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Summer 2024

The ECHO Times

President's Message

By Dori MacFarlane



My last article dealt with how ECHO helps people stay in their homes while they are experiencing a crisis. It is the goal of ECHO to keep people housed, fed, and secure. Unfortunately, there are times when people do lose their housing. Rock County is in an affordable housing crisis and it can feel hopeless. ECHO has been working to create more affordable housing, yet we cannot meet all of the needs of our community. ECHO is very fortunate to have two Housing Resource Navigators, whose full-time jobs are to locate housing and provide resources for those who lack those resources. Riley and Denise are available to help their clients get back into permanent homes and stay there.

These grant-funded positions offer our neighbors access to assessments that determine what their housing barriers might be. This program also provides a personal connection to our navigators, who learn their preferences and help them develop an action plan. Riley and Denise also support our clients by mentoring and assisting in finding the resources, programs, and services that are available. No two meetings are alike, as each client's needs vary. If a client needs assistance filling out applications, or visiting with potential landlords; Riley or Denise is right there beside them, giving them the support they need. There is also an educational component that goes along with this: teaching communication skills, time and/or money management and other crucial survival skills. Riley and Denise take pride in helping their clients obtain housing through the programs ECHO offers. They are also aware of other resources and services within Rock County that might cover some situations that ECHO does not. In those instances, our clients are guided toward those solutions. Once housing is found, ECHO can assist with emergency rental assistance, which either pays the security deposit or the first month's rent.

Helping our clients begins long before the client walks through the door. Riley and Denise conduct outreach to inform area landlords about our programs and to build rapport. Those regular visits help keep landlords aware of the housing needs of our clients and assure the landlords that our clients are striving to become reliable renters supported by ECHO. They also make frequent phone calls to the landlords to see if any openings have occurred. It is important that they develop a good relationship with landlords to encourage collaboration. This way if a problem develops, the landlord feels comfortable contacting us and knows that we will do our best to help our clients solve it before it becomes an eviction.

ARTICLE CONTINUES ON PAGE 2

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President's Message Continued:

Since the process of finding housing often requires extensive time, indeed months, ECHO also gives out overnight bags, hygiene kits, socks, sweatshirts, mittens or gloves, ponchos, and other items that are needed to stay warm, dry and fed. ECHO requires that all of these donated items be new out of respect for our clients.

I would love for there to come a time when everyone in our community has a home, food, and care. Until that time, I am proud that ECHO seeks to provide a blanket of comfort to our neighbors who do not have a roof over their heads.



*ECHO appreciates United Way Blackhawk Region for the grant that funds this program.



Executive Director's Message

By Jessica Locher, Executive Director

Over the last couple of ECHO newsletters, you have seen a theme around housing and homelessness. The housing (owner and rental) inventory has decreased, and the price of housing has increased due to inflation and demand. ECHO has seen an increase in requests for all our housing and homeless programs because of the low inventory and the increased rental rates. Today, I will focus on our Transitional Living Program (TLP). In 2019, we partnered with the City of Janesville's Neighborhood and Community Services department (NCS) to start our TLP with the donation of a house through their tax

foreclosure program. NCS also provided funding to help rehabilitate the house into safe and sanitary conditions. The doors to that TLP home opened to the first homeless family in March 2020.

The mission of ECHO's TLP is to provide support for homeless families to establish independent lives and move from homelessness to permanent housing. The TLP provides up to 18 months of weekly case management and housing to qualified households. The program's case management includes advocacy, supportive services, and crisis services. To help families along on their journey, participants will also be required to set and progress on long- and short-term goals. Some goals for the adults in the household could be to continue their education or participate in job training programs to obtain better paying employment, obtain their driver's license and/or vehicles to get to work and other appointments, work on improving their credit scores, and creating, and sticking to a monthly budget. The whole family could get connected to medical services (physical and/or mental health). Tenants will be provided individualized case management that is designed to help them obtain income and to prepare them to become renters in a market rate rental unit after the program ends. As necessary, ECHO will assist participants with accessing different services such as FoodShare, W-2, Social Security, and more.

As mentioned in past articles, by the end of 2024 ECHO will have eight units available for our transitional living program. ECHO invites you to join us in celebrating the opening of our second TLP home as we host an open house and celebration at the 4th Ward Park on Tuesday August 20, 2024, from 5:00-7:00pm. We will have kids' activities at the 4th Ward Park that is right across from our new TLP home on S. High Street. Tours will be available for those who would like to see the rehabilitated house. More information on the open house and celebration can be found on our website and social media accounts.

ARTICLE CONTINUES ON PAGE 3



Executive Director's Message Continued:

For a refresher, the second home was also donated by the City of Janesville's NCS, along with funding to rehabilitate the house that was vacant for over five years. The additional \$50,000 that was needed to bring it up to a safe and sanitary condition was provided by a matching grant through the Janesville Foundation and generous friends of ECHO. We greatly appreciate everyone's support of this project financially. We would also like to thank the Brothers Main and Hallman Lindsay for the support of this home through discounts and/or donated product.

This program is an important part of ECHO's future as we continue to provide a hand up, not a handout, to our low-income clients and families experiencing homelessness. These TLP homes provide a private, safe, stable place for them to decompress from past trauma while working on short-and long-term goals that will help remove barriers to self-sufficiency. We encourage you to connect with us to learn more about the transitional living program and how you can help this program continue to expand while meeting a critical need in our community.



SENIOR "STOCKBOX" PROGRAM

Free Food for income eligible seniors (60 & over)

Distribution at ECHO

Monday and Wednesdays from 1-4 pm

(Currently, there is a state-wide waitlist for any new clients)

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

Wisconsin ID Required - Please contact ECHO for more information, include the income limit 608-754-5333
Sponsored by the Hunger Task Force in Milwaukee



REUSE + RECYCLE

brown paper bags

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

OTHER NEEDS

- Cereal
- Granola Bars
- Pasta Sauce
- Hamburger & Tuna Helper (Boxed Meals)
- Feminine Products
- Bar Soap/Bodywash
- Men's Deodorant
- Shampoo & Conditioner
- Laundry Detergent
- Dish Soap & General
- Cleaning Products



Donation Hours:
M-TH 8:00am-4pm
F 8:00am-12pm

amazon **wishlist**

<https://amzn.to/3SwGMTJ>



VOLUNTEER OPEN HOUSE

1ST THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH 2PM

TOUR THE BUILDING AND
LEARN MORE ABOUT
VOLUNTEERING AT ECHO



Volunteer Take 5

Name:

Dawn

How long have you volunteered at ECHO?

2 Years

How did you get involved at ECHO?

I wanted to volunteer somewhere. I heard about ECHO so I called and signed up. They called me and I started a few days later. I love working here, it is very rewarding!

What do you do at ECHO?

Make up the bread bags, stock the upstairs shelves, call the clients and tell them their order is ready and where to pick it up.

What is your favorite thing about ECHO?

Seeing the joy and appreciation on the client's face when they pick up their food order.

What is one thing about ECHO that surprised you when you started volunteering?

ECHO is an amazing organization. I didn't know they did some many wonderful things besides supplying food for so many families.



If you are interested in volunteering at ECHO, please go to our website:

www.echojanesville.org/volunteer/ and fill out the application or stop by ECHO and ask for an application. Bring your sense of humor and a spirit of caring.

Looking for ways your employees can volunteer and make a difference in the community?

Maryam Enterline

Food Resource and Volunteer Coordinator

menterline@echojanesville.org



SHOEBOX PROJECT



TRAVEL SIZE

- toothbrush
- toothpaste
- comb/brush
- bar soap
- shampoo
- conditioner
- washcloth
- lotion
- deodorant
- razor
- shaving cream
- lip balm

You can help those living on or just off the streets by supplying some of the basic necessities that most of us take for granted each day. This would be a great project for school, youth and service groups.

Simply collect the above items in a shoebox and bring them to the ECHO Office for distribution to those in need. Boxes can be personalized for men, women or children. Just make sure to mark the boxes so we know who should receive them.



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.



June 22 Tornado Relief Grant Program

On the evening of Saturday, June 22, a reported tornado touched down in multiple areas of Rock County. This weather event caused considerable damage to structures and infrastructure.

The County has activated its Emergency Operations Center to mobilize additional resources. As a part of this response, ECHO is coordinating the reception of financial donations to those impacted.

Individuals and organizations interested in making financial donations may drop off cash or checks at ECHO, Inc. at 65 South High Street during regular business hours.

Those affected by the tornado can apply for a one-time grant up to \$500 to help cover recovery efforts. Applicants' household income must be at or below 80% County Median Income and in an area of reported tornado touch down. Application information can be found at <https://echojanesville.org/june-22-tornado-relief/>

Thank you to those who have already responded with a donation for this grant program.



SCHOOL SUPPLY NEED LIST

NOTEBOOKS
TWO POCKET FOLDERS
DRY ERASE MARKERS
COLORED PENCILS
SUPPLY BAG/BOX
GLUE STICKS
BACKPACKS

HEADPHONES
MARKERS
PENS
GLUE

Donations can be dropped off at
65 S High Street, Janesville by August 9.



Empty Bowls

TO GO!

PRE-ORDER YOUR SOUPS
STARTING OCTOBER 1ST

\$10 PER QUART (frozen)

PICK UP ON OCTOBER 19
11AM-12PM

**SOUPS TO BE
ANNOUNCED
ON SEPTEMBER
18TH**





Photo by: Full Spectrum Photography

Thank-You's!

Thank you to all who attended this year's Big Band Hangar Dance and to our event sponsors: Revv Aviation, MacFarlane Pheasant Farm, Blackhawk Community Credit Union, Big Radio, Pistons and Props, Timberhill Winery, Versatile DJ, JAX Custom Printing and our community funding partner, United Way Blackhawk Region.

MEET OUR NEW STAFF



Greetings! My name is Maryam Enterline and I joined the small but mighty ECHO team in May as the new Food Resource and Volunteer Coordinator! I grew up in Eau Claire, WI and graduated from UW-Whitewater with a dual degree in psychology and sociology. I've always been a people person and enjoy learning and connecting with people from all walks of life. It's truly amazing how strangers come together to support their community and I am very proud to serve alongside our volunteers in this role at ECHO. In addition to our amazing volunteers, I love that there is not a typical day at ECHO – each day presents a new set of challenges to navigate.

I've lived in Janesville with my husband, Wesley, for the last 12 years. We spend our time exploring all the natural beauty Wisconsin has to offer through hiking, kayaking and camping. We have been to all of Wisconsin State Parks and have a lifetime goal to explore all the National Parks. I love to travel, especially internationally, and took a trip of a lifetime to Kenya last November.

If we haven't met in person yet, please stop by and say hi!

If you or someone you know would like to spend their time and talents making a difference with us at ECHO, please join our monthly Volunteer Open House on 1st Thursday at 2pm.

FUNDS FOR FRIENDS PROGRAM



Save your receipts from Sentry with a "Funds for Friends" sticker on each one (ask for a sticker from the customer service counter)

Mail or deliver your receipts to ECHO to 65 S High St. Janesville, WI 53548

ECHO will receive 1% back based on the purchase price

Honor and Memory

Since our last newsletter, we received contributions in memory or in honor of the following ECHO friends.

Anna Briezinksi

Anne Lucey

Anne Striegl

Barbara DuBois

Bill Scherer

Bob Kerman

Bruce Camilleri

Candy Kraus

Christine Scaccia Lubeck

Daniel DuBois

David Brown

Dean Severance

Dennis Craddick

Dennis Stone

Dianne Lancelle

Dorothy Smith

Elizabeth Peterson

Frank & Iris Cross

Fred Blum

Gary & Susan Stillwell

Gary Nordeng

Gene Larson

Gerald Zielke

Greg Cabi

Harry C. Menz

Harry Merrifield

Helen Smith

James & Norine Turner

James McCalmont

Jerome LaBrie

Jerry Jensen

Jim Rebman

Jim Short

Jo /Kim & Kyle Lyttle / Hillison

Joan Luedtke

Karolyn Upham

Kathy Walker

Kay Deupree

Ken & Linda Olander

Lillian Newmark

Linda Hanel

Margaret Mary Peternel

Marilyn Ellis

Marjorie Reed

Mary Guenther

Pat Linneman

Patricia Carroll

Patti Jo Balke

Paul & Gerri Dahlke

Richard J. Pastula

Rita Downing

Roger & Val Letson, Marv Fuller

Ronald Scobie

Rosemary Kealy

Shelley Wendt

Shirley Gensler

Shirley Lornsen

Steve Mueske

Sue Madere

Sue McCrone

Vikki Brueggeman

WPS Legal Department

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 TRIVIA MOMENT:

How many volunteers work in the food pantry every day?

ANSWER CAN BE FOUND ON THE BOTTOM OF PAGE 11.

Food and Fund Drives

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

All Saints Church
Amazon
Asbury United Methodist Church
Bimbo Bakeries USA
Birds Eye
Cargill United Methodist Church
Catholic Charities
Chambers & Owen
Chick-Fil-A
Cleaning Authority
Country Quality Dairy
Crystal Farms
Daniels Sentry Food Stores
Dollar General
E & D Water Works
Emerald Grove UCC
Faith Lutheran Church
Festival Foods
First Christian Church
First Congregational Church
First Lutheran Church
First Presbyterian Church
Gardner Bakery
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church
Hedberg Public Library
Hendricks Properties
Hunger Task Force - Milwaukee
Hy-Vee
Jay's Big Rolls
Jones Dairy Farm
Kwik Trip Stores
Little Debbie

MacFarlane Pheasant Farm
Mt. Calvary Lutheran Church
Milton East Elementary
Mt. Zion United Methodist Church
Nativity of Mary Catholic Church and School
New Life Assembly of God/Convoy of Hope
NHA-WIC
Olive Garden
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Panera Bread
Peace Lutheran Church
Pepsi
Riverplace Senior Housing
Rock Prairie Presbyterian Church
Rolling Hills Dairy Producers
St. John Lutheran Church
St. John Vianney Church
St. Mark's Lutheran Church
St. Mary's Hospital, Janesville
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
St. Patrick Catholic Church
St. Paul's Lutheran Church
St. Peter's Lutheran Church
St. William Catholic Church
Sam's Club
Schnucks
Seneca Foods
Sentry Foods
Stop-N-Go
Trinity Episcopal Church
Tuesday Optimist Club
Walmart



**Would your business be willing to set out a donation bin on your counter?
Contact us:
earthur@echojanesville.org**

Trivia Answer: Every day around 10 volunteers work in the food pantry.



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ECHO Calendar of Events

- October 1 - Empty Bowls To Go sales open
- November 23 - Thanksgiving Distribution
- November 28- Festival Foods Turkey Trot
- December 6- S'mores and Cocoa
 sponsored by Educators Credit Union
- December 7 and 8- Rock-N-Farm Toy Show
- December 25- Christmas Day Dinner

Thank you to these generous business supporters



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Big City Experience.
 Small Town Service.



**Educators
 CREDIT UNION**



part of
 Janesville's
Jolly Jingle

**S'MORES & COCOA
 AT TOWN SQUARE
 DECEMBER 6TH 5:30- 8**

**Educators
 CREDIT UNION**
 Achieving more together.



**United Way
 Blackhawk Region
 Funded Partner**