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H.E.A.T., Inc. is a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides energy assistance statewide for Georgians in need. Qualified households receive assistance regardless of the energy used – natural gas, electricity, propane, oil, or other types of energy sources.



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**Helping low-income
Georgians meet their energy needs**

Fall/Winter
2007



The H.E.A.T. Factor



A NEWSLETTER OF THE HEATING ENERGY ASSISTANCE TEAM, INC.

From the Executive Director

“Good things happen when good people care enough to make a difference,” says Bryan Townsend, nationally renowned motivational speaker and humorist. That sentiment has certainly been true with the growth of the Heating Energy Assistance Team (H.E.A.T.) over the past few years. Because of the “care” by Georgia citizens, businesses, municipalities and various organizations, H.E.A.T. provided \$755,000 to help families stay warm last winter. As a result, more than 3,000 families received assistance with their heating bills. Those assisted included the elderly and disabled, families with children and unemployed heads of households. H.E.A.T.’s average fund disbursement over the past three years increased 16 percent. The success can be attributed to increased individual and corporate contributions as well as the establishment of new partnerships with municipalities and the propane gas industry.

Moreover, through a special grant, H.E.A.T. increased public awareness about the availability of energy assistance and how to get help with energy bills. Due to radio advertisements, flyers, and participation in radio and television interviews, information reached more than 1.2 million Georgians statewide! Also, in-kind newspaper advertisements, provided by The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, Savannah Morning News and The Augusta Chronicle aided in getting messages out to local communities.

Yes, good things do happen when people care. Thank you for your generosity in making a difference in the lives of families who needed a helping hand.

Janet H. Joseph
Executive Director

Spotlight on Partnerships

Featuring cities, businesses and individuals who are making a difference in the lives of others

Tifton named top city for donations to H.E.A.T.



Jacqueline Gurz (right) of the City of Tifton accepts MGAG H.E.A.T. Award from H.E.A.T. Director, Janet Joseph (left).

Tifton folks are very generous as evidenced by the city’s recognition as the top city in Georgia for total donations to H.E.A.T. The city raised nearly \$4,000 by asking its customers to give a little extra when paying their utility bills to help provide assistance to others who may have

a hard time affording heat for their homes. More than 16 local families were helped as a result of their efforts.

In honor of its achievement, Tifton received the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia’s (MGAG) H.E.A.T. Award. The award, a first presented at the association’s annual meeting, recognizes the city that raises the most dollars per meter. The city of Tifton outpaced strong participation by 15 other Georgia cities.

“I commend the citizens of Tifton for their enthusiastic efforts,” said Janet Joseph, H.E.A.T.’s executive director. “Their generosity exemplifies how city government and local citizens working together can bring hope to families during difficult times.”

Georgia's leading natural gas provider is long-time H.E.A.T. supporter

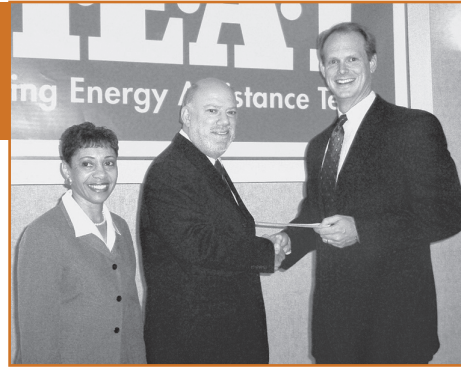
For Georgia Natural Gas (GNG), improving the lives of Georgia's senior citizens and children is a primary community relations goal. It fits, then, that the company has been H.E.A.T.'s largest donor over the past seven years. Nearly \$1.9 million donated by GNG during that time has provided more than 8,000 at-risk Georgia households with much-needed energy assistance. And GNG's \$100,000 donation to H.E.A.T. in 2006 for energy education helped reach consumers throughout Georgia with key energy messages.

"We believe in H.E.A.T.'s mission," said Joe Monroe, GNG's vice president of external affairs. "Our community relations program has been

successful because we focus on the greatest needs in the communities we serve. Clearly, helping our neighbors stay warm in the winter is a natural fit for us."

GNG also has focused on the developing neighborhoods near its Midtown Atlanta headquarters. The company's award-winning employee volunteer program sends dozens of GNG volunteers into the community every month, providing face-to-face support for a number of neighborhood programs.

Two years ago GNG's volunteer program won the prestigious national Points of Light Award, the nation's top award for employee volunteer efforts.



Ira Shucker (center), chairman of the board of directors for H.E.A.T. and Janet Joseph (left), H.E.A.T. director, accept a \$1 million GNG donation from GNG President Michael Braswell.

"Our community relations program has grown significantly over the past seven years," said Monroe. "But we have never abandoned our original commitment to H.E.A.T. We support and respect the work that H.E.A.T. does, and we challenge other corporations and individuals to work with us to raise funds for this worthwhile organization. Together, we can help our fellow Georgians stay warm this winter."

World-renowned entertainer contributes \$5,000 to H.E.A.T.



Staci Bush of H.E.A.T. accepts contribution from entertainer, Sean P.

Known for his charitable spirit almost as much as his rap talents, one of Atlanta's own entertainers, Sean P. (formerly known as Sean Paul of the Youngbloodz), helped the citizens of Georgia by making a \$5,000 donation to the H.E.A.T. Sean P. has traveled all over the world to entertain thousands of fans including U.S. troops in Iraq, Kuwait, Japan, Korea, Guam, Bahrain and Cuba. Through his travels, he has become aware of some of the poorest economies in the world. When he learned that the work-

ing poor families and senior citizens in his own state of Georgia were having difficulty affording their energy bills, he decided he had to do something to help them. He stated, "I could hardly believe that people in my own community had to make decisions about whether to buy food and medicine or pay their energy bills."

H.E.A.T.'s staff was delighted when Sean's management team contacted them about doing something to help the working poor and the elderly. Not only did he make a contribution, but he allowed H.E.A.T. to set up a campaign to challenge other entertainers in Georgia to get involved with energy assistance programs. Staci Bush, director of development and gifts for H.E.A.T., Inc., believes that the new partnership with Sean P. is not only valuable and shows community leadership, but it also exemplifies how entertainers and nonprofits can collaborate to make a positive impact in the community.

Are You Ready for Winter?

There are steps you can take to reduce your energy consumption and impact your bill –

- Have furnace checked by a qualified heating contractor to ensure proper working condition. If needed, replace furnace with an energy-saving one.
- Set thermostat at 68 degrees; for every degree adjusted up, energy usage increases 3 percent to 5 percent. Install programmable thermostats, if possible, to control usage when away from home.
- Dress warmly indoors to allow lower thermostat settings.
- Check caulking and weather stripping around windows and doors. Rule of thumb – if you can see daylight through cracks, then replacement is necessary to control outside air infiltration.
- Change heating and cooling unit air filters monthly or based on filter manufacturer's recommendation.
- If you have a fireplace that is not in use, make sure the damper is closed to prevent heat loss through the chimney.
- Open curtains and shades during the day to warm the home naturally with sunlight.

Information provided by the Atlanta Chapter, American Association of Blacks in Energy.

Did You Know...

- ❖ SCANA Energy Regulated Division provides natural gas service to low-income and elderly consumers, as well as individuals whose credit histories prevent them from obtaining service from another gas marketer.
- ❖ Seniors who are 65 years of age or older with an annual total household income of \$14,355 or less are eligible to receive a monthly discount of up to \$14 off the Atlanta Gas Light Company base charge.
- ❖ Customers of Georgia Power who are 65 years of age or older with an annual household income of \$14,355 or less are eligible to receive a senior citizen discount of \$14 off the monthly bill.
- ❖ Customers of Atmos Energy who are 65 years of age or older with an annual household income of \$12,000 or less are eligible to receive a waiver of the monthly customer charge.

Consumer Education

In the hustle and bustle of everyday living, many of us rarely take ample time to review our bills. The following points will help consumers who are on the Atlanta Gas Light Company pipeline system understand various components of the natural gas bill:

- A fixed rate allows you to pay the same per therm rate each month for the gas you use, even though the price may change.
- With a variable rate, the price for natural gas may change from month to month.
- Budget billing is a payment plan that allows you to spread your annual costs for gas over a 12-month period.
- Talk with your service provider to get answers to questions you may have. The contact information is on the bill.
- Natural gas marketers are required to file their prices for natural gas with the Georgia Public Service Commission (PSC) by the fifth day of the month. Afterwards, the information is posted on the PSC's website at <http://www.psc.state.ga.us/gas/pricecard.asp>.



Welcome New Board Members



Danna Thompson is the Director of Foundation and Corporate Development for the Arthritis Foundation's national office. Her duties include training and consulting with staff and volunteers in chapter offices across the country in major gift development. Ms. Thompson has 30 years of successful fundraising and management experience in the nonprofit sector. Her expertise includes volunteer recruitment and management, event management, public relations, foundation and grant writing and major gift development. Ms. Thompson is a member of the Association of Professional Fundraisers, and she has served on the board of March of Dimes and as a volunteer for United Way and American Red Cross.



Melvin D. Williams is Director of Regulatory Affairs for AGL Resources. His responsibilities include developing and implementing state regulatory policy and strategy for the corporation. Mr. Williams is an active member of the Atlanta community and serves on the board of the Jesse Draper Boys and Girls Club and is a member of Ben Hill United Methodist Church. Additionally, he is a former board member of the Georgia Municipal Association.



Chris Strippelhoff has more than 23 years of professional business experience, with more than 19 years of consulting and management experience in the natural gas industry. He currently serves as Vice President of Member Services for the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia. His responsibilities include oversight of member support, market development, communications, regulatory compliance and meeting planning. Along with his staff, Mr. Strippelhoff is responsible for handling rate design and administration, rate and service negotiations, regulatory compliance, legislative issues and management of special projects. Mr. Strippelhoff currently serves on the board of the Energy Solutions Center and on the Executive Committee of Southern Gas Association's Corporate TeleLink Network. He is an active member of the First Baptist Church in Marietta. Mr. Strippelhoff and his wife, Karla reside in Marietta, Georgia, and they have two grown children.

Success Story



Julia Aaron is thankful for the help she received through H.E.A.T.

The Aaron family – Frank, Julia and 2-year-old Kathryn – is among thousands of Georgia families who have benefited from receiving H.E.A.T. funds.

In 2004 Frank was diagnosed with kidney cancer and was laid off from his job. It took all of the family's savings to afford the surgery to remove his cancer. Fortunately the surgery was successful, but Frank could not find employment afterward.

In 2005 he was rehired by his former employer, but by then the family was forced to file bankruptcy. A few months later they found out that Frank had leukemia.

Julia dedicated the next seven months to helping her husband recover. She split her time between visiting her daughter in their northeast Georgia home and Grady Hospital in Atlanta, where her husband was seeking treatment. "That December I realized we needed help to keep our home warm," says Julia. The aid that the Aarons received from H.E.A.T. helped them pay their winter heating bills.

"I am very grateful that people care enough to contribute to H.E.A.T. and help people in need like our family," says Julia.

One in five Georgia households will struggle to pay their heating bills this winter. Your gifts allow H.E.A.T. to help those with greatest need get caught up on their energy bills, so that they can get back on their feet. Will you help H.E.A.T. help someone like Julia this winter?

Yes, I will help a family by supporting H.E.A.T.

My tax deductible donation of \$500 \$250 \$125 \$50 \$25 or other \$_____ is enclosed.

Note: A \$500 donation helps at least two deserving families stay warm this winter. Donations of any amount are needed and welcomed.

Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

On behalf of Georgians who will stay warm during the winter because of your gift – thank you!



- ✓ Make check payable to H.E.A.T.
- ✓ Fill in this form and send it in an envelope addressed to:

**H.E.A.T.
Wachovia Bank, N.A.
P.O. Box 930112
Atlanta, GA 31193**

Many Thanks to Our Government & Corporate Supporters!



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Other Ways to Donate

- Online at www.heatga.org
- Monthly through your gas bill if you are a SCANA Energy customer