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Spring 2019

The ECHO Times

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

President's Message By Nancy Hansen-Bennett



It is with much joy and thankfulness I have assumed the role of Board President. I appreciate all the services that ECHO provides for the Janesville Community and I am succeeding a very capable Gloria Huschka.

I am a person of faith and I pattern my life around serving wherever I am needed. ECHO has been part of my life for 50 years and I look forward to the celebration we will have later this year. I have seen ECHO grow in those years in service for thousands of individuals, our neighbors in need.

Our staff is gifted and easy to work with. They listen! Right now we are challenged with more services needed and less funds to work with to fill these needs! If you know of a service group who would like a program about ECHO, feel free to contact me. I *love* to tell the ECHO story.



REUSE + RECYCLE brown paper bags

Please drop off your brown paper bags
at 65 S. High St., Janesville, WI



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

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ECHO is Golden, with the Help of Many People ***Karen Lisser, Executive Director***



Worth Our Weight in Gold? I think so. ECHO will be celebrating our ***50th Golden Anniversary*** later this year! The services that ECHO provides help people get through tough situations. We keep families in their homes, feed them, help them with other basic needs and provide case management.

We Keep Doing More! Our year-end service reports for 2018 are on our website. One of our specialty reports is ***ECHO Services 1975 – 2018***. ECHO was started in late 1969, but 1975 is the first year that we had an Executive Director, and we started tracking service data. This report shows the first and last year of the first two Executive Directors: LaVerne Sandgren 1975-1990 and Barb Smith 1991-1994, and a variety of years with me, the third Executive Director – 1995, 2005, 2010 and 2018. From 1975 to 1990, under LaVerne, services increased 83%. From LaVerne's last year (1990) and Barb's last year (1994), services decreased 16%. From Barb's last year (1994) to my first year (1995), services increased 88%. We started counting pounds of food going out in 2005, which wasn't counted in the previous years. Subtracting out the pounds of food, since that number skews the total, from my first year, 1995, to 2018, services have increased 452%. Why such a large increase? The population has increased. The need has increased. We offer more services. We are more accessible.

Donations to ECHO pack a huge punch! The annual ***ECHO DOLLARS & SENSE REPORT*** combines our year-end service and financial reports, and adds in-kind donations to depict the estimated value of ECHO's services. The ***ECHO DOLLARS & SENSE 2018*** shows ECHO's ***Direct Assistance*** is ***98.2%*** and Administration just ***1.8%***!

The need for services is constant all year. The flow of clients needing ECHO services continues, as clients have to choose between putting food on the table and getting to work or paying their rent and utility bills. Housing and food services go hand-in-hand. Unstable housing affects clients' employability, mental health, their children's success in school, employers' bottom lines, and the community. There has been an increase in employed persons becoming homeless, because of increased housing costs.

Rents and utilities are rising faster than incomes for low-income people! Housing is the single largest cost for families. ECHO's clients' apartments cost an average of \$750 per month. Low-income people in the 0-30% County Median Income bracket pay over 50% of their gross income on housing and utilities. Over 80% of ECHO's clients earn 0-30% of County Median Income. For a family of four, that means they make less than \$25,000 a year gross income. Keeping a roof over peoples' heads keeps them safe and makes our food service more useful to them! ***Having food on your table is a basic need, and having a place to live is the core from which everything else is possible!***

ECHO assists about 3,600 families a year, about 14,000 people. Consider an example of a woman we helped. She has two children and is a single parent. She works full-time, earning a gross income of about \$14,000 per year. She pays over 50% of her gross income on rent and utilities. She has a GED, but no advanced training or education to get a better-paying job. The family was homeless – we helped them with lodging, then rent to get into housing, as well as providing food and other services.

Has the need gone up? We typically refer to our service reports, because people want quantitative data, not just our impressions. Our service reports show what we provided, but need is always more than what we can provide. The staff does more than provide ECHO services. They also problem-solve, lend a shoulder to cry on, link people to other services in the community, talk to landlords and other caseworkers with them, and much more. We help people feel more cared about when they leave here than when they came in. When you talk to a person needing help, they are people, not a number or a category. It is so different determining if they fit into this rule or if they fit the requirements of a grant. Donated funds are more flexible than grants and are for all of our services.

The success at carrying out our mission leads to increased costs. 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 a challenge and is determined by funders! What we can do together is limitless. It continues to be gratifying to me as I enter my 25th 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.

We hope that our mission and reputation encourage donations. For the fourth 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. Charity Navigator states that it demands rigor, responsibility and commitment to openness, and that ECHO's supporters should feel confident that their dollars are being used efficiently and responsibly. It is the right way to do things – with transparency, good stewardship, openness, and kindness.

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. We couldn't do all that we do without community support. ***ECHO is an example of faith in action, helping each other. Thank you for your help!***



50th Anniversary Special Events

- Forward Janesville BA5—June 20
- Scavenger Open House—July 13
- 1969 Style Dance—October 5

More details to come at www.echojanesville.org



Client Story

Jennifer has been self-employed for many years. Her children were in a serious accident in March 2018. One suffered major injuries, including a broken back. One had minor injuries, but suffers from PTSD. Jennifer closed her business in March to care for her children, reopening it mid-May. The loss of income impacted her payment of personal and business bills. Many clients changed providers, so Jennifer had to start over,

recruiting new clients. Jennifer had a large car repair in summer. Her car was repossessed and it cost over \$1500 to get it back. Jennifer had medical bills to pay, even though her children weren't at fault. The insurance companies have not settled the claim. Jennifer came to ECHO in November, asking for assistance with rent, the first time she needed assistance since 2002. Her landlord gave her a five day notice. She was behind one month rent since the accident. ECHO provided two months' rent and case management so Jennifer could catch up on bills. Jennifer is current on rent. Her business is picking up. Her children are recovering and in counseling, but unable to drive, one due to physical injuries and one due to PTSD.



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

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

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.

Checks can made out to ECHO and mailed to 65 S. High St., Janesville, WI 53548



**Janesville Area CROP Hunger Walk
Sunday, April 28, 2019
at Cargill United Methodist Church
Registration starts at 1pm**

Of every dollar raised, 25 cents will fight hunger here in our community through ECHO, Inc., and the rest will provide food, water, and resources to empower impoverished persons in our global community through Church World Services.



Contact Info
cropjanesville@charter.net



Join the movement at
<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/janesvillewi>

Volunteer Take 5

Name: *John Sathre*

How long have you volunteered at ECHO? *4 years.*

How did you get involved at ECHO? *Met Fran at an event, she sweet-talked me into volunteering.*

What do you do at ECHO? *Run the dumbwaiter, clean & organize, help with events, schmooze.*

What is your favorite thing about ECHO? *Comradery.*

What is one thing about ECHO that surprised you when you started volunteering?
Not surprised, but amazed at how many people we help.



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 133 clients.

Last year ECHO was able to provide bicycles to 18 clients.

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



HOUSING/RESOURCE NAVIGATOR WANTED!



ECHO is looking for a Housing and Resource Navigator to assist homeless households who are participants on the Coordinated Entry Prioritization List with accessing permanent housing. The Housing and Resource Navigator consults with local service providers to identify appropriate housing opportunities for clients and conducts outreach with local landlords to inform them of local housing programs, including but not limited to Rapid Re-Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing. 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

Thank you, United Way Blackhawk Region for the funding this new position from a Capacity Building Grant!

Upcoming Events



Fundraiser for



Important
DATE!

**Monday
June 3**

This year we would like to invite you to join us in the fight against hunger! Participating establishments donate 10% of Monday, June 3rd gross sales to ECHO.
View a list of participating establishments at www.echojanesville.org

**FUNDRAISE
your HEART
OUT**

MOD Pizza Fundraiser
Wed., May 1, 2019
10:30am-9:00pm

MOD Pizza will share 20% of proceeds with ECHO
3360 Milton Ave, Ste. 190

ECHO Holiday Express



Sunday, December 1, 2019
at the Pontiac Convention Center

Time - 2:00pm



Thursday, June 27, 4 - 8 pm
Panera Bread
2753 Milton Ave., Janesville

Panera will donate 20% back to ECHO.

*Flyer needs to be shown and available
at www.echojanesville.org*

Thank You!

Chicken Boy Murder Mystery

The Murder Mystery on January 18th & 19th was a wonderful success due to the following sponsor: Data Dimensions, Chicken Boy Productions, The Venue, and Best Events. Thank you also for the numerous contributions to the silent auction and the wonderful volunteers that helped to make the two nights a great event. We hope to see you next year for two more 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 30th and Ladies Must Swing for providing a great night of music. We hope to see you there next year!



[www.facebook.com/
ECHOJanesville](http://www.facebook.com/ECHOJanesville)

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



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.

John Brzezinski
Jeanne Casper
Jimmy Conway
Daniel B. DuBois
Don and Mary Eckert
Carol Ertz
Thomas Flood
Jerry Forst
Bob Goepfert

Rafael J. Hernandez Sr.
Buzz Janes
Kelly Jones
Judi Kneece
Robert Kuranz
Richard Larsen
Anita Lundberg
William Miess
Jerry O'Leary

Jon O'Leary
Kristina Patton
Elizabeth Peterson
Carol Pregont
Roger Rast
Ginny Spors
Ron and Mary Staben
Cai-Yun Tan
Bud Wirth

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.

Edna Feldman-Schultz
Nick's Birthday
Joan Jimenez
Karen Lisser

Mary Hayney
Elaine McDonald
Patrick McDonald
Warren Ruse

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
Mac & Cheese
Cereal

Peanut Butter & Jelly
Canned Meals
Instant Coffee
Spaghetti Sauce
Feminine Supplies

Toilet Paper
Diapers
Baby Wipes
Shampoo
Conditioner

Food Pantry Thank You

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

A & H Trucking	Humane Society of Southern Wisconsin
All Saints Anglican Church	Hunger Task Force - Milwaukee
Alpha Delta Kappa	Impact Confections
Asbury United Methodist Church	Janesville Woman's Club
Best Events	Jones Dairy Farm
Bimbo Bakeries USA	Knights of Columbus
Birds Eye	Kwik Trip
Boucher Group	MacFarlane Pheasant Farm
Brabazon Title Team	Madison Elementary
Butternut Bakery	Madison K-Kids
Cargill United Methodist Church	Mauer's Market IGA
Catholic Charities	Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church
Chambers & Owen	Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
Contemplative Prayer Group	Nativity of Mary Catholic Church and School
Craig Retired Teacher Lunch Bunch	NHA-WIC
Country Quality Dairy	Olive Garden
Crystal Farms	Our Savior Lutheran Church
CVS	Panera Bread
Daniel's Sentry Food Store	Peace Lutheran Church
Delta Kappa Gamma	Perfectly Plus Women's Consignment
Dollar General	Pepsi
Dreier Family Dental	Piggly Wiggly
Dunkin' Donuts	Riverplace Senior Housing
E & D Water Works	Rock Green Realtors Association
Emerald Grove UCC	Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church
Fagan Automotive	St. John's Lutheran Church
Faith Lutheran Church	St. John Vianney Church
Festival Foods	St. Mark Lutheran Church
First Christian Church	St. Matthew Lutheran Church & School
First Congregational Church	St. Patrick Catholic Church
First Lutheran Church	St. Paul Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church	St. Peter's Lutheran Church
Gardner Bakery	St. William Catholic Church
Goex	Sam's Club
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	Schnucks
Hedberg Public Library	Seneca Foods
Hendricks Properties	Starbucks
Hormel	Trinity Episcopal Church



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ECHO Calendar of Events

- ◆ **4/28 CROP Hunger Walk -**
1 PM at Cargill United Methodist Church
- ◆ **6/3 Eat Out for Hunger –**
All day at participating restaurants
- ◆ **8/23 School Supply Distribution –**
at St. John Lutheran Church
- ◆ **10/26 Empty Bowl Soup Fundraiser**
- ◆ **11/23 Thanksgiving Basket Dist.–**
at the Rock Co. 4-H Fairgrounds
- ◆ **12/1 ECHO Holiday Express –**
at the Pontiac Convention Center.

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

“Funds for Friends” Program

Thank you to everyone who supported the “Funds for Friends” program. ECHO is very blessed to have Daniel’s Sentry on Court Street and Mauer’s Market IGA on E. Milwaukee St. as supporters of this program. We are still in need of community support for this program. Please save your receipts from Sentry or IGA with a “Funds for Friends” sticker on each one. Mail or deliver the receipts to ECHO at 65 S. High St., Janesville, WI 53548. ECHO will receive 1% back based on the purchase price. Remember, you have to ask the cashier for the sticker. It is a good habit for 2019 when grocery shopping. Thank you again for supporting ECHO and the “Funds for Friends” program.

