with a big smile, repeatedly called us 'sweetheart' and 'honey', and helped us move things away from the windows. She was nothing less than cheerful that we were able to help her insulate her windows from the cold. "It's such a blessing that you all were able to come out," she said. Her kitchen, where she was sitting, was indeed cold, and judging from the cough she was fighting, it wasn't a good environment for her.

When we were finished weatherizing, Ms. Tina informed us that her son had

just been killed within the past week. She was noticeably struggling with the shock of losing someone who meant so much to her, but despite the pain and sadness she was going through, she put on a smile and talked with us as if we were old friends.

Before we left, Ms. Tina picked something up off of the kitchen table and handed it to Jana. It was a statue of an angel. "That's you," said Tina. "You truly are my angel and I just wanted you to know that. If you ever have any difficult clients, just look at her and say to yourself, 'I'm an angel!'" Jana smiled widely and thanked Ms. Tina.

The weatherization at Tina's house was among the most gratifying and warmest experiences we have had while working with EnergyCare. People like Tina are who we hope to help every day we work. She keeps in touch with us on a regular basis and Jana's angel is still sitting right next to her computer monitor.

The EC Network:

Celebrating Our First Full Year In Social Media!

This February marked the one-year anniversary since EnergyCare officially became a social media presence. The idea to create EnergyCare's first ever online network originated with the desire to make our message urgent, fresh, and constant. Before we created pages and profiles on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, as well as a blog on Blogspot.com, EnergyCare's only online presence was a website that frequently showed outdated news and only offered a small comment box for online followers to communicate with the organization.

Our first step was to create an E-mail address that would be strictly for potential and existing donors, volunteers, and supporters to communicate with EnergyCare directly. After establishing a line of constant communication between those that make our mission possible, the next step was to expand into the world of social media.

Our first foray into this exciting world was with Twitter, on which we set up an organization profile. Through this profile, we were able to provide followers with instant updates about EnergyCare's daily work. By linking our Twitter account to

our organization home page, we were now able to provide instant updates to our website as well. No longer would our online presence be stagnant and stale now that we had the ability to instantly inform people about our daily efforts to keep our neighbors in the St. Louis area safe from extreme temperatures.

Facebook provided an opportunity to expand our presence online even further to include more detailed updates and photo galleries from volunteer events and experiences with clients. It also gave us an opportunity to reach a younger crowd, which we hope will soon contribute to more volunteers. LinkedIn is a website that is geared more towards professionals. It gives us more of an opportunity to share our experiences with readers in a longer, story-like form.

After a year of social media, we have 137 fans on Facebook, Twitter, and LinkedIn, with users from the 18-24 age group to users who are 55 years of age or older, mainly from the United States, but also from Spain, Indonesia, India, and Canada. Our Facebook page has received nearly 6,000 page views. It is our hope that our social network can con-

tinue to grow into an online community that will be in constant communication with EnergyCare and one that will have its finger on the pulse of the needs of our elderly and ill neighbors in the St. Louis area. We hope that this community will continue to support us day in and day out as we strive to fulfill our mission, and for all those of you who have helped make this first year of EnergyCare's social media presence a success, we sincerely thank you!

EnergyCare is proud to bear the Better Business Bureau of Eastern Missouri and Southern Illinois' "Wise Giving Alliance Stands for Charity Accountability" seal, indicating that this organization meets all 20 of the accountability standards the Wise Giving Alliance uses to judge a charity's business practices. The accountability standards were developed to assist donors in making sound giving decisions and to foster public confidence in charitable organizations. **This seal ensures donors that EnergyCare is responsible and ethical in its fundraising practices.**



stlouis.bbb.org



Spotlight On Our Volunteers

Throughout February, March, and April, St. Louis thaws out and residents are able to relax and keep warm without battling the extreme cold. Volunteers help EnergyCare wrap up the weatherization program, as well as prepare the newsletter for mailing.

Assisting EnergyCare were groups of students from **Christian Brothers College Preparatory High School** and **Villa Duchesne High School**. These volunteers donated their time on the weekends to help weatherize homes in the area that had not yet been reached.

The ladies from Villa Duchesne continued their year of service to EnergyCare by weatherizing two different houses in February, effectively helping us wrap our winter program. Thank you to Holly, Savannah, Andrea, Demi, Claire, and Tim for providing EnergyCare with another fantastic volunteer experience.

During a morning snowfall on Saturday, February 5th, a group of eight volunteers from CBC high school arrived

at EnergyCare to help weatherize the home of Mr. Coyle. Despite the dangerous road conditions, the energetic eight were able to weatherize all of the windows in Mr. Coyle's home under the experienced leadership of Charlie Beach.

After they had finished their work, the men from CBC asked for some shovels and cleared Mr. Coyle's steps and front path of ice and snow. "I didn't even ask them about it or bring it up to Mr. Coyle," said EnergyCare lead service provider and supervisor Kenneth Cattage, who was with the group. "They just went to work and did a great job, as they always do!"

On behalf of the Board of Directors, the staff and the clients of EnergyCare, we want to extend our deepest appreciation to those who gave of themselves to help other in need. Without your help, we could not fulfill our mission of helping those who suffer most in our community. Thank you!

Views From The Executive Director

In the waning days of last summer, the EC staff met with me to review our service goals for winter 2010-11. Once again we faced the perennial challenge of "doing more with less" in a recessionary environment. Our objective was clear: maximize our efforts to assist low income older adults and families amid the constraints of a limited 2010 budget.

At the time we had no idea that the winter of 2010-11 would be more severe than those experienced in recent years. Colder than normal temperatures were not expected nor was the higher than normal frequency of snowfalls. And, of course, the ice made reaching our home bound older adults all the more difficult, and sometimes treacherous, on untreated city side streets.

One hard decision that was reached during that planning session was to decrease the number of weatherization kits distributed to poor, young and healthy persons in favor of increasing our hands-on weatherization for the frail elderly, ill and disabled. While weatherizing 60 some odd homes in 2009-10, the staff agreed to target no less than 100 homes in 2010-11.

Organizationally speaking, this decision involved reallocating the valuable weatherization supplies that we purchased. The same dollars were spent as in the year before and roughly the same types of materials were acquired. Using them to achieve the greatest impact among those we serve was the issue. Trusting that the young and healthy would be more mobile and have more available options, the staff voiced their choice to devote our resources to help the most vulnerable in the community.

By the end of February, 2011, with one more month of winter to go, the EC Service Providers, aided by many hard working volunteers, had weatherized the 100th home of the season. It was satisfying to know that 60% more homebound elderly, ill and disabled individuals were kept safely warm in their own homes than the year below. As for me, it was reassuring to know that our decision was consistent with the Mission of EnergyCare. The staff once again showed that they valued the impact that they could make on human lives and were willing to work hard to achieve that end.

As always, thank you for helping us to assist others. Your continued concern and generosity are appreciated.

Volunteer Close-up: Ryan Cronin

On March 4th, DeSmet High School senior, Ryan Cronin, came to EnergyCare to volunteer his time and effort to help those we serve. On his first day with EnergyCare, Ryan weatherized two different houses with service providers Kenneth Cattage and Steve Baer. Both homes belonged to elderly ladies who were suffering from illnesses and disabilities and desperately needed the help.

"Ryan is a real hard worker," said Ken Cattage, after working with him for a couple weeks. "He's a dedicated guy who does great work. He really cares for the people we serve."

In addition to his time spent at EnergyCare, Ryan also volunteers his on the weekends rehabbing houses in North St. Louis for families with young children.

Ryan is an exceptional student and will head to Southern Illinois University, Edwardsville, in the fall, to pursue a degree in Civil Engineering. He is also an accomplished athlete, having played four years of football in at DeSmet as well as four years of ultimate Frisbee, which he hopes to continue at SIUE.

Ryan's uncle, Ed Cronin, is the Chairman of the Board of Directors for EnergyCare and was instrumental in arranging for this opportunity for Ryan to not only see but participate in the kind of work EnergyCare does on a daily basis.

EnergyCare
Trivia Night II
Mark your calendars and
join us on Saturday,
October 15th, 7:00 p.m.
at Incarnate Word Academy
2788 Normandy Drive
Bel Nor, MO 63121

Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Additional details
forthcoming



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A Gathering of Angels (In Action)



We are most grateful to a special category of donors who, by their special gift of \$250 or more, help to ensure that EnergyCare's package of services are available for those who are most vulnerable to the effects of seasonal extremes. We call these special friends our "Angels in Action." We would like to take the opportunity to acknowledge those who made a special effort to help our low-income, at-risk neighbors this past winter.

"Earning their wings" were the following first-time **Angels in Action**: Sharon Tucker and Eric Marquardt, Michael and Marilyn Schaefer, and Peggy O'Brien.

"Re-gilding their halos" (2 to 5 repeat gifts) this winter were: George and Diana Holway, Carol E. Clark, Mary Louise Ernst, Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Ritter, the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Margaret Mary Clancy, Fr. David E. Rauch, Laura L. Ray, the Members of the Amalgamated Transit Union, John and Sheryl O'Shaughnessy, Kay M. Karras, Susan Piroit Kapetanovic, William and Judith Becker, and Julie H. Reilly.

"Preening their wings" (6 to 15 repeat gifts) were: Richard and Kathleen Gund, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Van Der Tuin, Joan M. Stepzinski, Steven and Jacqueline Rouff, Gabrielle M. Mack, Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Schorr, Pat and Peggy Sly, Joan and Gene Slay, Skip and Ann Bergman, Susan M. Barrett, Dr. and Mrs. Daryl C. Thake, Mr. and Mrs. Fred Brown, Connie Deschamps, and Elizabeth Carver.

Bringing our angelic choir to full complement were our "Archangels" (16 or more repeat gifts): Joanna May, Mr. Edward O. Bramman, M. Eileen Witterschein, Dr. Blanca M. Perez, M.D., Marilyn A. Woebeking, David and Roberta Imig, Dr. and Mrs. Victor Clever, John and Maryfrances Lang, John and Anita O'Connell, and Ken and Nancy Winkler.

A special THANK YOU to all of our **Angels in Action**, whose concern and financial sacrifice enabled some of our low-income neighbors to remain safely warm and in their own homes this winter!

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

Aloisia Bartolowits
Bernard and Virginia Benz
Arthur Campbell
Marvin G. Cawvey
Richard W. Darragh
Roy and Rita Dreiling
Albert and Florence Fuchs
Alice E. Giovannini
John Grotti
Thomas J. Hammiller
Joseph Hickey
Lucille Kaiser
Robert Kaiser, Jr.
Robert Kaiser, Sr.
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Blanche Lamkin
Joseph and Frances Laramie
Patricia Fontana Lueken
Ruth Mary Marti
Elmer Meyer
Hugo and Albertina Meyer
Leo and Ida Meyer
Patricia M. Mohs
Celeste and John O'Connor
Evelyn Patterson
Virginia Piontek
Mr. and Mrs. John A. Quinlan
Don Reilly
Luanne Rheinberger-Funke
Margaret Roseman
Margaret Sheldon
Msgr. Robert Slattery

John William Snyder
John A. Solari
Doris Tempelmeyer
Roger Tharp
Walter Wuertz
Don and Genevieve Zengerling
Cosimo R. Zucchero

Tributes

Mrs. Terri Cooke
85th Birthday
Jacob Joseph Donahay
Welcome to the World!
Neil Rogers
21st Birthday
The Egyptian People
Peaceful Revolution