President’s Message
By Gloria D. Huschka

Happy New Year! As a new year begins, the ECHO Executive Committee has a few personnel changes. I would like to say thank you to Betty Gilbert, who has served on the ECHO board for many years and recently has served on the Executive Committee as a member at large. Betty is one of those very inspiring people who always has a smile on her face in spite of what health concerns she may be dealing with. She was one of the first people to sign up to sleep outside at the fairgrounds when ECHO held an overnight fundraiser a few years ago. She had more pledges for the fundraiser than anyone else that I know of. Betty is stepping down from the Executive Committee this year but is not abandoning ECHO. She will continue to be a board representative and be one of the biggest cheerleaders for the organization. Thank you, Betty, for being a friend and strong supporter of ECHO! Replacing Betty on the Executive Committee is Maureen Birchfield, a newer board rep who brings a lot of enthusiasm to the committee. Welcome, Maureen! Rounding out the Executive Committee are Nancy Hansen Bennett, Vice President; Alicia Jenski, Secretary; Rick Mueller, Treasurer; Dori McFarlane, Member at Large; and myself as President.

Once a month the Executive Committee meets with the Executive Director of ECHO to review financials and other pertinent business as needed. The following week these same people meet with the larger Board of Directors of ECHO. The board is made up of board representatives from the various Member Churches. At any given meeting we have 25-35 attendees. I would like to extend a huge thank you to Nancy and Betty, who in the past year have worked tirelessly to get more representatives attending meetings and encouraging churches to participate more regularly. If your church would like to be involved, please call ECHO – 754-5333 and get more details!

At the January board meeting, all directors will be presented with the 2018 budget for ECHO. The Executive Committee along with the help of Karen Lisser, Executive Director, and Jessica Locher, Associate Director, met in early December to begin discussions about the budget. In all of my many years of serving with ECHO, I have to say that this year the budget process moved along very smoothly. Now we need everyone’s help to maintain and manage what will be proposed. Please consider donating to ECHO as the need continues to grow in our community.

Continued on Page 4
Leaving 2017 and Looking Ahead to 2018

The services that ECHO provides do not eliminate poverty, or make the poor less poor. They help people get through tough situations. We keep families in their homes, keep them fed, and help them with other basic needs. ECHO donors come from all walks of life – a blend of people helping others – to make Janesville a better place to live.

We never know for sure where our funds will come from. ECHO projects an annual budget, an estimate of donations that will come in and what services will be provided. If more comes in than projected, we will be able to meet more of the need. If the cash flow slows down, we have to cut services. Our projections take into account what happened previous years and project forward. We were off in our projections for 2017.

We fell $213,470 short of our projected 2017 budget. Breaking down that shortfall from what was projected: grants were short by $1,723; local donations were short by $211,747. In 2016, we had actual revenue of $974,000. Because a large donation from a foundation came in late 2016 rather than early 2017, we projected that our 2017 revenue and budget would be less, so we estimated $895,000 revenue for 2017.

We don’t know why we fell short by that much. One reason may be that when disasters occur, more money leaves the area to help those in need affected by those disasters. In 2017, there were three category 4 hurricanes in the U.S. (Harvey 8/25, Texas; Irma 9/10, Florida; and Maria 9/20, Puerto Rico). Another reason is there is a lot of competition for local dollars. We hope that our reputation is encouraging to donors.

For the second year in a row, we earned the coveted 4-Star Rating from Charity Navigator for our commitment to accountability and transparency. Charity Navigator’s goal is to provide donors with essential information needed to give them confidence in the charity they choose. They state that it demands rigor, responsibility and commitment to openness, and that ECHO’s supporters should feel confident that their hard-earned dollars are being used efficiently and responsibly. I believe it is the right way to do things – with transparency, good stewardship, openness, and kindness. ECHO is a small grassroots charity that does a lot in an efficient, accountable, transparent and ethical way.

Local support is our lifeblood. One donation alone doesn’t change people’s lives, but together we can do a lot—Everyone Cooperating to Help Others can help change lives. We couldn’t keep families in their homes, feed them, and help them with other basic needs without the help of this community.

Having food on your table is a basic need, and having a place to live is the core from which everything else is possible! Housing is the single largest cost for families. Low-income people pay 50-70% of their gross income for housing. Keeping a roof over peoples’ heads keeps them safe and makes our food service more useful to them!

We provided 3,879,111 meals in 2017! We paid for 459 months of rent assistance to keep families in their homes. We provided 3,504 shelter nights in motels for people experiencing homelessness who couldn’t get into shelters. I am still waiting to receive the Ruby Slippers I wished for on our 40th Anniversary nine years ago, so I can click my heels and every family will have a stable home.

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The number of unduplicated HHs served in 2017 was 3,286 HHs, over 13,000 people. Think about 3,286 different HHs coming through our doors in 2017 and most of them at least several times! Case Management to help these families with our various services in 2017 came to 12,992 hours. For more information on our services, see ECHO Services Report – December 2017, with YTD totals. Look for this report and other reports on our website. ECHO Dollars & Sense Report 2017 will be available in February—it will show you the value of donated goods and what we spent on services.

(Continued on next page)
The bottom line every year is that 98% goes to direct assistance and only 2% administration. ECHO staff has done an incredible job of helping clients, each of whom are seen by a social services staff member every time they come in. This brings me to an issue that has made the local headlines recently – non-profit salaries. We don’t have our financial report for year-end yet, but ECHO’s total salaries for the Executive Director and Associate Director, four additional Social Services staff, Food Pantry Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, Building and Grounds Maintenance, and three Food Procurement staff – 12 employees (8 full-time and 4 part-time) will total about $310,000 for 2017.

I would be happy to explain what each staff member does for anyone interested. I also invite you to come for informational tours to see our site and hear about our services.

Sustainability is a challenge. When I write grant proposals, funders ask for details about agency mission, who we serve, how the funds will be used, etc. They typically ask the question, “How will you sustain this program?” This is a reasonable question, but it is a very tough one to answer. The success at carrying out our mission leads to increased costs, because more successful programs serve more clients. The costs increase for the rents we pay for clients, the food we provide, and the many other support services and staffing, which would require a proportionate increase in support.

Sustainability is determined by funders. Great programs don’t appear out of thin air. It takes perseverance and financial resources, but it also takes relationships, face-to-face, hundreds of times a year. It is difficult for a program that literally changes people’s lives for the better to become self-sustaining.

What we can do together is limitless. If it matters to you, it matters to us. It continues to be gratifying to me as I enter my 24th year at ECHO that through the spirit and support of this community, ECHO helps keep a roof over people’s heads and food on their tables, making it possible for people to tackle obstacles in their path toward achieving more self-sufficiency. ECHO donors give to help people they don’t know, but care about, expecting nothing in return. That makes a difference at ECHO and in this community.

Let’s hope that 2018 is truly a new year, not just a new number, a year with new opportunities, new attitudes, new voices, new messages, and new visions. Thank you for your support.

2018 ECHO Executive Committee

Gloria Huschka, President
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church

Nancy Hansen-Bennett, Vice-President
Cargill United Methodist Church

Rick Mueller, Treasurer
Community Representative

Alicia Jenski, Secretary
Community Representative

Maureen Birchfield, Member at Large
All Saints Anglican Catholic Church

Dori MacFarlane, Member at Large
Community Representative

ECHO’s mission is dedicated to meeting housing, food and other basic human needs and addressing the barriers to self-sufficiency.
On behalf of the ECHO staff and Board of Directors, I would like to extend a huge THANK YOU for your help to ECHO in the past year. We could not have kept the doors open without the support of the community. We also need each and every volunteer who donates countless hours, whether it is by assisting in the food pantry with stocking shelves or filling food orders, as well as the volunteers who promote and attend the varied fundraising events throughout the year. To school groups, community members, businesses that promote ECHO, and all the individuals who give faithfully: THANK YOU!

Lastly, I would like to recognize a very special lady who has worked at ECHO for over 17 years and will be leaving in March: Karen Zapotosky, affectionately known as KZ. I have had the wonderful privilege of working with her at many fundraising events through the years and have always walked away with a smile on my face. She is dedicated to her job of assisting clients however she can. She is enthusiastic and always a positive role model for anyone she comes in contact with. We will miss you, KZ, and wish you the very best in your move!

**RECEPTIONIST WANTED!**

ECHO is looking for a dedicated Receptionist to handle client, donor, and volunteer duties, as well as general office management tasks. When our clients, donors, and volunteers walk into our office, we want them to find a friendly, smiling face and a helping hand. The ideal candidate has excellent communication and multitasking skills, a positive attitude and a strong work ethic.

Full job description is available at www.echojanesville.org/careers

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**2017 Service Highlights**

- Provided services to 3,286 unduplicated households
- Provided 3,879,111 meals
- Provided 3,504 nights in a motel to the homeless
- Provided 459 months of rent to prevent homelessness
- Provided 391 households with transportation assistance

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**ECHO Needs**

- Soup and Crackers
- Mac & Cheese
- Cereal
- Peanut Butter & Jelly
- Canned Meals
- Instant Coffee
- Feminine Supplies
- Diapers

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We send out info about ECHO via eblasts around twice a month. You can sign up by going to our website at www.echojanesville.org and clicking on the News/Event tab.

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**GO GREEN. REQUEST YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL AT www.echojanesville.org**
We like to think of it this way. The CROP Hunger Walk is the heart and “sole” of Janesville. It is the only event that brings together all members of our community—young and old, all faiths and all walks of life for a common goal—to end hunger one step at a time!

Mark your calendar for Janesville’s 41st CROP Hunger Walk to be held on Sunday, April 29, 2018, at Cargill United Methodist Church, 2000 Wesley Avenue, Janesville. Registration begins at 1:00 p.m., and the walk/run starts at 1:30 p.m. There is no registration fee, but CROP Hunger Walk donations are gratefully accepted to help raise funds for local and worldwide hunger relief.

Janesville’s local food pantry, ECHO, will be the recipient of 25% of the funds raised from this year’s event. In addition, ECHO will collect boxes of mac & cheese and jars of peanut butter on the day of the event to help families during the summer months when donations tend to drop off. The remaining funds will fight hunger internationally through the efforts of Church World Service.

Choose to walk or run on a designated 2K, 5K, or 10K route. Walk/run the portion of the route most comfortable to you. Water is provided along the way. The most important thing is your participation.

Leashed dogs may accompany walkers/runners, and there will be treats for registrants after the walk/run.

Join us to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors down the street and around the world. Register on the day of the event, or register a team of friends and relatives online right now and begin collecting donations to support the cause. More details may be found at: www.crophungerwalk.org/janesvillewi; www.facebook.com/JanesvilleCROP; contact Janesville’s event coordinators Carolyn Brandeen at (608) 754-7004 or Kathy Holcombe at (608) 756-8117; or email: cropjanesville@charter.net.

If you are not able to participate on the day of the event, consider making a tax-deductible online contribution to Janesville’s CROP Hunger Walk at: www.crophungerwalk.org/janesvillewi. Regardless of its size, your gift will have an impact around the block and around the world.

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Name: Fran Groene

How long have you volunteered at ECHO? 7 years

How did you get involved at ECHO? I have known ECHO since it began. I worked outside the home and it was always in my mind that after I retire I would volunteer. I like helping people.

What do you do at ECHO? I work in the pantry area where supplies are received. Merchants donate in big lots. I repackage these donations into family-size portions for distribution by the packers to the clients.

What is your favorite thing about ECHO? The happy feeling I get knowing maybe I helped a person or a family’s life be a little better today.

What is one thing about ECHO that surprised you when you started volunteering? The amount of services offered besides food.

ECHO is in need of volunteers to help out weekly in the pantry to pack the food orders during the hours of 9am to noon Monday - Friday. Please contact Fran at (608) 754-5333 if you would like to volunteer.

$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.
The Blessings of ECHO
By Karen Zapotosky aka KZ

I have worked at ECHO 20 plus years, and it is time for me to move on. I will be moving back to my home state of Pennsylvania, my home town of Yardley. It is about 45 minutes north of Philly, or Philadelphia for the unknowing. All of my family is there. We are all getting older, and health issues abound. My father is 83, has had some heart issues, and I want to spend time with him while we still have time.

The years at ECHO have had a powerful effect on my world view. I came as a rather self-centered, prideful person, thinking I would be a great influence. What I learned in serving the hungry, homeless, distraught individuals is that we all have needs, some seen but a lot unseen. I need to be very careful to remind myself each day to extend compassion and grace to that one who is in front of me, remembering that it could easily be me in that position. It’s humbling to interact with people willing to be vulnerable, taking a risk to ask and possibly be denied. That person’s heart is in my hands, and that is a huge responsibility. ECHO staff faces that task hundreds of times each week, month after month. The stress can be a challenge, but the joy and comfort we can give, when we can help, is great balance. Our staff, volunteers and donors are some of the most generous people I have ever met, and I have appreciated working with them all.

I have also had the difficulty of having to say no to requests, and that is hard when you have no other options or referrals. My parting hope and prayer is that ECHO will continue to be a hub of help and that people will continue to support its mission with time, resources and energy. It takes all of these to make this work.

My greatest take away is that people are amazingly resilient. The stories are unbelievable. The stuff people come through shows it is God’s given will to persevere no matter what. I’ve been blessed to be a part of all of it.

Grateful and thankful to all, KZ

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ECHO Square Meals Rock County 2018
Thank You, Participating Locations

◊ Barkley’s Burgers, Brews and Dawgs
◊ Bazinga Classic Pub & Grille
◊ Blue Gilly’s Pancake Pier and Lunch Dock
◊ The Buckhorn Supper Club
◊ Citrus Café
◊ Copper Falls
◊ Cozumel Mexican Restaurant
◊ Ding-a-Ling Supper Club
◊ Eagle Inn Family Restaurant
◊ Fredrick’s Supper Club
◊ Knute’s Bar & Grill
◊ Lark
◊ Looking Glass
◊ Lucy’s #7 Burger Bar
◊ Mac’s Pizza Shack
◊ My Apartment Pub & Grill
◊ Ray’s Family Restaurant
◊ Sneakers Sports Bar & Grill
◊ Whiskey Ranch
◊ Yetti’s Bar & Grill
Saturday, March 24, 2018
7:00-10:00pm
Pontiac Convention Center
Featuring music by
LADIES Must SWING
Cash Bar - Silent Auction - Raffle
Tickets : $15
Available at ECHO - 65 S High St
or at www.echojanesville.org
Proceeds Benefit ECHO
Everyone Cooperating to Help Others
Thank You!

Thanksgiving Baskets - Thank you to the donors and over 300 volunteers who came out to help pack and hand out 600 baskets. The Thanksgiving Baskets provided food for 1,090 people.

Holiday Express - Thank you to everyone who helped out and came to the ECHO Holiday Express. Many individuals, young and old, viewed Mickey’s Twice Upon a Christmas, visited with Santa, and made holiday crafts on November 26 at the Pontiac Convention Center. Many thanks to American Family Insurance - Colleen Frentzel and Heather Carmona Agencies for sponsoring the event and providing many volunteers for this great event! Put November 25 on your calendar for this year’s Holiday Express.

Adopt a Family (AAF) - Once again the generosity of the Janesville residents was seen by the ECHO staff and clients during the Christmas season. SO many donors participated in the Adopt-A-Family Christmas program that ECHO was able to help 81 families with Christmas gifts. Drop-off day is always a bit overwhelming and chaotic. I’m sure you can imagine the volume of gifts coming in, and those of you who have delivered gifts to the ECHO office have seen first-hand the Community Room stuffed to the max due to the generosity of the ECHO donors. I was blessed with many thank-you’s, hugs, and tears of happiness from the clients who participated in the Adopt-A-Family program, to pass along to their Donor Family. On behalf of the many Adopt-A-Family recipients, ECHO Staff, and ECHO Board we would like to say THANK YOU to the donors who call ECHO every year to adopt a family, as well as the many first time, Adopt-A-Family donors. Your generosity makes it possible to continue this great program year after year.

Tonya Frerichs, Client Advocate

Christmas Toys - Many thanks to those who donated toys and/or cash to help provide a Christmas for 566 children in need with the Christmas Toy Program. Thank you also to the many wonderful ECHO elves who helped sort toys and assist parents on the day of the event.

Easter Baskets for Children

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

- 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, March 26 at 9:30AM** to pack Easter baskets at the ECHO Office.
- **Tuesday - Thursday, March 27 to March 29 9AM - 4PM** to distribute baskets at the ECHO office.
In Memoriom:
Since our last newsletter, we received contributions in memory of the following ECHO friends. Their families and friends are in our thoughts and prayers.

Art Arnold
Lee Austin
Robert Burke
Greg Burns
Thomas A. Cunningham
Bernard and Angline Danczyk
David Dean Jr.
Lorraine Dearth
Joseph DeCremer
Rojean Erlien
Alice Figi
Patrick Finn
Howard Gage
Leonard Galbrecht
Gary Geller
Myra and Mike Guisleman

Donald Hrycay
John Hull
Donald Hustad
Don Jansen
Felix and Laura Kielpinski
Edward Knutson
George Kuffer
June Lehr
Bill LeMire
Luke McWilliams
Deloris Mellom
Barb Moody
Kay Muzi
Kathy Penfold
Vera Schiller
Dick Schuler

Louise Shekels
Sherri Sieff
Lucille Smith
Harry Spellman Jr.
Ginny Spors
Ted Stevenson
Jack and Betty Stone
Carol Ann Struntz
Donald Swanson
James and Norine Turner
Linda Uschan
Margaret Vick
June Wertz
Jeannie Williams
Debra Wolff

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.

Cathy and Carl Andren
Rhonda Armstrong
Chad Black
Deb and Jim Brewer
Jeannette Brinkman
Ken and Dagny Brosky
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Burnett
Jack and Kristina Burnett
Jill Constantino
Caitlin DeCremer Link
Ruth Ann Demmon
Jean Illingworth
Joan Jimenez
Stan and Tanza Kubacki
Sister Lucentia Klonecki

The Lorson Family
Marion Ludwig, 104th Birthday
Beverly Koch, 95th Birthday
Jim and Emily Lund
JT, Ellie, Peter and Anne McCrone
Mo and Chelsea McCrone
Skip and Sue McCrone
Jim Melvin
Kay and Dan Moore
Daniel Murdy
Wayne and Sherry Nuernberg
Donna Padilla
Sandy Petersen
Elizabeth Reid
Jane Reid

Scott Reid
Tony Smithson
Karen and Bill Spae
Darrell Stearns
Ginny Stephenson, 85th Birthday
Edna Thorp
Paul and Karen Tropp
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Utzig
Mr. and Mrs. Mark Utzig
Gene Williams
Linda and Doug Williams
Gary Woodworth

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>Kennedy Elementary School</th>
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<td>Abitec Corporation</td>
<td>Kids Against Hunger</td>
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<td>All Saints Church</td>
<td>Kwik Trip</td>
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<td>Andes Candies</td>
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<td>MacFarlane Pheasant Farm</td>
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<td>Ariens Specialty Brands</td>
<td>McCann Flooring</td>
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<td>Asbury United Methodist Church</td>
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<td>Bimbo Bakeries USA</td>
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<td>Brownberry Bread</td>
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<td>Butternut Bakery</td>
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<td>Cargill United Methodist Church</td>
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<td>Contemplative Prayer Group</td>
<td>Our Savior Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>Crystal Farms</td>
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<td>CVS Pharmacy</td>
<td>Pizza Hut - Eastside</td>
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<td>Daniel’s Sentry Food Stores</td>
<td>Premier Oral Surgery</td>
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<td>Delta Kappa Gamma</td>
<td>Quaker Steak and Lube</td>
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<td>Dollar General</td>
<td>Red Hatless Group</td>
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<td>Dunkin’ Donuts</td>
<td>Retired &amp; Senior Volunteer Program</td>
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<td>E &amp; D Water Works</td>
<td>Riverplace Senior Housing</td>
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<td>Edison Middle School</td>
<td>Rock County Jail Chaplaincy</td>
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<td>Emerald Grove United Congregational Church</td>
<td>Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church</td>
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<td>Faith Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Rock Valley Quilt Guild - Hearts &amp; Hands Study Group</td>
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<td>First Congregational Church</td>
<td>St. John Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>Gordie Boucher</td>
<td>St. William Catholic Church</td>
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<td>Hedberg Public Library</td>
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<td>Hormel</td>
<td>Seneca Foods</td>
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<td>Humane Society of Southern Wisconsin</td>
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<td>Hunger Task Force - Milwaukee</td>
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<td>Janesville Pickleball Club</td>
<td>Swing-N-Slide</td>
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<td>Johnson Tractor</td>
<td>Texas Roadhouse</td>
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<td>Jones Dairy Farm</td>
<td>Trinity Episcopal Church</td>
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<td>KFC</td>
<td>Unitarian Church</td>
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**Needed Large Brown Paper Bags, Plastic Bags, Twist Ties & Plastic Bottles**

Drop them off at ECHO (65 S. High St., Janesville)
Mon.-Fri. 9am-Noon, or Mon.-Thur. 1-4pm
ECHO Calendar of Events

♦ 3/24 Swing into Spring –
  7 PM at the Pontiac Convention Center


♦ 4/29 CROP Hunger Walk -
  1 PM at Cargill United Methodist Church

♦ 6/4 Eat Out for Hunger –
  All day at participating restaurants

♦ 8/24 School Supply Distribution –
  at St. John Lutheran Church

♦ 10/27 Empty Bowl Soup Fundraiser

♦ 11/17 Thanksgiving Basket Dist.–
  at the Rock Co. 4-H Fairgrounds

♦ 11/25 ECHO Holiday Express –
  at the Pontiac Convention Center.