

Spring/Summer
2015



Message from the Chairman

By *Vernon Lee, chairman
of the H.E.A.T. board of
directors and managing
member, Lee Group
Consulting, LLC*



More than 25 years ago, I was asked to serve on the H.E.A.T. advisory board to help further the mission started by one brave lady, Ms. Frances Pauley. She was known as "Everybody's Grandmother and Nobody's Fool." She brought together people from all races and backgrounds to work together toward equality and to prevent human suffering. It was an honor to have known Ms. Pauley because it was through her efforts and Atlanta Gas Light's that H.E.A.T. was born. H.E.A.T.'s mission then, as now, is to provide energy assistance for families in need throughout Georgia.

I served as chair of the H.E.A.T. advisory board from 1999 to 2001 during the time of natural gas deregulation in Georgia. H.E.A.T. was at a crossroads. We had to decide whether to dissolve H.E.A.T. or establish it as a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization. As a board, we decided H.E.A.T. had done a lot of good for the citizens

of Georgia by providing critical assistance to needy families and thus was worth continuing. That was one of the best decisions ever made! Today, we continue to provide assistance for our fellow Georgians who find themselves in need.

I am so elated and proud to have been asked and elected to serve as H.E.A.T. board chairman once again. H.E.A.T. is an outstanding organization. I truly have a heart and passion for the work that it does. Someone once asked me, why do you support H.E.A.T. to the extent that you do? My reason is simple – "But by the grace of God, there go I." H.E.A.T. does so much good for our neighbors. Yes, it could be your neighbor or even you. Because of your generous donations, H.E.A.T. provided \$567,000 to nearly 2,000 families last winter but many more needed help. Therefore, we will work

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The H.E.A.T. Factor

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



Life changed in an instant... H.E.A.T. was there to help

When 77-year-old Jane Grinstead's husband passed away, she not only lost him, but also lost 75 percent of her house because he had no will and her name was not on the deed. On top of that, the upkeep and monthly bills for the house were too much to handle.

Following the passing of her husband, Ms. Grinstead faced additional challenges. Within a seven-month period she dislocated her shoulder and then had a pacemaker inserted when her heart stop functioning properly. Not long after that she had skin cancer removed on her neck. But when she continued to not feel well and developed a sore throat, she eventually was diagnosed with stage-three Hodgkin's lymphoma. After completing several

rounds of chemotherapy, her health improved, but the bills mounted.



*H.E.A.T. Recipient
Jane Grinstead*

In order to live a much simpler and more cost-effective life, Ms. Grinstead moved into a small apartment. That helped, but her mounting medical bills took a toll on her finances. Although she was receiving Social Security benefits and a small retirement pension, she found herself unable to pay her past-due energy bill.

Fortunately, someone told her about H.E.A.T. and she received the assistance she needed to keep her service on. "Thank you and I appreciate what you have done," said Ms. Grinstead. "I never needed help before but this time I did and you came through for me."

The New Georgia -

Exploring Demographic Trends in Georgia

Between 2010 and 2030, urban Georgia is expected to grow by 3.1 million people, swelling to 11 million, and rural Georgia is expected to grow by 353,000 people to 2.1 million. Demographic trends in Georgia are hardly universal; however, understanding future trends plays a critical role in planning and providing services. Demographic change reflects two main population processes: natural increase (births minus deaths) and net migration (those moving into Georgia minus those moving out). Both processes play important roles in understanding our demographic past and future.

This article examines the demographic trends of two Georgias, rural and urban, in the 21st century. The three most common trends in Georgia are: 1) metro areas are growing while rural areas are not, 2) Georgia is becoming more ethnically diverse and 3) rural Georgia accounts for the oldest populations.

Some rural regions have experienced decades of growth, while other areas have seen almost a century of decline. Urban areas in Georgia, especially around metro Atlanta, have seen remarkable growth for the last 40 years, while growth in Georgia's other cities has been weak. All of Georgia, however,

is experiencing a common set of demographic forces including the Great Recession, new immigration and the aging of baby boomers.

While Georgia continues to be one of the fastest-growing states in the country, that growth is becoming increasingly concentrated in fewer and fewer counties that are largely urban. Population decline is not a new phenomenon for many of these rural communities. Thirty-seven of the 85 rural counties in Georgia had larger populations in the 1920 Census than in the 2010 Census.

Minority populations also continue to have a growing impact on both rural and urban Georgia. Although growing racial and ethnic diversity is typically seen as an urban phenomenon, Georgia's experience tells a different story. Both urban and rural areas of the state are seeing this increasing racial and ethnic diversification. In total, 131 of Georgia's 159 counties became more diverse between 2000 and 2010.

Finally, the population of rural Georgia is increasingly becoming older. Over the next 15 years, 46 Georgia counties will experience declining populations under the age of 65 while simultaneously seeing growth in their populations 65



By Matt Hauer, applied demographer, Carl Vinson Institute of Government at the University of Georgia. Mr. Hauer served as keynote speaker at the H.E.A.T. annual meeting last November.

and older. Many of these counties are in rural Georgia or just on the outskirts of urban Georgia.

There is no doubt that these demographic trends are reshaping Georgia and play increasingly important roles in the health of all Georgians. As these demographic shifts continue to play out over the next 20 years, strategies are needed to effectively address these changes.



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

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

Name _____

Address _____

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H.E.A.T.

Wells Fargo Bank, N.A.

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How to Stay Cool this Summer

Here are some tips to keep your **HOME** and **YOU** comfortable during the hot summer months.



TIPS FOR THE HOME

- ❄️ Avoid using appliances that give off heat during the hottest times of the day as they will make your cooling system work that much harder. Do your cooking, washing and drying clothes in the morning or in the late evening when the demand on your cooling system is less.
- ❄️ Close the curtains on sun-exposed windows.
- ❄️ Set your thermostat at 78 degrees Fahrenheit.
- ❄️ Use ceiling fans or area fans to help make the air feel up to six degrees cooler.
- ❄️ Replace air filters once a month to help your system run more efficiently. If you have pleated filters, change them at least every three months.

TIPS FOR YOU

- ❄️ Wear loose-fitting clothing, preferably of a light color. Cotton clothing will keep you cooler than many synthetics.
- ❄️ Wear hats and caps to ward off the sun.
- ❄️ Alter your pattern of outdoor exercise to take advantage of cooler times such as early morning or late evening.
- ❄️ Combat dehydration by drinking plenty of water along with sports drinks or other sources of electrolytes.
- ❄️ Avoid caffeine and alcohol as these promote dehydration.

New Partners Helping Neighbors through Pledge-Billing

Congratulations to the City of Thomson and Walton EMC Natural Gas!

These two organizations have one thing in common – they have joined ten other energy providers in offering their customers an opportunity to donate to H.E.A.T. via their monthly utility bill. The process, known as “pledge-billing,” is a win-win for both the energy provider and H.E.A.T. When a customer contributes directly through his or her bill, it not only makes it easy for them to donate, but statistics reveal more funds are raised to help struggling families with their home heating costs. The city of Thomson implemented pledge-billing last fall. “We

saw this as a way to help our neighbors during a difficult time continue to have heat in their homes during cold weather,” said Mayor Kenneth Usry. Thomson’s customers began signing up to make bill donations last October while Walton EMC Natural Gas began the process in January of this year. As of March, nearly \$3,000 has been raised through the efforts of both entities. Contributions are expected to increase substantially as customers continue to enroll. Overall, nearly \$120,000 was raised through bill donations last year thanks to programs at SCANA Energy and the cities of Claxton, Cochran, Hartwell, Perry, Royston, Sylvester, Toccoa, Waynesboro and Winder. As a result, more than 340 families were helped.



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Helping low-income Georgians meet their energy needs

Message from the Chairman

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harder this year to increase our reach.

During my tenure as chairman, I hope to accomplish two goals: raise awareness about H.E.A.T. and increase funding for the needy in Georgia. H.E.A.T. has one of the lowest administrative costs of any nonprofit. Eighty percent of all proceeds go to help those in need and only 20 percent is used for administrative services.

With your help, we can impact many more lives in our state. Please join us in making this H.E.A.T.'s best year ever!

JOIN OUR TEAM – VOLUNTEER!

Do you want to make a difference in the community?

Share your skills and talents with H.E.A.T. Skills in the areas of writing and fundraising are particularly needed. Also, other volunteer opportunities are available. Please visit heatga.org and click on the volunteer tab to sign up.

If you have questions, call 678-406-0212.



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.



heatga.org