

Spring/Summer
2013



The H.E.A.T. Factor



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

Message from the Chairman

By Bill Thornton, chairman of the H.E.A.T. board of directors and deputy executive director at the Georgia Municipal Association.

Good times for some, not for others!

With the passing of another winter, I want to genuinely thank the supporters of the Heating Energy Assistance Team (H.E.A.T.). Without your generosity, we could not provide much-needed help to Georgians in need. This heating season, H.E.A.T. provided \$576,000 which was distributed to nearly 1,700 needy households in counties throughout the state.

In January, we launched the Neighbors Helping Neighbors campaign in recognition of H.E.A.T.'s thirtieth year working to assist families in need. This effort was coordinated among the private- and public-sector energy providers throughout the entire state of Georgia. Hopefully, you received a message or saw one of our advertisements requesting support. Our plan was simple: if everyone donated a minimum of just \$5, we could make a huge difference for thousands of



our neighbors in need. I hope you had a chance to participate.

As we all know, Georgia was particularly hard hit by the economic recession. Our state unemployment rate is still among the highest in the nation at 8.6 percent compared to the national level of 7.7

percent. Without jobs, families find it difficult, if not impossible, to pay for the necessities of life. And for many of us, losing a critical utility service means going without home heating or cooling, hot water for baths and the ability to prepare a home-cooked meal.

This year started out to be promising with much-needed improvement in the overall economy. Unfortunately, the jobs creation report for March showed a surprising decrease. With experts describing the recent economic crisis as the "Great Recession," it is clear that it will take a long time for us to recover from its impact on our lives.

For that reason, now is a great time for you to help a neighbor in need. Please consider making at least a \$5 donation today. Together, we can make a difference that those struggling in our state will appreciate.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors Keep Warm Campaign

According to Webster's Dictionary, the word neighbor is defined as "one who is near in sympathy or confidence." In recognition of H.E.A.T.'s thirtieth year of providing assistance to Georgia families in need, the Neighbors Helping Neighbors Keep Warm campaign was created to raise additional funding to help those struggling to pay their home heating bills. The campaign ran January 15, 2013 – April 30, 2013, and was sponsored by SCANA Energy, Georgia Natural Gas, Gas South, the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia and several of its member cities, and the Georgia Municipal Gas Association.

To promote the campaign, H.E.A.T. used several methods to encourage neighbors to help their neighbors. Several participating cities adopted "H.E.A.T. resolutions." Press releases were distributed to media outlets throughout the state and sponsors included information about the campaign on their websites along with links to donate on the H.E.A.T. website. In addition, bill

inserts were included in monthly statements to utility customers.

Thanks to the campaign, we raised nearly \$24,000 in energy assistance and the collaborative efforts increased awareness about H.E.A.T. and the need for home heating assistance in our state. H.E.A.T. is grateful to those who opened their hearts and made a donation to help their neighbors who are less fortunate. Also, we especially thank our sponsors who gave their time and resources to this effort.



Assistance from H.E.A.T. Kept Sherry Hill Warm



Sherry Hill has endured many medical obstacles in her 58 years. In 1992 she was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma disease, a cancer of the lymphatic system. To fight the disease, she underwent chemotherapy treatment, a process that she describes as dreadful. Sherry said, "I wouldn't wish chemo treatment on anyone."

After the treatment, doctors discovered that chemotherapy had caused severe deterioration of Sherry's hips. She needed hip replacement surgery on both sides to alleviate the horrible pain she experienced daily, so in 1992, the same year doctors diagnosed her cancer, she was

fitted with two artificial hips. But her medical woes continued to grow, until she was told in 2009 that her coronary arteries were blocked and she would need coronary artery stent surgery to open her arteries.

Since that surgery, Sherry has been living on a fixed disability income of \$698 a month, which is not enough to cover all of her bills. When she found herself in need of natural gas to stay warm, she had no alternative but to seek help. After reading an article in the local newspaper about assistance available through H.E.A.T., she applied for help and received the assistance she desperately needed at that time. According to Sherry, H.E.A.T. gave her the help she needed to get her through a tough time and she was able to keep warm during the cold winter months. Sherry says to H.E.A.T. donors, "Your giving means a lot – I will be able to make it. Thank you so much."



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.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ Email _____

H.E.A.T.

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Spotlight on Volunteerism



L-R: AWC members – Lisa Banes, Beth Jetha and Judine Heard are prepared to welcome H.E.A.T.'s annual meeting guests.

The Atlanta Woman's Club

Our spotlight shines on The Atlanta Woman's Club (AWC), a nonprofit organization whose membership includes professional women of all ages, races and religions who share a common goal to work together to improve the local community socially, physically, culturally and educationally. The AWC encourages its members to become interested, involved citizens by engaging in charitable activities that benefit the community as a whole. The AWC is a part of the General Federation of Women's Clubs, one of the world's largest and oldest international philanthropic organizations.

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Is your home ready for summer?

There are a number of no- and low-cost steps you can take to prepare your home for the warm weather ahead:

- **Air Conditioner.** Have your air conditioner cleaned and checked annually.
- **Filters.** Clean or replace furnace filters regularly. A dirty or plugged filter reduces air conditioning efficiency and increases your cooling costs. If you use a dehumidifier, clean the filter.
- **Thermostat.** When at home, set the thermostat no lower than 78 degrees Fahrenheit. You can reduce cooling costs 3 to 5 percent for each degree you keep the thermostat set above 78 degrees. Consider purchasing a programmable thermostat.
- **Air Flow.** Make sure air registers are not obstructed

by furniture, carpeting or drapes. Use ceiling, window or oscillating fans when rooms are occupied. They make people feel more comfortable, thus requiring less air conditioning.

- **Heat-Producing Appliances.** Keep heat-producing appliances away from thermostats. Their heat can cause the thermostat to register a higher temperature, which will make your air conditioner run longer than necessary. Also, use these appliances in the morning or late evening when outdoor temperatures are at their low points.
- **Window Coverings.** Keep shades and drapes closed, especially on sunny sides of your home.
- **Lights.** Replace incandescent lights with fluorescent or light-emitting diode (LED) lights. If this is not possible, reduce the wattage of light bulbs in lamps and light fixtures. This also reduces the amount of heat the air conditioner has to remove.

Know a senior citizen who needs help with weatherization or furnace or water heater repairs?

Resource Service Ministries offers programs to low-income seniors that could help make their homes more energy efficient. You must be a Georgia Power customer to apply for the weatherization program. And for emergency repairs on gas furnaces and water heaters you must purchase service from a natural gas marketer.

You may be eligible if you...

- Are 65 years old and older
- Own and are living in the home
- Meet financial guidelines
- Purchase gas from one of the following marketers: Walton EMC, Stream Energy, SCANA Energy, Infinite energy, Georgia Natural Gas, Gas South, Fireside Natural Gas, True Natural Gas, Constellation Energy, Commerce Energy or Kratos Georgia

**Please contact
Resource Service Ministries
(404) 352-5440**

H.E.A.T. Welcomes New Board Member

The H.E.A.T. board extends a warm welcome to Mike Jewell who has more than twenty-five years of natural gas distribution experience. Mike began his career in Athens, Tennessee at the Athens Utilities Board and while employed there served on the operating committee for Tennessee One Call for seven years. He was also a volunteer firefighter/EMT for the City of Athens.



Mike Jewell

Mike began his career at the City of Winder in 1997 as assistant superintendent and has served as the gas director and is now the city's regulatory compliance officer. He also serves on the board of directors of the American Public Gas Association and is currently the secretary/treasurer for the Georgia Municipal Association Gas Section. In addition, Mike has served as chairman of the Barrow County Utilities Coordinating Committee. Mike and his staff have participated in numerous fundraising activities for H.E.A.T. and assisted Winder in establishing a H.E.A.T. "round-up" program that rounds up customers' billing to the nearest dollar with the difference going to H.E.A.T.

Mike and his wife, Christy, have two daughters, two sons and two grandchildren. He is an active member of the Winder Masonic Lodge and enjoys spending time helping out with its fundraisers and blood drives.

Helping low-income Georgians meet their energy needs

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The Atlanta Woman's Club

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Since November 2008, the Home Life Division of AWC has volunteered with H.E.A.T. by giving of its time and talent to ensure our annual meeting venue is decorated with elegance and flair. AWC volunteers also support the registration desk and greet guests upon their arrival. In addition, H.E.A.T. has benefited from a financial donation from AWC almost every year since 2009. We genuinely appreciate all AWC does to help move the mission of H.E.A.T. forward.

AWC's president, Karen Clydesdale, said, "Since we were founded on November 11, 1895, members of the Atlanta Woman's Club have worked tirelessly to improve our local community, our state and the world. Our dedicated members strive to improve the lives of others by alleviating poverty, injustice and poor health. Our goals and principals are very similar to those of H.E.A.T., whose mission is to prevent human suffering by providing energy assistance to those in need. With care and compassion, both AWC and H.E.A.T. will continue to work to improve the quality of life for those less fortunate. We are honored to work with H.E.A.T. and look forward to continuing our relationship."

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

Contributor

Katherine Bows Taylor - Marketing, Communications & Brand Consultant

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.



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