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Fall 2021

The ECHO Times

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

President's Message

By Heidi Jensen



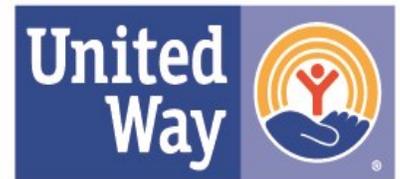
The leaves are turning colors and beginning to fall. The temperature is dropping and it is time to gear up for the colder weather and snow. Those who know me know that I very much dislike snow and the associated weather that accompanies it. I am, however, fortunate to have a house to provide shelter from the soon-to-arrive snowflakes and blustery weather. Some of ECHO's clients are in need of shelter from the elements. ECHO strives to help those in our community who need shelter by providing hotel vouchers and guidance to find housing. In September alone, ECHO provided 595 nights in local hotels. ECHO also aids those who have shelter to stay in their apartments by providing rent assistance. In September, ECHO provided 34 months of rent to keep families housed.

The fall season leads to Thanksgiving and Christmas soon to follow. Please consider helping those in need in our community by supporting ECHO and its many upcoming events. There are many ways to get involved. Consider donating to the Thanksgiving basket distribution, sponsoring a family for a Thanksgiving dinner or volunteering or participating in the Festival Food Turkey Trot (Nov 25).

Be thankful for all of your blessings and consider a donation to ECHO to help continue the mission of meeting the housing, food and other basic needs of those in our community.



Proud Partner Agency



United Way
Blackhawk Region

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First Year In Review By Jessica Locher, Executive Director

One year complete as the Executive Director at ECHO. I could not be more proud of the ECHO staff and volunteers who assisted me during the past year as we transitioned leadership during the pandemic. I would also like to thank Karen Lisser, who spent much time mentoring me over the years, as that assisted with making the transition more smooth.

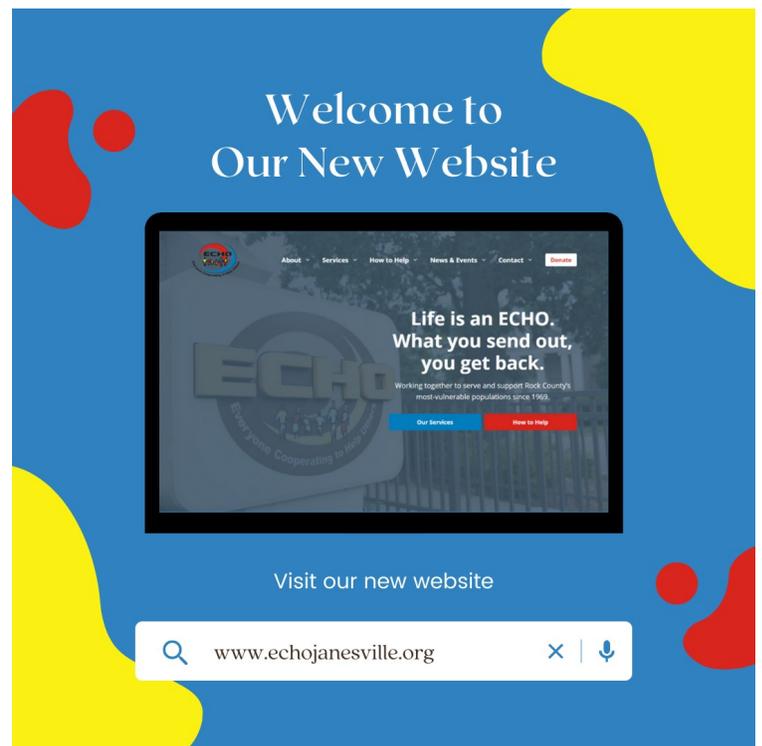
This past year we saw a large increase in requests for our homeless services including street outreach and emergency motel vouchers. With the support of our donors and Community Development Block Grant funding from the City of Janesville, we were able to increase our capacity of emergency motel vouchers in 2021. From January 1 to October 31, 2021, we provided 8,094 nights in local motels. That same period of time in 2020, we provided 3,594 nights at local motels. I am so proud of the staff for continuing to provide all of the basic needs we always have provided in the past, along with increasing the time they have spent on case management of our emergency motel voucher program.

During the past year, we have modified our fundraising efforts. We raised funds through a calendar raffle sponsored by MacFarlane Pheasant Farm and online silent auctions. We also hosted Empty Bowls as a drive-through twice during this pandemic—thank you, YMCA of North Rock County, for letting us use their parking lot for distribution. Also a big thank you to the following businesses who sponsored the event or donated soup: Basics Co-Op, Best Events Catering, BTC Culinary Arts Students, Citrus Café, Culvers, Ding A Ling Supper Club, Eagle Inn, ECHO, G R Sandwich, Jeff’s Kitchen, Knute’s, Luke’s Deli, Mac’s Pizza Shack, Mercy Hospital, Milwaukee Grill, My Apartment, Panera, Russ’s Park Place, Sidelines, SSM Health Janesville, The Lark Market, Vert Café & Plant Gallery, MacFarlane Pheasant, Jax Custom Printing, Non-Toxic Living by Michele Ianni. We also just booked our first in-person event for March 26, 2022 - Swing Into Spring featuring Ladies Must Swing at the Celtic House. We can’t wait to see all of our supporters in person again!

We have some great community news to share too. ECHO has been approached by an anonymous donor to fund a solar array project that will provide about 72% of our utility costs. This is big for a non-profit like ours where over half of our building is used for food pantry services with commercial refrigeration. The project will take about 6 months to complete from contract signing to the solar panels being connected to the electrical grid. We are so excited to be the recipient of this donation, as it will allow us to provide more housing and homeless services with the money saved each month.

More great community news is our partnership with the YMCA of North Rock County for a weekend food program for youth. Youth can pick up a bag of food on Fridays from 3-6 pm at the Downtown Janesville YMCA location. Food for the program is being provided by ECHO. YMCA volunteers are packing the drawstring bags of food. ECHO has committed to providing 50 bags of food each week for a year.

I can’t wait to see what the next year brings!



Are you a friend of ECHO? www.facebook.com/ECHOJanesville

Give Thanks This Holiday Season

Basket Distribution

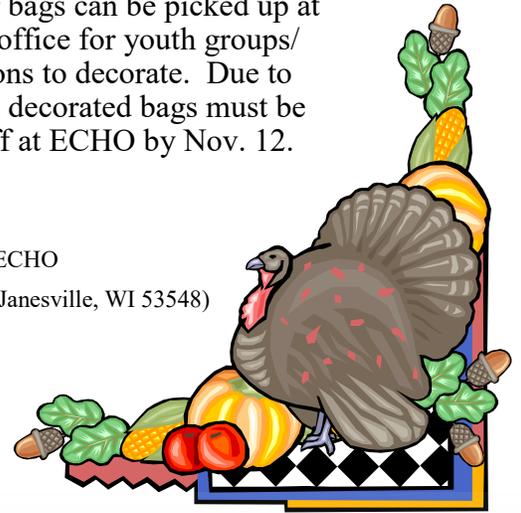
Saturday, November 20

Due to COVID-19, ECHO will not be accepting donations of cookies and bars. Please consider purchasing canned cranberries, green beans and corn instead.

Decorated Grocery Bags

Brown paper bags can be picked up at the ECHO office for youth groups/organizations to decorate. Due to COVID-19, decorated bags must be dropped off at ECHO by Nov. 12.

Please drop off at ECHO
(65 S High Street, Janesville, WI 53548)



VOLUNTEERS NEED TO SIGN UP IN ADVANCE BY CALLING FRAN AT 608-754-5333
(Due to COVID-19, we will be accepting a limited number of volunteers)



THANKSGIVING Donation

ECHO expects to assist over 600 families who are low-income.



Yes, I would like to sponsor ____ Thanksgiving Dinner(s) at \$30 each and/or
I would like to make a donation to help feed families after Thanksgiving.
\$25 **\$50** **\$100** **\$250** **\$500** **Other** \$ _____

by sending in a check to the ECHO Office at 65 S. High St., Janesville, WI 53548,
made out to: "ECHO Thanksgiving".

Please help make a family's holiday a thankful one!

Name: _____ Phone #: _____ E-Mail: _____
Address: _____ Zip Code: _____

New Staff at ECHO

ECHO welcomed two new social service staff on September 29, 2021. We are super excited to have Ana Boden (Client Advocate) and Rachel Rennhack (Client Advocate/Rapid Re-Housing Case Manager) join Team ECHO!



Hello! My name is Ana Boden. I am originally from Spain, but I have lived in Janesville for almost 23 years. I have a degree in Education and for the last 12 years I worked in Supply Chain/Export. However, I always had a passion for volunteering and helping others: in my kids' schools, lunch buddy program, at work, etc. I feel very privilege to have converted this passion into my job and to be part of ECHO. I whole-heartedly believe that we can make a difference in our community if we all work together to help others.



Hello! My name is Rachel Rennhack and I am ecstatic to be the new Client Advocate and Rapid Re-Housing Case Manager. Recently, I received my Master's Degree in Social Work from UW-Whitewater with an emphasis in Mental Health and Substance Use Disorders. I have lived in the Janesville area my entire life and have been aware of ECHO and how our organization provides individuals and families with food, housing and other services during the holidays. I enjoy working with others in need and am excited that being a part of ECHO will provide me the opportunity to do so.

In the future, I would like to work with as many diverse clients as I can, allowing me to utilize my skills as a trained social worker. Becoming a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and pursuing a career in therapy has become a part of my future aspirations. Personally, I enjoy the fall season and all it brings, such as bonfires, caramel apples, and pumpkin patch visits. I enjoy spending time with my family and friends, as well as my cats.

I'm looking forward to the many opportunities ECHO will bring professionally and personally.

2021 Festival Foods Turkey Trot—New Downtown Janesville Location



The Festival Foods Turkey Trot is the perfect guilt-free solution for eating your weight in mashed potatoes.

The Festival Foods Turkey Trot allows participants to partake in either a 5-mile run or a 2-mile run/walk and is open to everyone of all ages and abilities. Don't forget to bring your favorite cuddly companion for the 2-mile Dog Jog.

Get your workout in this Thanksgiving Day!

Proceeds Benefit: ECHO, YMCA,
and Boys & Girls Club.

Register Online at www.festivalfoodsturkeytrot.com to run/walk or volunteer!

Christmas Toy Drive and Distribution Info

Due to COVID-19 and ensuring the safety of our clients, volunteers and staff, ECHO will again modify their annual Toy Distribution.

This year, ECHO is requesting monetary donations or gift cards from Blain's Farm & Fleet. Parents will receive a gift card(s) to purchase presents, along with a pre-packed goodie bag full of stocking stuffers and holiday cheer for children in need in our community.

Donations will be accepted now through December 9 at the ECHO office, 65 S. High St. from 9 am-Noon & 1-4 pm Monday-Thursday, 9 am-Noon Friday or call 754-5333 for an appointment to drop off donations.

Last year ECHO provided 429 children with Christmas toys. ECHO also distributed Christmas trees and decorations to 52 families who otherwise would not have been able to afford these holiday extras. Please be a part of our holiday tradition.

Holiday wrapping paper is needed and can also be dropped off along with the gift cards.

Toy Distribution - Thurs, Dec. 9, Fri., Dec. 10 and Mon., Dec.13
Snow Day - Saturday, December 11 at ECHO (65 S High Street)

Preregistration from now - Monday, December 13 at ECHO is required for participation in the program. Participants must bring photo ID, current utility bill with a Janesville address, and proof of income for the entire household.

Any toy donations will be used for birthday presents throughout the year for children in need.



HAPPY
Holidays



FREE ECHO CHRISTMAS DINNER

Saturday, Dec. 25 from 11AM to 1PM

(Open to everyone in the community)

St. William's Catholic Church, 1820 Ravine St., Janesville

Everyone's welcome! Please join us!

Carry-out and Delivery Only Due To COVID-19

Call 608-754-5333 to schedule a delivery.



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.

Marlene Belland
Butch Cashmore
Ruth Chrostowski
Christopher Darveaux
Richard DuBois
Harriett Fredendall
John Hrober

Roscoe Iverson
Dorothy Murphy
Barb P
Elizabeth Peterson
Hubert Prochaska
Arnie Schmitz
Charles Smith

Dorothy Smith
Shirley Smith
Clarence Soddy
James & Norine Turner
Betty Woodstock

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.

Del & Joan Halfmann
Virginia Hirsch
Steve Latka
John Nelson

Paula & John Parshall
Ruth Ann Potts
Ken & Sandy Roach

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.)

Volunteer Take 5

Name: Santa Claus (Tom Brien)

How long have you volunteered at ECHO? Too long to remember.

How did you get involved at ECHO? It was at the ECHO Christmas Dinner when it was held at First Lutheran Church. Their Santa never showed up and I said I have a suit. I went home and got my suit and came back.

What do you do at ECHO? Santa has attended ECHO Christmas dinners, Holiday Express, and Farm & Fleet Toy Drives.

What is your favorite thing about ECHO? ECHO Christmas Dinner.

What is one thing about ECHO that surprised you when you started volunteering? The amount of services that ECHO provides to the community.





Food Pantry Thank You

Special thanks to the following businesses and organizations for assisting our food pantry:

All Saints Anglican Catholic Church
Amazon
Aptiv
Asbury United Methodist Church
Bimbo Bakeries USA
Bird's Eye
Blain's Farm & Fleet
Brownberry Bread
Butternut Bakery
Cargill United Methodist Church
Caritas
Catholic Charities
CESA
Chambers & Owen
Choice Program
Contemplative Prayer Group
Crystal Farms
Daniel's Sentry Food West
Dean Medical Group
Delta Kappa Gamma
Dollar General
Dunkin' Donuts
E & D Water Works
Faith Lutheran Church
Family Dollar
Festival Foods
First Baptist
First Congregational Church
First Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church
Gardner Bakery
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Hedberg Public Library
Hendricks Properties
Hormel
Humane Society of Southern Wisconsin
Hunger Task Force - Milwaukee
IMP Foods

Janesville Senior Center
Jones Dairy Farm
Kandu
KFC
Kwik Trips
Little Debbie
McFarlane Pheasant Farm
MOM's Group of Janesville
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church
Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
Nativity of Mary Catholic Church
New Life Assembly of God
NHA-WIC
NFI
Olive Garden
Our Savior Lutheran
Panera Bread
Peace Lutheran Church
Pepsi
Riverplace Senior Housing
Rock Green Realtors
Rock Prairie Presbyterian
Ruby's Pantry Food Bank
St. John Lutheran Church
St. John Vianney Church
St. Mark's Lutheran Church
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
St. Patrick Catholic Church
St. Paul Lutheran Church
St. Peter's Lutheran Church
St. William Catholic Church
Sam's Club
Schnucks
Seneca Foods
Trinity Episcopal Church
Upper Lakes Food
Washara Food Pantry
Walmart



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Upcoming Events:

7/6-12/28/21
Calendar Raffle

11/20/21
Thanksgiving Basket Dist.

11/25/21
Festival Foods Turkey Trot

12/9/21—12/13/21
Toy Distribution

12/25/21
Christmas Dinner

3/26/22
Swing Into Spring

**WE NEED
 SUPERHEROES
 TO HELP FIGHT
 HUNGER!**

**CALL FRAN AT (608) 754-5333
 TO SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER**



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

