

Fall/Winter
2010

Claxton Wins H.E.A.T. Award for Second Year in a Row

For two consecutive years – 2009 and 2010 – the city of Claxton, GA has blown away the competition to win the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia's (MGAG's) H.E.A.T. Award. The prize recognizes the outstanding effort by a city to inspire its residents to help neighbors in need pay their heating bills. Recognition goes to the city that raises the most money per active customer.

Thanks to the efforts lead by City Administrator Gayle Durrence, Claxton collected more than \$2,200 (\$2.64 per customer) and beat out 22 other cities to win. "H.E.A.T. is extremely grateful for communities like Claxton," said Chris Strippelhoff, chairman of H.E.A.T.'s board of directors. "The generosity of its citizens is commendable and shows they have true compassion for their neighbors."

Funds donated by Claxton's residents were



Claxton's City Administrator Gayle Durrence (center) accepts the MGAG H.E.A.T. Award from H.E.A.T. reps Janet Joseph and Chris Strippelhoff.

used to provide assistance to six deserving families.

Claxton shares the honor of two consecutive wins with the city of Tifton, GA, which took home the inaugural award in 2007 and was recognized again in 2008. Could it be a triple play for Claxton in 2011? Stay tuned!

Focus on Caring, Giving – Not Just Observing

Narcissus was the boy in Greek mythology who fell in love with his own image from the pool, died of unrequited love and was turned into the flower narcissus. For several years writers and pundits have been speaking about the increase in narcissistic thinking among the American people. In fact, some years ago Professor Christopher Lasch wrote a book entitled: **The Culture of Narcissism**.

An abbreviated definition might be our predilection to self interest, to selfish thinking. If the writers are correct, then more and more of our citizenry are increasingly devoted to their own welfare and less concerned about others. I remember during the oil crisis of 1976 several people reported in the newspaper as only caring if there was enough oil to last their lifetime and that others could worry about the future.

There are many reasons for this alarming tendency to selfish narcissism. Briefly allow me to suggest a few. The speed of change in our society in all areas is speeding up rapidly and will continue to increase. Therefore, it is hard for some to keep their mind and reasoning abreast of the fast-changing world in which they find themselves. So, rather than stay engaged,

they drop out. Their tendency is go home, lock the door, pull down the blinds and tell the world to go on by.

Some will say that for the first time in American history the future will not be as good as the past has been. If that is to be the case, then they will give up trying to make it better if they think it is hopeless. With selfish narcissism comes communal apathy.

Others fear for the loss of enforceable moral standards, the tendency in the postmodern world to see truth and right and wrong as being relative. To use Paul Harvey's comment: the buoy markers in the channel of life have been removed.

My fear is that if these observations are true, then as a people we will increasingly become spectators in the game of life, no longer caring or serving.

Thank you for giving, and let us now become spectators to the plight of those who need us.



Dr. John Stumbo
Mayor, Fort Valley, GA

The H.E.A.T. Factor



A NEWSLETTER OF THE HEATING ENERGY ASSISTANCE TEAM, INC. www.heatga.org

From the Executive Director

After a blistering summer, fall is finally here! As the temperature drops, our thoughts naturally turn to the holidays, conjuring images of cozy winter nights with family and friends.

Sadly, with cool weather arriving earlier than usual this year, thousands of Georgia families are more anxious than eager about winter. "Will it last long?" they wonder. "How will I pay my bills?" The mission of H.E.A.T. is to help ease the burdens of these families by providing financial support with their heating bills.

Recently H.E.A.T. traveled throughout the state to meet some of the 2,014 families who benefited last winter from the support of neighbors like you. Anika Scipio, a single mother who recently moved out of a battered women's shelter, was trying to rebuild her life when she lost her job. Mildred Wilson, disabled and unable to work, lost her daughter and is now raising her three grandchildren.

Many, like Donald James, struggle to pay for both life-saving medications and utilities. Others have lost or can't find jobs,



Anika Scipio with her children –
L-R: Gracie, Cameron and Shalima.

and with a 10 percent unemployment rate in Georgia, there's little hope things will change significantly soon.

Continued on Page 3



Donate to H.E.A.T. Many less fortunate families need your help today.

Donate online at www.heatga.org or complete this form and mail it with your check to the address below.

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H.E.A.T.

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Spotlight on Partnerships

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



Atlanta Gas Light

An AGL Resources Company

AGL and H.E.A.T.: A Warm Partnership over the Years

Atlanta Gas Light, the oldest corporation in the state, and its parent company, AGL Resources, are proud of their connection to H.E.A.T., the oldest statewide fuel fund program in Georgia.

In 1983 Atlanta Gas Light joined Frances F. Pauley, an advocate for the poor, in establishing H.E.A.T. to provide energy assistance to low-income citizens. Since then, Atlanta Gas Light and AGL Resources have donated more than \$1 million to H.E.A.T.

In the beginning, H.E.A.T. was a program that allowed AGL customers to make energy assistance donations when they paid their bills. After Georgia's natural gas market was deregulated, H.E.A.T. was spun off as a separate nonprofit organization. But the relationship remains close, and AGL hosts the nonprofit's annual meeting each year.

H.E.A.T. is just one of the ways that AGL partners with the 243 communities within its Georgia distribution area. The company is dedicated to its core corporate value of "generosity of spirit." Its employees and executives are involved in community service on an almost daily basis, from raising money for charity to building Habitat for Humanity homes, from serving on boards to serving Meals on Wheels.

Today, AGL is the eighth largest natural gas distribution utility in the United States and the largest in the Southeast.

Serving approximately 2.3 million customers in six states through its utilities, Atlanta-based AGL Resources (NYSE:AGL) has branched out into other areas of the natural gas industry. The company owns Houston-based Sequent Energy Management, which focuses on asset management and optimization, producer services and wholesale marketing. Through its SouthStar joint venture, the company markets natural gas to Georgia consumers under the Georgia Natural Gas brand. AGL Resources also owns and operates two salt dome storage facilities: Jefferson Island Storage & Hub (Louisiana) and Golden Triangle Storage (Texas).

Conserve and Save on Energy Costs

Energy-Saving Tips for the Winter

With the outside temperature getting cooler, now is the best time to start thinking about ways to save on your energy bill. To keep warm and reduce your energy use, try these helpful energy-saving tips around your home.

Set thermostat at 68 degrees during the winter while you're home during the day, and lower it at night or while you're away to 55 – 58 degrees. For every degree the thermostat is adjusted up, energy usage increases 3 percent to 5 percent. Seniors and individuals with health problems may require a warmer setting.

Install a programmable thermostat that automatically adjusts the temperature when you're not at home. You could see up to 15 percent in annual savings by programming your thermostat five degrees lower for eight hours per day during the winter.

Dress warmly indoors to allow lower thermostat settings.

Check your furnace filter frequently, and replace or clean it once a month or as needed. A dirty filter can drive up the cost of heating your home.

Open curtains and shades during the day to warm the home naturally with sunlight. Close window treatments at night to slow the loss of heat through the glass.

If you have a fireplace that is not in use, make sure the damper is closed to prevent heat loss through the chimney.

Seal air leaks with caulking and weather-stripping materials to keep temperatures in the home controlled. Check for air leaks around doors and windows, behind electrical outlets, around pipes, along attic hatches and around your chimney.

Have heating system professionally serviced once a year to keep it running as efficiently as possible. If your system is older, consider installing a more efficient system.

Energy-Saving Tips to Save on Water Heating Costs

There are steps you can take to reduce energy consumption and impact your bill when using hot water –

Lower thermostat on your water heater to 120 degrees and repair leaky faucets.

Wrap electric water heaters with an insulated blanket. Read the installation instructions and warranty to make sure this doesn't void the warranty.

Lower the temperature setting on your washing machine and wash only full loads.

Most of the energy your washing machine uses is for heating water. Wash your laundry with warm or cold water rather than hot; then rinse in cold water only and save at least 50 percent on your washer's energy costs. Most of today's laundry detergents work effectively in cold water.

Set your dishwasher on the low-temperature setting unless your dishes are very dirty.

Use the "energy saver" switch on your dishwasher to shut off the drying element.

Run only full loads in your dishwasher. Avoid the rinse-and-hold cycle and save the seven to 10 gallons of water that pre-rinsing requires.

Install water-saving, low-flow showerheads and set your water to less than full force. Reduce the demand on your water heater by taking shorter showers.



From the Executive Director, continued from page 2

There are thousands more in need. But you can help us bring hope to these families!

Your donation – no matter how large or small – says "I care." Can you really make a difference? Listen to Anika Scipio:

I know you're giving from your heart and may not be able to put a face on the person receiving your help. But your donations kept my kids warm last year, and I just have to say "Thank you."

We also want to say "Thank you." Thank you for being a devoted and caring friend to those in need in our community and for helping H.E.A.T. lift up fellow Georgians.

Janet H. Joseph
Janet H. Joseph
Executive Director

The H.E.A.T. Factor is a newsletter published for friends and supporters of H.E.A.T., Inc.

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Our mission is to provide energy assistance for Georgians in need.

H.E.A.T., Inc. is a 501 (c) (3) statewide nonprofit organization that raises funds to help Georgians who need temporary financial assistance with energy bills. Thousands of households need help, but only limited funding is available.

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

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Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia