



## H.E.A.T. – Living True to Its Mission

Although 2013 showed tremendous turn-around for our economy, many families in Georgia still live in poverty. The average annual income of households assisted by the Heating Energy Assistance Team, Inc. (H.E.A.T.) during the 2013-2014 winter was \$9,398. Other staggering details about the families we served include: 29 percent were considered working poor or had low-

wage jobs, 30 percent were unemployed and 38 percent survived on limited income such as Social Security. Our mission is to prevent human suffering by providing energy assistance for Georgians in need. Last winter H.E.A.T. held true to its mission by providing \$577,000 to assist nearly 1,700 families including the elderly, disabled and families with children.

### **Pearlene Carswell was one who benefited from H.E.A.T. funds during a very difficult time in her life.**

#### *Here's her story...*

It was a dark day for Pearlene Carswell when her left leg was amputated after deep vein thrombosis resulted in serious infection. And even though she had endured many surgeries to remove blood clots from both legs, she was grateful that doctors were able to save her right leg after her condition worsened. But Pearlene's pain and difficulties did not stop with the amputation. She later learned she was suffering from neuropathy in her hips and other parts of her body due to uncontrolled diabetes that she was not aware she had. Previous bloodwork had never warranted any medication, and Pearlene was not aware that her blood sugar was running extremely high during other periods of time. Now on medication to lower her blood sugar, she also is taking a blood thinner as well as medications for the neuropathy and for high blood pressure.

Prior to the amputation, Pearlene found it hard to get work, or get the type of work she was accustomed to because she was unable to stand. Standing for any length of time was too much for her to bear. As a result, she



went for a full year without any income. Her bills were past due, and new bills were coming in every day. And with a daughter attending Central Georgia Technical College who depended on her for some financial support, the challenges were overwhelming.

Finally, after applying since 2010 for disability benefits, Pearlene was granted the benefits and was hired by the Housing Authority to drive the agency's van part-time. Even so, her income was not enough to catch up on her bills. When her heat was threatened to be shut off, her energy provider told her about assistance from H.E.A.T. She applied and received much-needed help to get her back on track.

Pearlene stated that she never lost her faith during her struggles, and she believes that her prayers were answered by those who donate to H.E.A.T. She says "thank you" to the donors and asks that they continue giving because there are many people in the community who really need help. "Without their help, I don't know what I would have done," said Pearlene.

# Spirit of Giving

I give to H.E.A.T. because I want to give back. I have been blessed with a wonderful wife, kids, home, job and good health. Others out there have had one or more parts of their lives go terribly wrong.

My wife and I have both been through career scares — proposed corporate layoffs, a merger that forced us to relocate and find work elsewhere, an employer that went bankrupt and



*Steve Laine*  
*A caring donor who gives back.*

county budget cuts. We know there's a very fine line between doing great and having things fall apart.

I want to help those who have been affected. My faith has guided me to take care of widows and orphans, and that has led to want to help all those with pressing needs. I want to help those who cannot help themselves. And right now I have the ability to do that.



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

Donate online at [www.heatga.org](http://www.heatga.org) or complete this form and mail it with your check to the address below.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone ( \_\_\_\_\_ ) \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

**H.E.A.T.**

Wells Fargo

P. O. Box 930112

Atlanta, GA 31193



## From the Executive Director

I didn't always carry a blanket in the trunk of my car. Flashlight? Yes. First aid kit? Yes. Jumper cables? Absolutely. I had everything I needed to spend, at most, a few hours on the side of the road waiting for AAA. Like many Georgia motorists, I never imagined I would need to have enough food and blankets to keep me fed and warm for half a day — or longer — in freezing cold weather.

And then came the winter storm of January 2014.

As I looked at the images on TV, online, everywhere, my thoughts immediately turned to the people that H.E.A.T. helps. The working poor. The unemployed. Georgians on fixed incomes. As frustrated as many of us were doing the storm — some lost power; others were stranded overnight in offices, schools and even grocery stores; many spent the night in their cars, or abandoned them completely — we knew this was a temporary inconvenience. We knew it would eventually come to an end. What we didn't know was when. *When will I get back to my warm bed?*

The people H.E.A.T. helps every winter — approximately 55 percent of whom were children in 2013-2014 — have the opposite problem. *When will my heat be turned off? I can't afford to pay my bill. How long will my family be in the cold?* And no emergency teams are coming to rescue them.

As H.E.A.T.'s director, this is what I think about day in and day out. But every so often, a situation crystalizes for me exactly why I do what I do. And that's what happened last winter.

Some weather forecasters are calling for a colder-than-normal winter in our area this year. And with your help, the H.E.A.T. board, staff and I are going to do our best to make sure H.E.A.T. rescues as many stranded Georgians as possible from the cold.

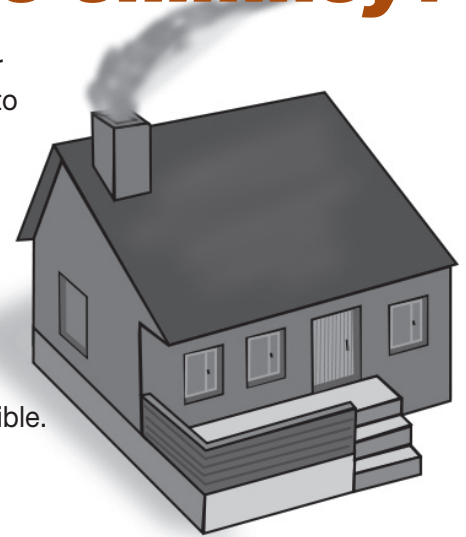
*Janet H. Joseph*

**Janet H. Joseph**  
Executive Director

# *Is your heat going up the chimney?*

- Keep your fireplace damper closed unless a fire is burning. Keeping the damper open is like keeping a window wide open during the winter – it allows warm air to go right up the chimney.
- When you use the fireplace, reduce heat loss by opening dampers in the bottom of the firebox (if provided) and close doors leading into the room.
- If you never use your fireplace, plug and seal the chimney flue.
- If you do use the fireplace, install tempered glass doors and a heat-air exchange system that blows warmed air back into the room.
- Check the seal on the fireplace flue damper and make sure it's as snug as possible.
- Add caulking around the fireplace hearth.

Source: U.S. Department of Energy



## *Welcome to the Board*

**Matt Parry** is director of digital services for Kellen Communications, a division of Kellen Company. Matt oversees interactive services for Kellen Digital and spearheads Research and Development. Matt also is a member of the Project Management Institute, the Drupal Users Group and an active participant in management, interactive marketing and leadership organizations.



He earned a B.A. in fine art with computer science concentration from Saint Joseph's University in Philadelphia, a degree in multimedia and 3D animation at the Art Institute of Atlanta and completed a Masters of Information Technology from Southern Polytechnic State University. His knowledge of application languages (ASP, PHP, and .NET), user interface design and advanced web application technologies benefits Kellen Digital clients.

In his free time, Matt, who is a native Atlantan, enjoys gardening, running and anything outdoors. H.E.A.T. is his first experience serving on a board and he is excited to help move the organization to its next level with his knowledge of how people interact online through social media and the web.

## **Announcing the 2014 Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia (MGAG) H.E.A.T. Award Winners**

We are pleased to announce the winners of this year's MGAG H.E.A.T. Award presented to cities that raised that most funds per customer in three categories. We applaud their dedication and hard work!

### **Under 1,000 customers**

*(contributions equaled \$4.47 per customer)*

#### **City of Clayton**

### **1,000 to 5,000 customers**

*(contributions equaled \$1.38 per customer)*

#### **City of Tifton**

### **5,000 or more customers**

*(contributions equaled \$1.46 per customer)*

#### **City of Winder**

## **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.***



[www.heatga.org](http://www.heatga.org)

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.



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*Helping low-income Georgians meet their energy needs*

## MANY THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS!



- City of Americus
- City of Austell
- City of Blakely
- City of Camilla
- City of Claxton
- City of Cochran
- City of Covington
- Fort Valley Utility Commission
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- City of Union Point
- City of Waynesboro
- City of Winder
- Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia