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Winter 2020

The ECHO Times

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

President's Message

By Nancy Hansen-Bennett



One of the many advantages of being a long-time ECHO Board member is the ability to see long range where we've been and, hopefully, where we are going. We are still a food pantry, but we are so much more! We are a driving force in the greater Janesville community in the effort to combat homelessness. We believe in the ultimate worth of every individual, and our staff treat everyone with the utmost respect. I am proud to be an ECHO volunteer and grateful for all your support. Thanks and praise!



REUSE + RECYCLE

brown paper bags

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

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Leaving 2019 and Looking Ahead to 2020



By **Karen Lisser, Executive Director**
klisser@echojanesville.org

Services that ECHO provides do not eliminate poverty, or make the poor less poor. They help people survive tough situations. We keep families in their homes, keep them fed, help them with other basic needs and provide case management. Our focus is to help fill in the gaps or provide help to people in emergencies and get people through tough situations.

“We all stumble, every one of us; that’s why it’s a comfort to go hand-in-hand” (author unknown). If we work together, helping our neighbors in need, it makes this community a comforting and better place. Because of community support, ECHO has helped people for over 50 years. 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.

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 on housing. Keeping a roof over peoples’ heads keeps them safe and makes our food service more useful to them!

We provided 3,633,076 meals in 2019! We paid for 351 months of rent assistance to keep families in their homes and provided 2,967 shelter nights in motels for people experiencing homelessness who couldn’t get into shelters. We had to cut off lodging for 5 months of 2019, because of a shortage of funds. We provided fewer months of rent, because we had difficulty helping people experiencing homelessness to obtain apartments, due to the housing shortage in our area.

The number of unduplicated households (HHs) served in 2019 was 3,768 HHs, about 14,000 people. That’s 3,768 different HHs coming through our doors in 2019 and most of them at least several times! Case Management to help these families with our various services came to 16,567 hours. For more information on our services, see *ECHO Services Report – December 2019, with YTD totals*. Look for this report and other reports on our website. *ECHO Dollars & Sense Report 2019* will be available in February—it will show you the value of donated goods, what we spent on services.

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 them having to be seen by a social services staff member every time they come in. We couldn’t do this without your support and want you to see the effect your contributions make. Here is an example of just one family we helped – I will call her Jennifer.

Jennifer has been successfully self-employed for many years. In March, both of her children were in a severe car accident. The oldest suffered major injuries, including a broken back. The youngest had more minor injuries, but also suffers from PTSD from the accident - she was the driver (not at fault). Jennifer closed her business for over two months to care for her children.

They are both still recovering and unable to drive, but Jennifer was able to reopen her business in mid-May. However, the loss of income and business for over two months impacted her ability to pay personal and professional bills. Many of her clients changed providers, so Jennifer had to start over with recruitment of new clients.

Jennifer also suffered from a large car repair over the summer and had her car repossessed due to missed payments. She had to pay over \$1500 to get it back, because she needs her car to work. Jennifer had medical bills to pay from the car accident, even though her children weren’t at fault, because the insurance companies have not settled the claim yet. Jennifer finally came to ECHO in November asking for assistance with housing – the first time she has needed to request assistance since 2002.

Her landlord gave her a five-day notice, as she was continuously one month behind on rent since the accident. ECHO provided two months of rent assistance along with case management and referrals to give Jennifer the opportunity to catch up on other bills. To date, she is current on her rent.

Sustainability is a challenge and is determined by funders. Great programs don’t appear out of thin air. It takes perseverance and financial resources. Together, we can change things. It is difficult for a program that literally changes people’s lives for the better, to become self-sustaining. It continues to be gratifying to me as I enter my 26th 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. *Continued on next page*

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That makes a difference at ECHO and in this community. Local support is our lifeblood, providing over 80% of our funding.

I am honored and privileged to have been the Executive Director of ECHO the last 25 years, and I still have a lot more that I can accomplish here. I am thrilled about our new Transitional Living Program (TLP) House that we were given by the City to rehab and use for transitional living, taking a family out of homelessness, giving them a place to live and providing case management for them to become self-sufficient. The family of three, a young mother and father with a one-year-old girl, was chosen in mid-November and will move in soon, perhaps by the time you receive this newsletter. Rejeana is the case manager and has been working with the family weekly the last two months. The TLP House is fully furnished.

I have the opportunity to be in a position to help people in this community see the difference that they can make - not only in the lives of others, but also in their own lives - by simply giving of themselves. We each may feel that what we can contribute is *just a drop in the bucket*. But a steady succession of drops fills the bucket pretty quickly. This concept is evident at ECHO. One donation alone doesn't change people's lives—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.

What we can do together is limitless. The ECHO staff joins me in thanking all of you who give money, goods, time—giving of yourselves—to help ECHO's mission. Let's hope that 2020 is truly a new year - a year with new opportunities, new attitudes, new voices, new messages, and new visions.

Have a great 2020!

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 6 at 9:30AM** to pack Easter baskets at the ECHO Office.
- ◆ **Tuesday - Thursday, April 7 to April 9 9AM - 4PM** to distribute baskets at the ECHO office.





**\$25 per
Box Set**

**\$25 per
Box Set**

Square Meals

**\$25 BOX OF GIFT CARDS FROM LOCAL ESTABLISHMENTS.
EACH GIFT CARD IS WORTH \$10 OFF YOUR TAB
AT THE FEATURED LOCALLY - OWNED ESTABLISHMENT.**

2020 Participating Locations

**BASICS CO-OP
COFFEE & DELI**

**FREDRICK'S
SUPPER CLUB**

**MAC'S PIZZA
SHACK**

**SANDEE'S
THAI FUSION**

**BLUE GILLY'S
PANCAKE PIER**

**KNUTE'S
BAR & GRILL**

**MY APARTMENT
PUB & GRILL**

**SIDELINES SPORTS
PUB & GRILL**

**BUCKHORN
SUPPER CLUB**

THE LOOKING GLASS

**ROCKIE'S
HOMETOWN
PIZZA & SUBS**

**WHISKEY RANCH
BAR & GRILL**

CITRUS CAFE

**LUCY'S #7
BURGER BAR**

**YETTI'S
BAR & GRILL**

BRING GIFT CARD TO FEATURED DINING DESTINATION AND SPEND \$25 OR MORE (PRE-TAX/GRATUITY).

2020 ECHO Executive Committee

Nancy Hansen-Bennett, President
Cargill United Methodist Church

Maureen Birchfield, Secretary
All Saints Anglican Catholic Church

Heidi Jensen, Vice-President
Asbury United Methodist Church

Greg Kraft, Member at Large
Nativity of Mary Catholic Church

Rick Mueller, Treasurer
Community Representative

Dori MacFarlane, Member at Large
Community Representative

Gloria Huschka, Immediate Past President
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church



*ECHO's mission is dedicated to meeting housing,
food and other basic human needs and addressing
the barriers to self-sufficiency.*



Daniel’s Sentry “Funds for Friends” Program

Thank you to everyone who supported the “Funds for Friends” program. ECHO is blessed to have Daniel’s Sentry on Court Street as a supporter of this program as we enter 2020. We are still in need of community support of this program. Please save your receipts from Sentry 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 2020 when grocery shopping. Thank you again for supporting ECHO and the “Funds for Friends” program.

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.

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

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



2019 SERVICE SNAPSHOT

- 3,768 Rock County households served
- 3,633,076 meals provided
- 2,967 Nights in a local motel for the homeless
- 351 months of rent paid to keep families housed
- 429 children received school supplies
- 517 children received Christmas presents

Thank you for assisting us in our mission of meeting housing, food and other basic human needs and addressing the barriers to self-sufficiency.

CROP Hunger Walk set for April 26

Hunger kills more people throughout the world than AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis combined, but area residents hope to change that statistic during the 43rd annual Janesville Area CROP Hunger Walk.

Mark your calendar for Sunday, April 26. That's when walkers—young and old and representing all faiths and all walks of life—will gather to fight hunger. ECHO again will be the recipient of 25 percent of the funds raised from this year's Janesville walk. Last year's walk raised a total of \$53,000 with a check of \$13,281.51 delivered to ECHO to fight hunger locally.

The remaining funds helped the efforts of Church World Service (CWS), a faith-based organization that fights hunger and poverty in communities around the globe.

"Join us to make a difference in the lives of our neighbors down the street and around the globe," said Kathy Holcombe, event coordinator.

"Raising Animals; Growing Communities" is the theme for this year's walks throughout the United States. CWS is highlighting how donations are making a difference in the Dominican Republic, where 30,000 people are vulnerable to hunger. CWS will use funds from the walk to help families develop their own gardens, farms and fishing ponds so they'll have enough to eat.

On Sunday, April 26, registration will begin at 1 p.m. at Cargill United Methodist Church, 2000 Wesley Ave., Janesville, with the walk starting at 1:30 p.m. A 5K route will make a loop along Milwaukee Street, Randall Avenue, Racine Street, through Palmer Park and back to the church via Lexington Drive. Walkers who desire a shorter route can turn onto Ruger Avenue from Randall.

There is no registration fee to participate, but walkers are encouraged to collect donations to support the cause. Holcombe suggested that people form a team of church members, family, friends or co-workers to make the walk more fun for everyone.

Whether you're walking individually or as a team, you can register at www.crophungerwalk.org/janesvillewi. Just click on "Register," fill in your details and you'll find lots of tools to help you get started.

A meeting for team captains is scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Saturday, March 14, at Trinity Episcopal Church, 411 E. Court St., Janesville. Recruiting materials will be distributed at the meeting.

If you are not able to participate in the walk, consider making a tax-deductible online contribution at www.crophungerwalk.org/janesvillewi. Regardless of its size, your gift will help people in your neighborhood and around the world.

For more information on the April 26 walk, call Holcombe at 608-756-8117 or email kholcombe8117@charter.net. You can also visit www.crophungerwalk.org/janesvillewi or www.facebook.com/JanesvilleAreaCROP.

Spring Event Fun! Gloria Huschka, Immediate Past President

Happy New Year! Every year the ECHO Fundraising Committee comes up with a variety of events and projects to help raise funds for ECHO so the doors can stay open to serve the needs in our community. One of my all-time favorite fundraisers is coming up on Saturday March 28th and I am asking you to join me there. It is called **SWING into SPRING**. The event will be held from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at the Pontiac Convention Center. Free Swing Lessons are available starting at 6 p.m. by John Curran of Madison Area Ballroom, Inc. The main feature of the evening is the very talented "Ladies Must Swing," the finest all-female Big Band from Madison. These ladies are fantastic and will have you out of your seat and jiving all evening long! Tickets are \$20 and may be purchased at ECHO – or at www.echojanesville.org. The event includes a cash bar, silent auction, raffle and wine pull. Snacks will also be available. So mark your calendar and come join me on March 28th for SWING into SPRING at the Pontiac Convention Center!



Volunteer Take 5

Name: *April Wright*

How long have you volunteered at ECHO?
5 years.

How did you get involved at ECHO? *After I retired, I wanted to give back to the community.*

What do you do at ECHO? *Fill food orders, restock shelves and whatever needs to be done.*

What is your favorite thing about ECHO? *Working with the other volunteers.*

What is one thing about ECHO that surprised you when you started volunteering? *The very many ways ECHO helps so many in our community.*



ECHO needs 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.



www.facebook.com/ECHOJanesville

We have homeless and hungry families in our community that need a roof over their heads to prepare food we provide. Will you please consider making a difference by donating to help those in need?

\$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.

SWING into SPRING

Saturday, March 28, 2020

7:00-10:00pm

Pontiac Convention Center

Featuring music by



Cash Bar - Silent Auction - Raffle - Wine Pull

Tickets : \$20

Available at ECHO - 65 S High St or at www.echojanesville.org

**Free Swing Lesson by John Curran
of Madison Area Ballroom, Inc.
Starts promptly at 6:00 p.m.**



Thank You!

Thanksgiving Baskets - Thank you to the donors and over 200 volunteers who came out to help pack and hand out 600 baskets. The Thanksgiving Baskets provided food for 1,188 people.

Holiday Express - Thank you to everyone who helped out and came to the ECHO Holiday Express. Many individuals, young and old, viewed *Arthur Christmas*, visited with Santa, and made holiday crafts on November 26 at the Pontiac Convention Center. Many thanks to American Family Insurance - Colleen Frentzel for sponsoring the event and providing many volunteers for this great event! Put November 29 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 517 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.

Christmas Dinner - ECHO would like to thank the many volunteers who came to the Christmas Dinner and helped serve 850 meals. St. William Catholic Church graciously donated their space for the dinner. ECHO would also like to give a big shout-out to our chef, Jon Gordon, and his many volunteers who made all of the yummy food. We are very grateful that our previous chef found his own replacement and provided training, as it was such a smooth transition with no problems. We hope to see you at the Christmas Dinner on Friday, December 25, 2020 at St. William Catholic Church!

New Staff at ECHO

ECHO would like to welcome, Chelsea, our new PATH Outreach Worker. Her position is funded by a SAMHSA grant to outreach and connect homeless people with serious mental illness to housing and services. Chelsea states, "I am excited to join the team at ECHO!"

We would also like to welcome Rachel, our new Housing and Resource Navigator. Her position is funded by United Way Blackhawk Region. Rachel says "I wanted to have a career where I could give back to people in a real impactful way! I'm beyond excited to join the ECHO team and help assist individuals with their housing needs."



Chelsea



Rachel



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.

Carla Aiello
Lavern Anderson
Marilyn Baum
Virginia Benson
Emilie Lorraine Borgmann
Amos & Ruth Budahn
David Budahn
Patrick Cassidy
Rev. Charles Evavold

Clayton Foss
Marylou Goepfert
Sharon Kennedy
Linda Kettle
Catherine Kitelinger
Elaine Ruth Klingemeyer
Edward Knutson
Grandma & Grandpa Kueter
Richard "Dick" McCann

Rollin Natter
Alan Neugebauer
Jeannette Ries
Sue Sathre
Ramona Scharine
Bud Schwartzlow
Ginny Spors
James and Norine Turner
Elaine 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.

Rhonda Armstrong
Willa Bagley
Deb & Jim Brewer
Margie Burdette
Jack & Kristina Burnett
Martha & Jack Burnett
Carlson Family
Jodi Clark
ECHO Staff & Volunteers
Connie Glowacki
Steve and Laurie Harper
Mary Hayney
Mert Helgesen, Birthday

Hrycay Family
Alexander Latka
Chris Latka
Judy Latka
Craig Lipetri
Rob and Karen Lisser
Lorson Family
Marion Ludwig, 106 Birthday
JT, Ellie, Peter, Anne, & Isla McCrone
Mo & Chelsea McCrone
Skip & Sue McCrone
McDonald Family
Kay & Dan Moore

Sarah Nass
Donna Padilla
Sandy Peterson
Warren Rose
Don and Carolyn Seierstad
Tony Smithson, Birthday
Karen & Bill Spae
Rebecca Stanek
Michael & Judy Stoney, Birthday
Edna Thorp
Nicholas Utphall
The Weisz Siblings
Linda & Doug 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.)



**ECHO is seeking volunteers
for the Fundraising Committee.**

**Contact Jessica at jlocher@echojanesville.org
for more information about joining the
ECHO Fundraising Committee.**

Food and Fund Drives

Special thanks to the following businesses and organizations that held food, fund and other drives:

All Saints Church	KFC
Anytime Fitness	Kids Against Hunger
Aramark	Kennedy Elementary School
Asbury United Methodist Church	Kwik Trip
Beta Alpha PSI	Little Debbie
Bimbo Bakeries USA	MacFarlane Pheasant Farm
Bird's Eye	Menards
Brownberry Bread	Mercy Meals on Wheels
Butternut Bakery	Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church
Cargill United Methodist Church	Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
Catholic Charities	Nativity of Mary Catholic Church and School
Chambers & Owen	NHA-WIC
Church of Nazarene	Olive Garden
Contemplative Prayer Group	Our Savior Lutheran Church
Country Quality Dairy	Panera Bread
Crystal Farms	Peace Lutheran Church
CVS Pharmacy	Pepsi
Daniel's Sentry Food	Retired & Senior Volunteer Program
Delta Kappa Gamma	Rock County Jail Chaplaincy
Dollar General	Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church
Dunkin' Donuts	Rotary Club
E & D Water Works	St. John Lutheran Church
Emerald Grove United Congregational Church	St. John Vianney Church
Faith Lutheran Church	St. Mark's Lutheran Church
Family Dollar	St. Matthew Lutheran Church & School
First Baptist Church	St. Patrick Catholic Church
First Congregational Church	St. Paul Lutheran Church
First Lutheran Church	St. Peter's Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church	St. William Catholic Church
Gardner Bakery	Sam's Club
Generac	Sauk Valley Bank
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	Schnucks
GSM Transportation	Seneca Foods
Hedberg Public Library	Starbucks
Hendricks Properties	Texas Roadhouse
Hormel	Trinity Episcopal Church
Humane Society of Southern Wisconsin	Unitarian Church
Hunger Task Force - Milwaukee	WCBVI
Jones Dairy Farm	



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ECHO Calendar of Events

- ◆ **3/28 Swing into Spring** –
7 PM at the Pontiac Convention Center
- ◆ **4/7-4/9 Children's Easter Basket Distribution** – at the ECHO Office
- ◆ **4/26 CROP Hunger Walk** -
1 PM at Cargill United Methodist Church
- ◆ **6/1 Eat Out for Hunger** –
All day at participating restaurants
- ◆ **8/21 School Supply Distribution** –
at St. John Lutheran Church
- ◆ **10/24 Empty Bowl Soup Fundraiser**
- ◆ **11/21 Thanksgiving Basket Dist.**–
at the Rock Co. 4-H Fairgrounds
- ◆ **11/29 ECHO Holiday Express** –
at the Pontiac Convention Center.



United Way
Blackhawk Region
Funded Partner