



Winter At Mid-Point: Responding to Need

The winter of 2010-11 will probably be go down in the record books as one of the more unusual winters in recent memory. We have seen temperatures ranging from the single digits to close to 70 degrees. The St. Louis area also saw tornadoes on New Years Eve, and a major snow-fall in late January.

Harsh winter weather produces challenges for everyone, but most especially for the low-income community. Through its service providers, EnergyCare does what it can to protect qualifying low-income elderly, home-bound, disabled or ill people and families with very young children and keep them safe from the effects of the winter weather. Starting each year in October, service providers and volunteers weatherize clients' homes using proven, low-cost materials and methods designed to prevent air infiltration into the home as well as the escape of heat from the home.

From the beginning of October until mid-January, service providers made over 400 home visits to determine eligibility and deliver services. This outreach touched the lives of

nearly 800 people, including 137 children. Seventy-four homes were weatherized during this period. An additional 71 "do-it-yourself" weatherization kits were distributed to households with an able-bodied person who could do the weatherization, after a brief, on-site,



A volunteer from Villa Duchesne High School weatherizing a client's home.

training session.

Many of the places we visited were simply cold and the weatherization of the home would take care of the problem. However, a number of the homes had been disconnected from their pri-

mary heating source. In this case, a portable electric heater is given to the family, in addition to blankets, to assist them in remaining warm. More than 120 heaters were distributed, and over 150 households received blankets.

Another component of the EnergyCare Winter Warming Program is a furnace repair program that is available to low-income elderly homeowners. In collaboration with Laclede Gas Company, EnergyCare was able to provide 20 low-income elderly homeowners with minor repairs to their non-operational furnaces, and get them up and running.

With several more weeks to go before the Winter Warming Program comes to an end, we know that there will be more people seeking our assistance. All of us at EnergyCare want to thank those who have helped us so far this winter with their time, talent and financial support! We are deeply grateful for the confidence you have placed in us and allowing us to be your representatives in the community. Please continue to help us warm the hearts and homes of those who are in need!

Blankets, Blankets, and MORE Blankets!

Since the beginning of the **Seventh Annual Blanket St. Louis** blanket drive, this past November, EnergyCare staff have been kept busy sorting, storing and handing out blankets by the dozens! Thanks to the efforts of several individuals, churches and businesses, EnergyCare has been the recipient of over **830 blankets** to date!

We would like to thank everyone who has participated so far: **Incarnate Word Academy, Webster University, the St. Vincent De Paul Society of St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church, 1st Unitarian Church of St. Louis, Our Lady of Providence Catholic Church, Christ Church Cathedral, St. Nicholas**

Greek Orthodox Church, Heartland Baptist Church and St. Norbert Catholic Church.

We also acknowledge our Friends at **First Bank** and in a special way, **Mr. Ed Furman**, for their very generous donation of 117 electric blankets! Since 1999, these kind people have donated over 1300 electric blankets to EnergyCare for distribution among our low-income neighbors!

Several other businesses held blanket drives for us this year, as well. A big thank you to **Energizer**, and **Mary Molitor** who coordinated their collection. We are also grateful to **Insituform Technologies**, and **Yvonne Tedder** who

coordinated their collection.

Last but not least, we would like to thank **Chris and Karen Baer, Stella Worms, Kerry Cronin, the Jovanovic Family, Keandria Frazier, Brad and Karen Haas & Family, Yara Halaseh, and Teddy Kemp** who also contributed blankets to EnergyCare. Many, many thanks to everyone! The **Blanket St. Louis** drive continues to the end of March.



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. Bobby 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 Claire Ewersmann describe their experience working with her.

Ms. Bobby is an older, single woman who lives in her own home in North St. Louis County. Like many of our neighbors this winter, she has been going through some difficult times. She is recovering from a stroke she suffered in early 2010, and as a result is unable to work.

Initially, Bobby called EnergyCare asking to have her home weatherized in order to save on her heating bill. She also mentioned that some of the windows were cracked and letting in a significant amount of cold air. We made arrangements to visit her and see what we could do to help.

When we arrived to weatherize her home, the house was extremely cold. Bobby then informed us that her furnace had broken down, and that the only heat she had was from her stove - definitely not a safe option. We decided to give her a space heater which she could move

from room to room to help keep her warm. The house was so cold, initially, that our weatherization materials would not adhere properly to the window frame until we warmed them next to the stove. Once the vinyl was in place, Ms. Bobby began to notice the temperature change and was very pleased.

Through our furnace repair program, we were able to have Laclede Gas Company's technicians come and repair her furnace. Claire and I were very happy that we were able to help Ms. Bobby remain safely warm and in her own home this winter. Just being in her cold home for the couple of hours that we were there, Claire and I came to a deeper realization of how difficult it is for our fellow St. Louisans who do not have a warm place to live. This is why EnergyCare's services are so important and truly touch the lives of the people we serve.

Sometimes, Wishes Really DO Come True!

In the Fall issue of The Connection, the staff at EnergyCare voiced a few of their "wishes," in the hope that, just maybe, someone would be in a position to grant them. Within a few days of the Fall issue going out, to our amazement, our wishes had been granted.

Our first wish was for a new windshield on our aging service van, which over the course of the past couple of years had sustained some cracking, which was getting worse as time went on.



Windshield Before

Thanks to **Mr. Don Norris**, of St. Louis, this wish was granted. Mr. Norris made arrangements to have the windshield replaced and covered the cost. Now, our service staff has a clear view of the road ahead of them!



Windshield After

Our second wish was to have a more energy efficient replacement for our 27+ year old refrigerator.

We didn't have to wait long before another good friend of EnergyCare, **Ms. Joanna May**, contacted us wanting to help out! Thanks to a cash donation from Ms. May, and some good bargain hunting, EnergyCare's staff now has a new EnergyStar rated refrigerator in which to store their lunches and liquid refreshments.



Our third wish was for giftcards from WalMart or Home Depot to purchase supplies around the office. Although we didn't receive gift cards, *per se*, **Mr. Robert Bartolowits**, of Allison Park, PA, sent a cash donation to EnergyCare, asking that it be applied "to wish one, two, or three"!

Thanks to Mr. Bartolowits' generous gift, we were able to stock up on paper towels, soap, tissue, cleaning supplies and a host of other consumable "necessities of agency life".

We are extremely grateful to our friends who responded to our wishes. Their generosity in granting these wishes allows us to worry a bit less about agency needs. It has also allowed EnergyCare to devote more of its financial resources to its mission: ensuring that low-income elderly, disabled, chronically and/or seriously ill persons and families with very young children are kept safely warm in the winter, or cool in the summer, and in their own homes. On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff, please accept our gratitude and best wishes!



Spotlight On Our Volunteers

With a very small service staff, EnergyCare depends a great deal on its volunteers to help in bringing its summer and winter services to those who need them. We have always been blessed with an eager supply of men and women, both young and “not so young,” who have been a great support to us.

Between August of last year and the end of January, 2011, EnergyCare has hosted ten groups from a variety of places totaling 159 individuals.

Assisting EnergyCare were groups of students from **Christian Brothers College Preparatory High School, Villa Duchesne High School, John Burroughs School, Washington University Leadership Through Service and Little Flower School** in Richmond Heights.

We also welcomed a group from the **First Unitarian Church of St. Louis**, a group from **Heartland Baptist Church**, in

Oakville, as well as two groups from the **Boeing Believers in Christ** (employees and families affiliated with the Boeing Corporation).

These volunteers donated a combined total of well over 450 hours of their time to assist in both the assembly of weatherization kits and the direct weatherization of clients homes.

With the chill weather which the St. Louis area has experienced from the mid-November through the end of January, we know that EnergyCare clients appreciated the efforts of all our volunteers, which helped to warm not only our clients homes, but their hearts as well.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff and the clients of EnergyCare, we want to extend our deepest appreciation to those who gave of themselves to help others in need. It is true: “Volunteers extend the possibilities!” Thank you to all who reached out to those in need!

How You Can Help EnergyCare Help Others

EnergyCare is a private, unaffiliated, non-profit agency and must rely on the generosity of its friends and benefactors, as well as the general public, in order to provide its often life-preserving services to its low-income clients.

While EnergyCare has two main, seasonal programs, the services provided to the low-income community continue throughout the year.

There are a number of ways that our friends can help us to provide for the energy-related needs of the low-income community:

1. Put a stamp on your return envelope. Although we include a donation envelope in each of our mailings, the charge to EnergyCare is **52 cents** for each donation received in our return envelopes. The postage is reimbursed to us, however, if there is a first class stamp on the envelope. In truth, your stamp is an additional gift to EnergyCare!

2. Consider becoming a Monthly Donor to EnergyCare. We will send you a supply of return envelopes. Once a month, write your check - or note your **credit card number and expiration date** in the space indicated on the return envelope - and drop it in the mail.

An even easier way is to **become a monthly donor using our Electronic Funds Transfer program.** In this way, you determine an amount that is automatically taken from your checking or savings

account each month, in a bank-to-bank transfer, for as long as you choose. This is, perhaps, the safest and easiest way of making a gift to EnergyCare.

3. Become an EnergyCare volunteer. With a small staff, there are always a variety of activities, ranging from office assistance to direct service to clients, for which volunteers provide valuable and needed help. Check our website (www.energycare.org) for a full listing of opportunities.

4. Make an on-line donation to assist EnergyCare's efforts. While you are reading the latest news from EnergyCare on our website (*see web address above*), you can make a donation using the secure PayPal option, or your credit card. All donations are acknowledged by mail.

5. Remember EnergyCare in your Estate Planning. A final gift, through your will, by means of an insurance policy, or through designation as a beneficiary of a Trust can help to ensure that EnergyCare and its programs will be available to those in need for years to come! (*Our full legal name is: Missouri EnergyCare, Inc.*)

If you have any questions, or for additional information, please contact EnergyCare's Director of Development, Tom Gardner, at (314) 773-5968 x 23, or email him at:

tom@energycare.org

Views From The Executive Director

I want to thank each and every one of you for the gift of your time, talents and/or financial contribution to EnergyCare during 2010. Your concern and generosity have been exceptional given the uncertain economic times in which we live.

Your most recent gift allows us to continue to assist those who are among the poorest of the poor in our community. Many of the families we serve walk a financial tightrope. When the cost of food, gasoline and utilities fluctuate, they, in turn, teeter on the brink of disaster.

Some of the families we assist are comprised of working parents with school aged children. Some are extended families that include not only dependent children, but older adults who can no longer live independently.

By contrast, some families are headed by grandmothers who are caring for a new generation while forgoing their leisure years.

Many young moms and dads labor daily at low wage service jobs to put food on the table. Some have learned the hard lesson that the last one hired is often the first one fired — that is, laid off because of a sluggish regional economy.

Some individuals we assist are out of the job market due to advanced age or physical disability. They subsist on low, fixed incomes in the form of their monthly social security or disability check.

Your generous gift, delivered to these families in the form of weatherization materials, blankets, heaters or home heating bill payments, is a beacon of hope for each recipient family.

Your concern, conveyed by an empathetic EnergyCare service provider or an eager, young volunteer, is a reassuring message for an overburdened older adult.

I know that the individuals and families we serve would thank you personally if they could. That's why I'm doing it for them. Thank you for your continued concern and generosity.



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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

Ann Austin
Aloisia Bartolowits
Mr. and Mrs. Raymond E. Bauer
Paul R. Bear
Mary Bebeau
Katherine T. Bippin
Louis "Lou" Borgmeyer
Virginia B. Bramman
Arthur Campbell
June M. Canepa
Kathleen Cannady
Joan Carver
Marvin G. Cawvey
Tom and Betty Ann Clancy
Richard Coleman
Philip James Degnan
Lee and Larry Dolan
Benjamin C. Downs
Floyd and Patti Ellis
Michael J. Frank
Sister Mary Geraldine, CSC
Humbert and Mary Ghio
Deceased of the
Grisham and Musial Families
Fred and Mary Guilbault
Richard and Rosemary Hagerty
Dick Hammer
Roger L. Hantak
Veronica A. Haulcy-Wells
Deceased and Living of the Hermann Family
Joseph Hickey
Jan Hoeferkamp
Deceased of the
Huck and Kinsella Families
Kalilah M. Johnson
Lucille Kaiser
Robert Kaiser, Sr.
Robert Kaiser, Jr.
Peter C. Karras

Jim Kelley
Sr. Patricia Ann Kelley, CCVI
Tom Kelley
Joan Costello Kemp
Lillian Koerber
Timothy Korobey
Edward and Stella Koziatek
Blanche Lamkin
Joseph and Frances Laramie
Sylvester J. Liss
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Patricia Maguire
Robert and Virginia May
Sister Dolores McGhee, DC
Dr. and Mrs. William A. McGuire
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Russell and Ruth Meredith
Hazel C. Merker
Hugo and Albertina Meyer
Leo and Ida Meyer
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Roberta Raglin
Bob, Jack and Karen Ann Richards
John Michael Roehm
Deceased of the
Rose, Kelley and Herlihy Families
Irene A. Schaan
Michael and Anna Schmidt
Margaret Sheldon
Julia Smith

John A. Solari
Jane and Mary Jo Sumner
Jane and Mary Jo Thole
Tom Timme
Mr. Lee A. Tyson
Clare Underwood
Earl Voelz
Don Weyerich

Tributes

Holiday Greetings:

Paul Richter and Kim Pierce
Rick and Fran Cook Sr. Jackie Dillon, CSJ
Hilgeman, Stillman & Bender Families
Wilbert Eckstein Dr. William K. Hall, MD
E. P. & K. L. Gibbons Family
Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hoffman
Roy & Eileen Holschen Terry Houlihan
Susie King

Drs. Charles and Kimberly Leonard
Luke and Charlotte Meatte

Birthday Greetings:

Mrs. Teel Ackerman John H. Doing
Rabbi Dr. Jay Goldberg

Special Tributes:

Connie and Norman Schlass
60th Anniversary
Leonard and Diane Borgmeyer
Golden Anniversary
Larry and Claire Martin
Wedding Anniversary
Raymond Cardinal Burke
Elevation to Cardinal
Mrs. Jo Taylor
Continual Friendship
"A Return to Faith"

In thanksgiving for help with bills
In thanksgiving for blessings received
In thanksgiving that I am able to make a donation