Spring 2018

The ECHO Times

LIFE IS AN ECHO - WHAT YOU SEND OUT, YOU GET BACK!

President’s Message
By Gloria D. Huschka

Happy Spring 2018! My apologies to everyone if this newsletter is a bit late arriving in your mailbox. Jessica reminded me more than once that it was time for my spring newsletter article, but the weather continued to feel more wintery than spring. So I kept procrastinating and here we are, like it or not, in the merry month of April already! Life has been busy for a few ECHO staff and board members in the past few weeks. First off, I want to publicly congratulate Executive Director Karen Lisser for receiving the Excellence in Advocacy Award on March 21st from United Way Blackhawk Region at their annual meeting “Live United.” All of us on the board are proud of your many accomplishments, Karen, and wish to thank you for all that you do to keep ECHO in the forefront of our community. Congratulations also go out to Rick Mueller, past president of ECHO and current treasurer, whose business received the Corporate Award of Merit at the Women of Distinction Awards on April 5th. Rick has been a huge supporter of ECHO for many years. Jax Custom Printing, co-owned by Rick Mueller and Dennis Vinedahl, prints the newsletter and other materials for ECHO. Thank you, Rick, for your many hours of service to our community!

Since we last chatted in these pages, there have been a few fundraising events in the community for ECHO. On January 27th, Chicken Boy Productions presented an interactive play at The Venue titled, Eat, Drink and Be Murdered. This was my first year of attending this annual event and I would like to thank The Venue, Best Events for the delicious food and for the actors who proudly presented the fun and interactive play to a full house. Events like this would not be available without the cooperation of many individuals and their love for ECHO. (Continued on Page 9)

IN THIS ISSUE

- KAREN’S KORNER…………………………..2
- KAREN’S KORNER CONT., CHARITY NAV.,………………..3
- CARRIE’S STORY, DONATION……………………………..4
- CROP HUNGER WALK…………………………………5
- VOLUNTEER TAKE 5, NEW STAFF, FANS & BICYCLES……..6
- VOLUNTEER TY, LETTER CARRIER FOOD DRIVE……..7
- UPCOMING EVENTS………………………………………..8
- THANK YOUS, PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE CONT…………9
- MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS, NEEDS LIST………10
- FOOD PANTRY THANK YOU……………………………11
- CALENDAR OF EVENTS, EMPTY BOWLS…………………..12
I was recently honored by receiving the United Way Blackhawk Region’s Excellence in Advocacy Award. I was asked to share a little of my acceptance speech for this column.

I am privileged to be in a position to help people. The people who walk through ECHO's doors ask for basic assistance and humbly share their personal lives with us. They trust us and share their sorrows and joys, their mistakes and successes. They may have the least in material possessions, but they are not the least themselves—they are pretty special.

Advocacy can be defined as supporting a cause or group of people. To advocate stresses urging or pleading. In my case, it is speaking up for our neighbors in need of basic essentials, which sometimes requires urging and pleading for funds for programs. Here are a few synonyms for Advocate:

- **Support** – an unspecific type of assistance;
- **Backer** – supporting by lending assistance to one who is failing;
- **Champion** – publicly defending one too weak to advocate his or her own cause, such as championing for the needs of children;
- **Friend** – implies being there for someone you care about.

I particularly like the **Friend** synonym. ECHO befriends many people by providing many services to meet basic needs for people of all ages, newborn to elderly. ECHO gives people hope, respect and dignity and makes their lives a little more bearable. It's not just about getting food, lodging, or rent help—it's also about having someone listen to you, and care! I can't say enough about the dedication, caring and expertise of the ECHO staff, who serve the clients and support me.

ECHO is a grassroots agency founded by the churches in the area, sparked by a food pantry at a church in late 1969, with a clothing center at another church. ECHO grew and was incorporated in 1975. They hired their first Executive Director, LaVerne Sandgren, who led ECHO until 1990. LaVerne was often described as an angel while at ECHO. LaVerne became a friend when I met her in 1995, until she died in 2014. She would always say to me that she couldn’t do all that I was doing as Director. I told her that she played a crucial role in laying the foundation for me. LaVerne is still an ECHO angel.

In 1975, ECHO also obtained an office, a house at 317 Dodge St, and an annex at 7 N. Academy for food and clothing. In February 1997, the annex moved to Trinity’s Ortmayer Hall. When we were at the house, we had to see people who had physical disabilities outside, because of the steps, and the house was getting close to being condemned. In 2001, I was a key player in kicking off a building campaign and building a new office/pantry on the corner. Clients used to have to come to the ECHO Office before going to the Annex for their food. The food pantry and office have been together in one building since November 2002.

ECHO has been providing many services for over 49 years. When I started in January 1995, ECHO had only one other employee. Today, ECHO has 12 employees and over 100 weekly volunteers, plus 100s more for special distributions, such as School Supplies distribution, Thanksgiving groceries distribution, Christmas Toys program, Christmas Day Dinner, to name a few. When I started, all the client records were handwritten on recipe cards and kept in a card-catalog style file. Cards were stapled together for those who had been coming to us for a while. There was a typewriter and two new computers. By the end of 1995, all clients were entered onto a client data base, with complete information about the family. We now serve over 3,500 unduplicated HHs per year, about 14,000 people, many of whom come in monthly, or more often if they are experiencing homelessness.

When I started, I noticed that there was a need for more housing and homeless services. I expanded our rent assistance and lodging in motels, while keeping food services strong. I asked why there were no longer Homeless and Housing Subcommittees in the community, previously part of the ACTION Council. I resurrected them, later combining them into one subcommittee. Many more changes followed. (Continued on next page)
I will never forget the day in late 1995 that Ron DelCiello, then the administrator at Parkside Lodge, came to me and asked what I thought the building could be used for, since MercyHealth was moving Parkside Lodge out. It had been a convent at one time and had many bedrooms. I said that, without a doubt, it needed to be a homeless shelter, because Janesville needed one badly. MercyHealth agreed. I was on the start-up committee, and Ron chose me to help Javon Bea cut the ribbon.

I was a founding member of the W2 Response Team. I later recommended that the focus be poverty, not just W2, and we became the Poverty Response Team. After a few years, we combined all of these committees, since there were many of us going to all of them, and we became the local continuum of care, the Homeless Intervention Task Force. I was also an active member of the Homeless Education Action Team (HEAT), looking for ways to help students experiencing homelessness. After a few years, it became Project 16:49.

People still talk about the time I changed my appearance and went undercover for three days and nights, to experience homelessness. One of my tasks was to check on three of the places we were using for lodging. Of the three places I stayed overnight, one we never used again, and one we didn’t use until new ownership took over and fixed the problems. Only one of the three passed the test.

Having a place to live is the core from which everything else is possible! In 2017, ECHO provided 459 months of rent assistance to keep families in their homes, and 3,504 shelter nights to people experiencing homelessness. 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.

Housing makes our food program more effective, but ECHO is most widely known as a food pantry. In 2017, we provided over 3,879,111 meals! We provide over 30 services – you can check our monthly service reports on the ECHO website. On that website, you will also find our annual ECHO DOLLARS & SENSE REPORT. In that report, you will see that ECHO’s Direct Assistance to Administration Ratio is 98% to 2%!

I'd like to end with an excerpt from a book, Believe:

"Compassion"

..."Compassion shown to others
Will be shown to you someday."

Thank you, everyone, for what you do for ECHO.
GO GREEN. REQUEST YOUR NEWSLETTER BY E-MAIL AT www.echojanesville.org

Carrie’s Story

Carrie had been homeless on and off since she moved back to Wisconsin in 2014. During her stay at House of Mercy in May 2016 with her boyfriend, Carrie enrolled in our ECHOWAY Rapid Re-Housing Program. With ECHOWAY, we were able to help Carrie find a one-bedroom apartment, even though she had a past eviction and a low-paying job. ECHO paid her security deposit and first month’s rent. Carrie and her boyfriend were responsible for utilities.

Her ECHO case manager was able to help her obtain her birth certificate from her home state so she could get a Wisconsin ID. Carrie was referred to the Job Center for help with her GED. At her third housing appointment, Carrie informed her case manager that she lost her job and her boyfriend left. Carrie was distraught, as he was helping pay for the utilities and provide other necessary household items. ECHO continued paying Carrie’s rent.

In September, Carrie was hospitalized and was sent home with a breathing machine. In November, Carrie got a part-time job at her apartment complex, cleaning. In December, her pregnant 18-year-old daughter moved in. Carrie was able to get a 3rd shift full-time job, cleaning at a local hospital, but ended up losing it due to lack of transportation. Eventually, she was able to find another job at a nursing home out of town that a friend worked at and was able to carpool with the friend.

Carrie’s grandson was born in April 2017. After her grandson was born, Carrie’s landlord moved her into a two-bedroom apartment. Her daughter continued going to Charter School and got onto W2. In July 2017, Carrie got a full-time factory job in Janesville. Her daughter is applying for a job there, but on a different shift so Carrie’s grandson does not need a paid babysitter.

During this whole time, ECHO paid Carrie’s rent, so she did not need to worry about becoming homeless again. By October 2017, Carrie will be able to pay her full rent. She is grateful for the assistance she received from the ECHOWAY Program. She is finally feeling like she is in a good place, will be able to keep her apartment, and will not fall back into homelessness.

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.
Each year, our community comes together to raise money and awareness for hunger relief locally and around the world through the CROP Hunger Walk. Over 1,000 CROP Hunger Walks happen every year in the United States. Walkers/runners ask family, neighbors, colleagues and places of worship to donate money for their participation in the Janesville Area CROP Hunger Walk. Our steps symbolize the daily journey others must make for food and clean water.

In the past 40 years, you have taken steps – literally – to end hunger by raising over $1,100,00 in the Janesville Area CROP Hunger Walk!

The Janesville Area CROP Hunger Walk will be held on 4/29/2018 beginning at 1:30 p.m.. (Registration begins at 1:00 p.m.).

Cargill United Methodist Church, 2000 Wesley Avenue, Janesville, WI 53545

The 2018 CROP Hunger Walk has a new ½ mile, 1 mile, 5K, 10K route with increased visibility and safety – and it’s even scenic to boot!

One-fourth of the funds raised stays in our community to support local hunger and poverty fighting programs administered by ECHO. 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 money is used by Church World Service to alleviate hunger in poor communities throughout the world.

EVERYONE!

CROP Hunger Walks are community events involving everyone who wants to fight hunger around the block and around the world. Our walk encourages teams and individuals from public and private schools, civic and cultural groups, area businesses, and all faith groups.

There is NO FEE to participate. All donations are gratefully accepted. 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. Details at: www.crophungerwalk.org/janesvillewi

For more information, contact Carolyn Brandeen at (608) 754-7004 or Kathy Holcombe at (608) 752-8117; email: cropjanesville@charter.net

JOIN THE ORIGINAL WALK EVENT IN THE UNITED STATES!
FIGHT HUNGER GLOBALLY AND IN YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY.
Bicycles and Fans Needed

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 99 clients.

Last year ECHO was able to provide bicycles to 7 clients.

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

ECHO Welcomes Nicole Young as a New Receptionist

My name is Nicole and I am the new receptionist at ECHO. I moved here with my husband and two children almost six years ago. Shortly after we moved here, I found out about ECHO and all the great things they do for our community. I have been volunteering in the food pantry and for the Christmas toy distribution ever since. When this position opened up, I jumped at the opportunity to help with a wider variety of needs. Helping people has always been a passion of mine and I look forward to being able to do so on a daily basis. In my spare time I enjoy reading, spending time with my family and watching my children play hockey.
The Staff and our Board of Directors of ECHO 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 2017! 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.

Senior “Stockbox” Program

Free Food for income eligible seniors (60 & over)

Registration & distribution at ECHO
Mon.-Thurs. from 1-3pm

Box contents vary, but may include cereal, pasta or rice, canned goods, canned meat, juice, & Wisconsin cheese.

Wisconsin ID required
Income limit: 1 person $1,316;
1 person + spouse $1,784

Stop by ECHO or call Marge at 754-5333 for more info.

Volunteers Needed
If you can help, please call Fran at 754-5333

Sponsored by the Hunger Task Force in Milwaukee
This year we would like to invite you to join us in the fight against hunger! Participating establishments donate 10% of Monday, June 4th gross sales to ECHO.

PARTICIPATING ESTABLISHMENTS:
Basics Co-op Coffee & Deli
Charlie’s Place
Citrus Cafe
Culver’s – Milton Ave. and Court St.
Hammy’s Roadside Bar
H&S Express Hibachi & Sushi
Kealy’s Kafe
The Looking Glass
Mac’s Pizza Shack
My Apartment Pub & Grill
Panda Garden
Riley’s Sports Bar & Grill
Steve’s Deli Dog House
Texas Roadhouse

Check www.echojanesville.org for an updated list

ECHO Holiday Express
Sunday, November 25, 2018
at the Pontiac Convention Center
Time - 2:00pm

Sponsored by
Chicken Boy Murder Mystery
The Murder Mystery, "Eat, Drink, and Be Murdered" on January 27th was a wonderful success due to the following sponsors: Data Dimensions, Chicken Boy Productions, The Venue, Best Events, Ginger Spaight, Kerri Walker - Century 21 Realty, Tammy Cherry - Shorewest Realty, E&D Water Works, Advia Credit Union, St. John Vianney, MacFarlane Pheasants, and Rock Green Realtors Association. 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 for two nights of fun!

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: Boucher Group - Janesville, BEST Events Catering, Full Throttle Technologies, Lamar Outdoor Advertising, MacFarlane Pheasants, Kerri Walker - Century 21 Realty, Blackhawk Veterinary Hospital. We hope to see you there next year!

Visit www.ECHOJanesville.org to view our monthly and annual reports along with our most recent audit documents.

President’s Message - Continued from Page 1
A silent auction and wine pull were also held at the event. If you missed this year’s event, we hope you will join us next January when a new murder mystery will be presented on two nights! On March 24th, ECHO hosted Swing into Spring with Ladies Must Swing, the finest all-female big band from Madison, Wisconsin. This group is amazing; if you missed it, you truly missed one of the best nights of entertainment offered in Janesville. The dance floor at the Pontiac Center was full of dancers throughout the evening. I highly recommend that you buy a ticket next March when this event will be offered again and come out to enjoy a wonderful evening of fantastic music! The next ECHO fundraiser will be held on Monday, June 4th and is called Eat Out for Hunger. I don’t know of anyone who does not like to eat. Many area restaurants will be donating a portion of their sales that day to ECHO. The list of restaurants will be listed in the newsletter and online, so please eat out on June 4th and help fight hunger at the same time!

Until next time……enjoy your spring!
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.

Dorothy Addie  Arthur Disch  Wayne Olson
Duane Alexander  Don and Mary Eckert  Delores Otto
Vern Anderson  Russell French  Elizabeth Peterson
Dale Barry  Barb Ziegelmann Hogan  Vernon Rowoldt
Tom Benton  Mary Kolberg  Gloria Schmidt
Marion Bothum  Gloria Leyes  Ken Smith
Michael Buchanan  Teresa Ann Markee  William Elmer Storer
Ralph Buggs  Kevin Mickelson
David Dean  Barb Moody

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.

David Dean Jr.  Dean & Jayne Paynter 50th Anniversary
Betty Gilbert  Kevin Salem Smith
David Latka – 45th Birthday  Paul and Karen Tropp
Wilma Miland

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.)

ECHO Needs
Soup and Crackers  Peanut Butter & Jelly  Toilet Paper
Mac & Cheese  Canned Meals  Diapers
Cereal  Instant Coffee  Baby Wipes
Spaghetti Sauce  Feminine Supplies  Shampoo
Feminine Supplies  Conditioner
Food Pantry Thank You

Special thanks to the following businesses and organizations that assist our food programs:

A & H Trucking
Advia Credit Union
All Saints Anglican Church
Alliant Energy
Andes Candies
Asbury United Methodist Church
Best Events
Bimbo Bakeries USA
Birds Eye
Boucher Group
Butternut Bakery
Cargill United Methodist Church
Catholic Charities
Chambers & Owen
Contemplative Prayer Group
Country Quality Dairy
Crystal Farms
CVS
Daniel’s Sentry Food Stores
Delta Kappa Gamma
Dollar General
Dunkin’ Donuts
E & D Water Works
Emerald Grove UCC
Faith Lutheran Church
Festival Foods
First Congregational Church
First Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church
Franklin Middle School
Gardner Bakery
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Hedberg Public Library
Hendricks Properties
Hormel
Humane Society of Southern Wisconsin
Hunger Task Force - Milwaukee
Impact Confections
Jones Dairy Farm
Knights of Columbus
Kwik Trip
MacFarlane Pheasant Farm
Marshall Middle School
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church
Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
Nativity of Mary Catholic Church and School
NHA-WIC
Olive Garden
Our Savior Lutheran
Panera Bread
Peace Lutheran Church
Perfectly Plus Women’s Consignment
Pepsi
Piggly Wiggly
Riverplace Senior Housing
RLB Group
Rock County Christian School
Rock Green Realtors Association
Rock Prairie Montessori
Rock Prairie Presbyterian
Roosevelt Elementary School
Ruby’s Pantry
St. John’s Lutheran Church
St. John Vianney Church
St. Mark Lutheran Church
St. Matthew Lutheran Church & School
St. Patrick Catholic Church
St. Paul Lutheran Church
St. Peter’s Lutheran Church
St. William Catholic Church
Sam’s Club
Schnucks
Seneca Foods
Starbucks
Trinity Episcopal Church
Van Galder/Coach USA
ECHO Calendar of Events

✈️ 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’s Lutheran Church

✈️ 11/17 Thanksgiving Basket Distribution
at the Rock Co. 4-H Fairgrounds

✈️ 11/25 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 27, 2018
11am to 2pm