Open the Door!
President’s Message
By Gloria D. Huschka

Have you ever heard the phrase, “when one door closes, another one opens”? ECHO is the local door for many people who are in financial distress. ECHO was created in late 1969 as a non-profit, faith-community sponsored charity organization, serving low-income individuals and families in the Janesville area. It exists through the generosity of others in the community. ECHO stands for Everyone Cooperating to Help Others. Congregations, many individuals, businesses, school and community groups, foundations, and social service agencies are some of the supporters of ECHO. And we are grateful for each and every one of you!!

Through the years ECHO has grown from being a food pantry and clothing depot to being a charity organization called upon to help meet temporary housing, food, transportation, and other emergency needs for low-income families.

ECHO seeks to help people help themselves through its programs and services, which are not readily available through other sources, and to assist them in utilizing other existing services and programs in the community. It does not impose any theological or political value system upon those served.

As our thoughts turn from the drab, cold, dreary days of winter, to the bright sunshine of spring, I hope you will walk with us at ECHO as we take you on a tour of what ECHO is and what it offers to the people searching for an open door!
Good News
Karen Lisser, Executive Director

We received a letter from Charity Navigator on March 1, 2017, congratulating us on earning the coveted 4-Star Rating from Charity Navigator for a second consecutive year, for demonstrating strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency. They indicated in our letter that they highlight the fine work of efficient, ethical and open charities. Their goal is to provide donors with essential information needed to give them greater confidence in the charitable choice they make. They state that it demands rigor, responsibility and commitment to openness, and further state that ECHO’s supporters should feel much more confident that their hard-earned dollars are being used efficiently and responsibly.

I have always felt that we should do what’s right and do it the right way – with transparency, good stewardship, openness, and kindness. It is nice to receive confirmation from a well-respected independent evaluator that they agree with what we have felt for many years. It is important to be open about our financials and services. ECHO is a small grassroots charity that does a lot in an efficient, accountable, transparent and ethical way. Those of you reading this newsletter probably already had confidence in ECHO, and we hope that you now have even more confidence in us and will continue to support us and that you will help spread the word to others. Local support is our lifeblood.

Two of our annual reports have been updated to include 2016. They are on our website. ECHO Services 1975 – 2016 and Dollars and Sense Report 2016. The Comparative Services Report shows the first and last year of the first two Executive Directors and the first year with me as Executive Director, plus three other years, including last year. The spark that became ECHO was in late 1969. The first Executive Director was hired in 1975, so that is when statistics started being kept. ECHO’s annual Dollars and Sense Report combines our services for the year, what was spent on those services, incorporating program accounting, and what the in-kind value of donated goods and services add to that. The result – over 98% of donations are used for Direct Assistance to the people we serve, and under 2% for Administration.

Smoking Cessation classes at ECHO. I am excited that we are adding these classes for our clients, in collaboration with other organizations/sponsors. First, we recently attended a community leaders’ breakfast at SSM Health and received information about 4 mini grants of $5,000 each that they are offering non-profits to address any of their top 3 initiatives: Obesity; Smoking Cessation; Fall Prevention. I had already been in conversations with Ian Hedges at HealthNet regarding offering Smoking Cessation classes here. We decided to do this together and bring in Youth2Youth. On March 17, together, we were awarded one of the grants. ECHO will be doing the case management, Youth2Youth will lead the classes at ECHO, and HealthNet will be providing medical resources, including patches and other meds.

UW-Extension 8-Week Eating Smart, Being Active Classes at ECHO. Sessions include discussions and hand-outs on: tips for menu planning and smart shopping; goal setting to make healthy food choices and to stay active; ideas and recipes for quick, healthy, low-cost meals. There is a free gift at each class.

Our clients will have opportunities and resources to become healthier and save money. We are pleased to be working together with these organizations.
Shannon’s Story

In 2016, Shannon, a single parent, and her infant daughter were living with Shannon's mother. The relationship between Shannon and her mother deteriorated, and they were kicked out. Shannon found a friend who let her move in, but that situation was no better. She found herself and her infant daughter on the streets in the dead of winter. When Shannon arrived at ECHO, she was very upset and did not know what she would do. ECHO was able to help Shannon with lodging; she and her case worker prepared an action plan, a list of tasks for her to complete by the next week.

The next week, Shannon came back with a big smile; she felt a weight was lifted off her shoulders. She felt hopeful for the future. Shannon had met with a Rock County Human Services caseworker to start the W-2 program. She had applied for multiple jobs and had an interview for one, and she even found a relative who would watch her daughter when she had interviews.

After only three weeks of emergency lodging, Shannon found an apartment and started a new job. She was approved for childcare through the county. ECHO continued her lodging, and as part of a special program, ECHO will be helping her with first month’s rent and security deposit, and she will be able to move into the apartment almost immediately. ECHO also helped with their other services - food, transportation assistance, personal and household supplies, and case management.

Shannon is so happy. She said, “I am thankful to ECHO for their help and support. It has made a big difference to me and my daughter.”
CROP Hunger Walk
Ending Hunger Around the Block and Around the World
Sunday, April 23, 2017 1:00 pm
Cargill United Methodist Church (2000 Wesley Ave., Janesville)

In 2016 the Janesville CROP Hunger Walk raised $45,662.66. In July of 2016 ECHO received 25% of the total or more than $11,000. Summer months are always slow giving months for ECHO. The funds CROP walkers raised through the CROP Hunger Walk came at a perfect time. Thank you!

The funds we raised will help our neighbors in Janesville who do not have enough food to feed their families. The families served by ECHO include senior citizens who cannot make their Social Security check stretch far enough. They include single moms struggling to raise their children. They include many who work for minimum wage, which does not begin to cover family expenses. You have made a difference for your neighbors.

With your help, vulnerable children in developing countries are reaching their milestone 5\textsuperscript{th} birthday—healthy and well-nourished. Struggling families are learning new farming techniques that help them put food on the table and earn much needed income. Impoverished communities are developing reliable systems to provide safe, clean drinking water. You are literally changing lives!

We are prevailing upon your generous spirits again this year. The CROP Hunger Walk will be Sunday, April 23\textsuperscript{rd} with registration beginning at 1:00 and the Walk stepping off from Cargill United Methodist Church at 1:30 pm. If you have not walked before, we encourage you to consider walking this year. You will enjoy the company of others on the Walk, get excellent exercise and raise needed funds. If you have never donated to the CROP Walk, please consider donating to someone you know who is walking. Jessica Locher, staff member at ECHO, will be participating in the Walk and will value your support.

In 2016 we raised more funds than we did in 2015. Can we increase again this year? With your generous help, we can and we will!

**40th Annual CROP Hunger Walk**
April 23\textsuperscript{rd} 1:00 pm Cargill United Methodist Church

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**GO GREEN. REQUEST YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL AT www.echojanesville.org**

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**Needed: Large Brown Paper Bags, Plastic Bags, Twist Ties and Plastic Bottles**
Drop them off at ECHO Mon.-Fri. 9am-Noon, or Mon.-Thur. 1-4pm

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**ECHO Needs**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Soup and Crackers</th>
<th>Peanut Butter &amp; Jelly</th>
<th>Toilet Paper</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mac &amp; Cheese</td>
<td>Canned Meals</td>
<td>Diapers</td>
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<td>Cereal</td>
<td>Instant Coffee</td>
<td>Baby Wipes</td>
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<td>Spaghetti Sauce</td>
<td>Shampoo</td>
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<td>Feminine Supplies</td>
<td>Conditioner</td>
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Easter Baskets for Children

ECHO will be packing and distributing Easter baskets to children who would otherwise go without during this most blessed holiday.

Items needed for the baskets are:

✧ Children’s Easter baskets
✧ Individually wrapped candy
✧ Plastic eggs
✧ Plastic basket wrap

Items can be dropped off at the ECHO Office during regular business hours Monday-Friday 9am-Noon or Monday-Thursday 1-4pm or by appointment by calling 754-5333.

Volunteers are needed on:

✧ **Monday, April 10 at 9am** to pack Easter baskets at the ECHO Office.
✧ **Tuesday - Thursday, April 11 to April 13, 9am - 4pm**
  to distribute baskets at the ECHO office.

If you would like to volunteer, please call Fran at 754-5333.

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation now to keep food on the tables and a roof over the heads of our neighbors who are struggling.

$30 □ $60 □ $120 □ $250 □ $500 □ Other □ $________

Name: _____________________ Phone #: ___________ E-Mail: ______________________________
Address: _____________________________________________________ Zip Code: ______________

Donations can also be made online at www.echojanesville.org
For payment by credit card, visit our website above.

Your gift is tax deductible as provided by law. Thank you for your support.
ECHO assists clients with fans to keep cool in warm weather and bikes for clients to get to jobs.

Last year ECHO was able to provide fans to 236 clients.

Last year ECHO was able to provide bicycles to 11 clients.

Please consider donating a bicycle or fan to those in need.

ECHO Welcomes Joe Locher as a new Client Advocate/Rent Supervisor

My name is Joe Locher. I am the new Rent Supervisor and a Client Advocate at ECHO. I am returning to ECHO after three years of working at House of Mercy. I returned because I love this organization, the staff, and its mission to assist low-income and homeless residents of Janesville. I previously interned and worked for ECHO from 2009-2013 and it feels like I have returned home. I thank Karen Lisser and the ECHO Executive Committee for allowing me to rejoin this great organization.

A bit about me: I enjoy spending time with my wife (Jessica) and two greyhounds (Molly & Spock), exercising, reading comics, and playing video games. When it is nice out, I really look forward to biking Janesville’s wonderful trails. So if you are out and about, you’ll be hearing me yell “PASSING ON THE LEFT!”

Name: Joan Starks

How long have you volunteered at ECHO? 20 years.

How did you get involved at ECHO? Retired and wanted to volunteer.

What do you do at ECHO? I pack food orders and help stock shelves on Wednesdays.

What is your favorite thing about ECHO? Friendly volunteers and office personnel at ECHO are very nice.

What is one thing about ECHO that surprised you when you started volunteering? That so many families need help in our community!
National Volunteer Week
April 23 - 29, 2017

The Staff of ECHO along with our Board of Directors say thank you to our hundreds of volunteers. We appreciate all that you do to help, from our food pantry to fundraising events and everything in between. Your dedication and time in volunteering for ECHO are priceless. ECHO volunteers gave over 24,000 hours in 2016! THANK YOU!

If you would like to volunteer at ECHO, please call Fran at 754-5333 to schedule a visit to fill out the volunteer application.

Volunteers Needed
If you can help unload and sort food on Saturday, May 13, please call Fran at 754-5333

ECHO MAILBAG

Dear Karen, Jessica and Partners:

We can all agree that the holidays bring stress and elevated hardships for families who are not in a financial position to offer their children the toys and gifts we have grown to associate with Christmas. We can also agree that all children want to wake up on Christmas morning with a gift of some kind to open, as it is so often associated with being a “good” child or a “bad” one. When a gift is under the tree, it gives validation for being labeled a “good” kid and that is very important to a child who waits with bated breath - wondering if Santa believes in them.

Many good children however, don’t understand or perhaps understand all too well that their parents cannot afford to purchase gifts and therefore, they must go without. This puts a lot of stress on a child both emotionally and even on a social level. ECHO’s toy distribution is critical to helping ease the stress of both parent and child and allows them the simple luxury of enjoying a day of gifts like most of us enjoy annually.

We are never underwhelmed by the continued efforts of ECHO and its commitment to serving those in need. Keep up the great work that impacts so many lives and brings hope, when hope seemed like a dream.

Forward Janesville Staff
This year we would like to invite you to join us in the fight against hunger! Participating establishments donate 10% of Monday, June 5th gross sales to ECHO.

**PARTICIPATING ESTABLISHMENTS:**
- Charlie’s Place
- Chipotle
- Citrus Cafe
- Culver’s – Milton Ave. and Court St.
- Dairy Queen – Court St.
- East Point Sportz Pub
- Firehouse Subs
- Hammys Roadside Bar
- HHFFRGGHG
- H&S Express Hibachi & Sushi
- Kealy’s Kafe
- Mac’s Pizza Shack
- My Apartment Pub & Grill
- Panda Garden
- Peking Chinese
- Popeye’s Louisiana Kitchen
- Riley’s Sports Bar & Grill
- Steve’s Deli Dog House

*Check www.echojanesville.org for an updated list*
Chicken Boy Murder Mystery
The Murder Mystery, "I Love Grandma, A Loving Family Reunion" on January 28th was a wonderful success due to the following sponsors: Chicken Boy Productions, UAW Hall, Chef Paula Folk and staff, Best Events, Lion's Quick Mart, Thrivent, Kerri Walker Century 21 Realty, Tammy Cherry Shorewest Realty and E&D Water Works. Thank you also for the numerous contributions to the silent auction and the wonderful volunteers that helped to make the evening a great event. We hope to see you there next year!

Touching Hearts at ECHO
Thank you to our Touching Heart business participants: Basics Cooperative, Bass Creek Espresso, Blackhawk Community Credit Union, Citrus Cafè, Commercial Bank, Culvers, East Point Sportz Pub, Harris Ace Hardware, MacFarlane Pheasants, My Apartment, Perfectly Plus Consignment Shop, Perfectly Precious Consign. Shop, Shady Nook, Trading Spaces, & Wedge Inn East. Many thanks to the individuals and churches who also participated in Touching Hearts at ECHO!

Swing into Spring
Thank you to all who attended Swing into Spring. We greatly appreciate those who donated items for the silent auction. We appreciate the Pontiac Convention Center for their hospitality on March 25th and Ladies Must Swing for providing a great night of music. Thank you to the following for sponsoring the night: BEST Events Catering, Blackhawk Community Credit Union, Edgerton Pharmacy and Boutique, Frito Lay/Pepsi Co., Full Throttle Technologies, Lamar Outdoor Advertising, MacFarlane Pheasants, & Summit Accounting Group. We hope to see you there next year!

FACTS ABOUT ECHO

1. ECHO receives awesome birthday cakes from Sam’s Club. We provide them to kids under 18 with a toy that was left over from our Christmas Toy Distribution.

2. 98% of ECHO’s budget goes to direct client assistance.

3. ECHO does not give out cash to clients.

4. ECHO provides representative payee services for those on SSI/SSDI and need help with managing their money.
In Memoriam:
Since our last newsletter, we received contributions in memory of the following ECHO friends. Their families and friends are in our thoughts and prayers.

| Raymond Benton | Mary Johnson | Ron Richards |
| Virginia Brockhaus | Philip J. Johnson | Margaret Roherty |
| Bryan Burdick | Shirley Klossner | Deb Schwanke |
| J.P. Cullen | Carol Kloster | Eugene Sheppard |
| Tod Daniel | Gil Klukas | Winifred Stasch |
| Richard Donovan | Nancy Lembrich | Harold “Bud” Steinke |
| Don & Mary Eckert | Judy Manthey | Sally Sterk |
| Nancy Gibney | Connie Masterman | Gen Stoklosa |
| Karen Goelzer-McKaig | Cathy Negus | Arlene Thompson |
| Bob Goepfert | Connie Nundahl | James & Norine Turner |
| Phyllis Grangaard | Gladys Olson | Paul Udulutch |
| James Healy | Paul Oswald | Gary Watt |
| E. Lucille Hruska | Elizabeth Peterson | Ron Weber |
| Ramonda Indgjer | Mike Raber | Michael Wemstrom |
| Grace Jackson | Sue Rhodes | |

In Honor:
We join the families and friends in congratulating the following ECHO friends who were honored by donations in celebration of their birthday, anniversary, or special occasion.

| Marie & Zoe | Dinty & Don Ryan |
| GM Retirees | Susan Schmoekel |
| Kathy Holcombe | Ginger Straight |
| Summer Huckstep | Pastor Jeff Tomberlin |
| Rick Mueller | Thelma Wilcox |
| Bob Nelson | Lisa Williams |

We thank you all for thinking of ECHO!

Memorial and honorarium card packets are available at the ECHO office or through participating churches. Each packet contains:
1. An ECHO information sheet and envelope for you to mail or bring in your donation to ECHO.
2. A postcard to send to the person or family to let them know that a donation was made to ECHO in honor or memory of the person you are remembering.
3. Checks may be made payable to ECHO, Inc. (Your gift is tax deductible as allowed by law.)
Special thanks to the following businesses and organizations that held food, fund and other drives:

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<th>A &amp; H Trucking</th>
<th>Kwik Trip</th>
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<td>All Saints Anglican Church</td>
<td>MacFarlane Pheasant Farm</td>
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<td>Andes Candies</td>
<td>Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>Asbury United Methodist Church</td>
<td>Mt. Zion United Methodist Church</td>
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<td>Bimbo Bakeries USA</td>
<td>Nativity of Mary Catholic Church and School</td>
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<td>Birds Eye</td>
<td>NHA-WIC</td>
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<td>Butternut Bakery</td>
<td>Olive Garden</td>
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<td>Cargill United Methodist Church</td>
<td>Panera Bread</td>
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<td>Catholic Charities</td>
<td>Peace Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>Chambers &amp; Owen</td>
<td>Perfectly Plus Women’s Consignment</td>
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<td>Concordia University - Beloit</td>
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<td>Contemplative Prayer Group</td>
<td>Pick’n Save</td>
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<td>Country Quality Dairy</td>
<td>Riverplace Senior Housing</td>
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<td>Crystal Farms</td>
<td>Rock County Christian School</td>
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<td>Daniel’s Sentry Food Stores</td>
<td>Rock Prairie Presbyterian</td>
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<td>Dollar General</td>
<td>Roundy’s Food</td>
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<td>Dunkin’ Donuts</td>
<td>Ruby’s Pantry</td>
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<td>E &amp; D Water Works</td>
<td>St. John’s Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>Fagan Automotive</td>
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<td>Faith Lutheran Church</td>
<td>St. Mark Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>Festival Foods</td>
<td>St. Matthew Lutheran Church &amp; School</td>
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<td>St. Patrick Catholic Church</td>
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<td>First Lutheran Church</td>
<td>St. Paul Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>First Presbyterian Church</td>
<td>St. Peter’s Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>Gardner Bakery</td>
<td>St. William Catholic Church</td>
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<td>Good Shepherd Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Sam’s Club</td>
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<td>Hedberg Public Library</td>
<td>Schnucks</td>
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<td>Hendricks Properties</td>
<td>Seneca Foods</td>
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<td>Hormel</td>
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<td>Humane Society of Southern Wisconsin</td>
<td>Trinity Episcopal Church</td>
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<td>Hunger Task Force - Milwaukee</td>
<td>Van Galder/Coach USA</td>
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<td>Impact Confections</td>
<td>WSBVI</td>
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<td>Jones Dairy Farm</td>
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“TRY TO BE A RAINBOW IN SOMEONE'S CLOUD.”
MAYA ANGELOU
ECHO Calendar of Events

✦ 4/23 CROP Hunger Walk  
   1 PM at Cargill United Methodist Church

✦ 6/5 Eat Out for Hunger  
   All day at Participating Restaurants

✦ 8/25 School Supply Distribution  
   At St. John’s Lutheran Church

✦ 10/28 Empty Bowl Soup Fundraiser  
   11 AM - 2 PM at Parker High School

✦ 11/18 Thanksgiving Basket Distribution  
   at the Rock Co. 4-H Fairgrounds

✦ 11/26 ECHO Holiday Express  
   at the Pontiac Convention Center.

For more information about these events,  
visit www.echojanesville.org

Save the Date

Empty Bowls

Saturday  
October 28, 2017  
Parker High School  
11am to 2pm