



# NEW VIEW NETWORK

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April, May, June, 2011

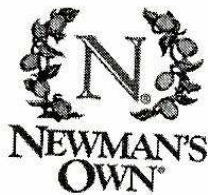
The voice of **OPERATION: NEW VIEW COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY**  
Published Quarterly. Serving the Iowa counties of Dubuque, Delaware and Jackson

## DUBUQUE WEATHERIZATION CHALLENGE EARNS NATIONAL AWARD FOR MAKE A DIFFERENCE DAY

The 2010 Dubuque Weatherization Challenge has been named as one of the top ten *Make A Difference Day* projects in the nation by **USA WEEKEND** Magazine.



Sponsored by **USA WEEKEND** Magazine in partnership with *HandsOn Network* and *Newman's Own*, Make A Difference Day is the nation's largest day of doing good. For more than two decades, Make A Difference Day has inspired millions of volunteers to serve their neighbors through community projects that serve others in many areas. The National Make A Difference Day Award Winners are selected each year and awarded \$10,000 grants from *Newman's Own*. The 10 Make A Difference Day Award Winners for 2010 were recognized at a luncheon in Washington, DC on April 14, 2011.



The luncheon was attended by agency board member **Laura Rousell** of Black Hills Energy and agency executive director, **Tom Stovall**. They were joined by

**Jim Normandin**, Publisher of the Dubuque *Telegraph Herald*.

The \$10,000 grant was given to Operation: New View Community Action Agency. In addition, the Black Hills Cares program will match the grant with another \$10,000. The total of \$20,000 will be placed in our agency's "Keep Our Neighbors Warm Fund" to assist local households with energy assistance.



The Dubuque *Telegraph Herald* (TH), one of the key sponsors of the Dubuque Weatherization Challenge, nominated the project for the Make A Difference Day Award. National award winners were featured in the April 8-10 Edition of **USA WEEKEND** Magazine.

We can all be very proud of this honor being bestowed on a tremendous community service project and our role as a key partner. It is a great example of what Community Action is all about.

**WINTER UTILITY SHUTOFF  
MORATORIUM ENDED APRIL 1<sup>ST</sup>**

The winter heating shutoff moratorium ended on April 1<sup>st</sup>. The moratorium protects customers certified as eligible for LIHEAP (Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program) from shutoff of utilities during the winter months. As the moratorium ends, many households will be facing utility shutoffs and applying for emergency assistance funds from non-LIHEAP sources.

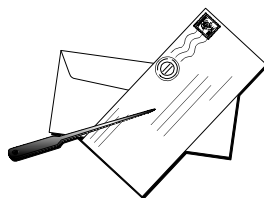
A key source of funding to assist households with shutoffs is our agency's "Keep Our Neighbors Warm Fund."



**KEEP OUR NEIGHBORS WARM  
FUND NEEDS SUPPORT**

Our agency's "Keep Our Neighbors Warm Fund" continues to accept donations and grow in its ability to supplement heating assistance funds for low-income families to pay down high winter heating bills. This much-needed funding has been generously provided by individuals, organizations, businesses and special projects.

Iowa's winter heating shutoff moratorium ended on April 1<sup>st</sup>. After that date, households are no longer protected from utility shutoffs if they have past due accounts for natural gas or electric. We are now seeing utility shutoffs for the numerous households that have not been able to keep up with their high winter heating bills. The "Keep Our Neighbors Warm Fund"



donations are being used to assist low-income families to keep their gas and electric on.

The "Keep Our Neighbors Warm Fund" was established by the Board of Directors of Operation: New View Community Action Agency in 2005 in response to drastic increases that year in heating costs, high energy bills and flat funding by the federal government. Donations may be sent to any of our agency's offices in Dubuque, Delaware and Jackson counties. Be sure to write "Keep Our Neighbors Warm Fund" on the memo portion of your checks. All donations are truly needed and greatly appreciated.



**DUBUQUE KIWANIS CLUB  
AND BLACK HILLS CARES  
HELP KEEP OUR NEIGHBORS WARM!**

The Dubuque Kiwanis Club recently donated \$1,000 to our agency's "Keep Our Neighbors Warm Fund." They gave this donation through the Black Hills Cares program. This means that Black Hills Energy will match the contribution with \$1,000, making a total gift of \$2,000.



Board member Laura Roussell, representing Black Hills Energy, and Mary Billmeyer of our agency staff attended the Kiwanis meeting on March 14<sup>th</sup> to accept the check and explain how it will be used to assist people. Our thanks to the Kiwanis Club and Black Hills Energy for their wonderful support.

# SPRING

## KWIK CARE & BLACK HILLS ENERGY SUPPORTS 'KEEP OUR NEIGHBORS WARM FUND'

During the month of January, the Kwik Kare Program, sponsored by Queen B Radio (Super Hits 106) and Kwik Stop Stores and Dairy Queens in the Dubuque area, designated all contributions

they received to the "Keep Our Neighbors Warm Fund." Along with radio advertising there were donation canisters located at the 8 Kwik Stops and Dairy Queens in



the Dubuque Area.

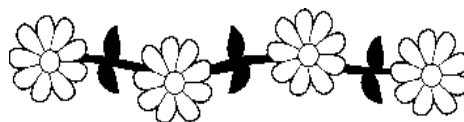
Through this program, a total of \$1,519.05 was contributed. These funds will be matched by the Black Hills Cares Program, which means a total of \$3,038.10 will come back to our agency to help households with heating assistance. Our thanks to the Kwik Care Program and Black Hills Energy for this generous support.



## EMBRACE IOWA PROGRAM MEETS LOCAL NEEDS

During the Christmas Season each year, the Des Moines Register conducts it's annual Embrace Iowa Program. Donations received by the program are equally divided among Iowa's 18

Community Action Agencies to use in meeting emergency needs in all 99 counties of the state. The Embrace Iowa Program provided \$14,278 to our agency during this past Christmas season to provide emergency assistance to households in Dubuque, Delaware and Jackson counties. During the past 11 years, the program has provided \$102,237 in donations to our agency. Our sincere thanks to the Des Moines Register for their generous sponsorship of this important program.



## HEAD START PROGRAM REVIEW SET FOR APRIL 25-29

The agency has received word from the Federal Office of Head Start that the On-Site Monitoring Review of our Head Start Program will take place during the week of April 25-29, 2011. This comprehensive and intense review of our program takes place every three years in order to ensure quality and compliance with the national Head Start Performance Standards. A team of monitors will spend the week at our agency reviewing our operations and issue a report on their findings.



## STAFF COMPLETE COMMUNITY ACTION ORIENTATION

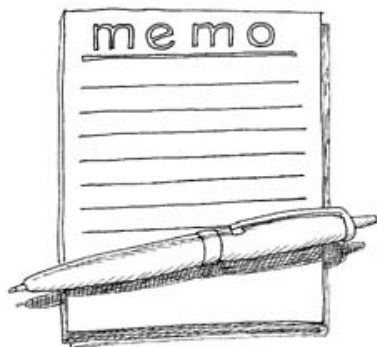
Some 18 agency staff members completed the employee Community Action Orientation session held recently at the Central Office. The objective of the session is to provide our newer employees with the rich history of Community Action and an

appreciation of “the big picture” as to just what Community Action and our agency is all about, how we operate and how we serve the people of our communities.

## *Congratulations*

Congratulations to our graduates of Community Action 101.

**Lenore Meyer**, Head Start Nutrition/Center Aide, West Locust Center; **Whitney Rekemeyer**, Head Start Cook, Maquoketa Center; **Sarah Young**, Head Start Teacher Associate, Westminster Center #1; **Christy Link**, Head Start Teacher Associate, St. John Center #2; **Jessica Allen**, Head Start Teacher, Westminster Center #1; **Cathy Koppes**, Head Start Transportation Aide, Dyersville Center; **Myron Cole**, Head Start Transportation Aide, Epworth Center; **Paul Newman**, Head Start Transportation Aide, St. John Center #1; **Heidi Kieffer**, Head Start Nutrition/Center Aide, St. John Center #1; **Kathy White**, Head Start Cook, Westminster Center; **Anna Soderman**, Head Start Team Coordinator, Central Office; **Mary Barolotta**, Head Start Team Coordinator, Central Office; **Christina Slack**, Head Start Team Coordinator, Central Office; **Teresa Smith**, Head Start Data Entry Clerk, Central Office; **Greg James**, Weatherization Inspector/Evaluator, Central Office; **Ed Behrens**, Weatherization Inspector/Evaluator, Central Office; **Becky Jenkins**, Special Projects Coordinator, Central, and **Becky Weidenbacher**, LIHEAP Temp. Intake Worker.



## HEAD START

As I write this article, I'm reflecting back on the last three months and focusing on the next three weeks. During the last three months we started recruitment efforts for the upcoming school year, while still enrolling children for this year. To date we have all 284 slots full, although, we will continue to accept children in to our program until April 15<sup>th</sup> as slots become available. All applications after that will be considered for programming in the fall. In addition to that we have been working on our self assessment and community assessment.

We have received notice that we will be having our triennial review the week of April 24<sup>th</sup> - 29<sup>th</sup>. While I thought it would be unannounced, it wasn't.



We are now in fast forward mode trying to work with a schedule that will allow the reviewers to interview staff, parents, policy council members, governing board members, community partners, consultants, and content area personnel. In addition to the numerous interviews there will be a large amount of documents to review and classroom visits and observations. A majority of this will occur within the first three days of their visit with the next two days writing reports and following up on any questions they may have.

May brings flowers, showers, and the end of the school year. Our staff has been busy planning end of the year field trips and last day celebrations. While it seems far off, it will be here before you know it. If you haven't been to one of our centers to volunteer they year, now would be a good time to go. The staff could use the help! We could, also, use the in-kind for your time. I have addressed the need to increase in-kind in the pst and this year is no exception. Please take the time to help us out.

I would like to take a moment to thank Chuck n' Jo's for the donation of 284 Easter baskets. I know that it takes a lot of volunteer time to put these baskets together and it is very much appreciated by all of us. Thank You!

Have a great Easter and enjoy the spring weather. I plan to, along with the upcoming arrival of grandchild number five that is due any day now.

*Peggy Hanniford*

Early Childhood Programs Director



**DUBUQUE COUNTY OUTREACH**

During the months of January, February, and march, staff have been busy preparing rent reimbursement forms. The total taken in Dubuque was 108. Food Pantry referrals were 341.

Outreach continue to take LIHEAP applications. The moratorium ended April 1. Regulated customers are protected from disconnects from November 1 through April 1. Calls are starting to come in from people with disconnects.

Staff are taking Head Start applications for fall enrollment. There were 77 SHARE's (food packages) bought during this time.

We have requests for assistance with rent, water bills, medical assistance, hygiene products and the list goes on and on with needs.



During these requests staff are busy doing advocacy for our families. Outreach staff have been busy making calls to households that have been affected by the flood disasters of 2010. We are checking with these families to see if they have unmet needs from the water disaster.

We are all looking forward to spring and have enjoyed the warm days that we've had. Keep 'em coming!! Happy Easter!

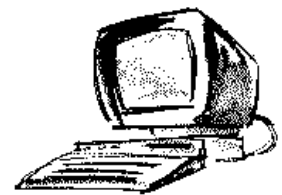
*Mary Billmeyer*

Energy Assistance  
& Community Services Program Assistant



**JACKSON COUNTY OUTREACH**

Jackson county office staff assisted 141 households with the application process for the regular fuel assistance program. Applications for the program will continue to be taken until April 29<sup>th</sup>. Along with the fuel applications staff provided budget counseling for 190 households, due to obtaining needed fuel deliveries and payment arrangements.



The outreach office is gearing up for the Head Start application process and looking for children three and four years of age for the upcoming 2011-2012 Head Start school year this coming fall. Anyone knowing of a child should contact our office to set up an appointment to do an application. The program is free to qualifying

households. There are two centers located in Maquoketa and one in Preston.

In-kind for the months totaled \$5,756.40, including hours of time donated by volunteers, along with other donated items.

Information concerning our agency programs and other agency programs was made available for client use in 1,029 instances. Advocacy services were provided for 118 households with either other agencies, utility providers or fuel vendors.

95 households were assisted with nutritional items, 10 households were provided with needed clothing items and 3 households were assisted with hygiene products. 9 referrals were made for GED classes.

*Emilie Daniels*

Jackson County Outreach Center Coordinator



### DELAWARE COUNTY OUTREACH



At this time I am still working with the Delaware County Disaster Recovery Committee to help people with unmet needs due to the floods of July 2010. Operation: New View

helped with applications for Iowa Helping Iowa Funds that were for Delaware County residents that were under 300% poverty (\$44,100 for a family of 2). We were also involved with taking applications for qualifying people for a grant from Lutheran Services and Iowa Community Action Association. Currently the focus is on local funds

from the disaster committee. This follows the analogy called the "ladder of assistance."

The ladder starts with the beginning of the disaster at the bottom rung and lists the order in which to proceed. Rung #1 is for immediate needs; food and shelter and involves voluntary agencies, Rung #2 is to apply for through your insurance company, Rung #3 is to apply to FEMA, Rung #4 must apply to SBA Small Business Administration, Rung #5 other needs assistance from any sources available, and Rung #6 Long

T e r m  
R e c o v e r y  
C o m m i t t e e,  
a s s i s t a n c e  
f r o m  
v o l u n t a r y  
a g e n c i e s  
n o t  
c o v e r e d  
b y



other programs. The ladder helps explain the process; it does not tell us what to do for the frustration during the process. The good news is we are at the top of the recovery ladder. Operation: New View has been there from the beginning to the end and although it has been an exhausting journey, it has been gratifying to help with this effort. It has also been an invaluable learning experience.

Operation: New View also continues to do our usual repertoire of services. With LIHEAP (Low-Income Home Emergency Assistance Program) running to the end of April, we continue to work on fuel applications. We are also dealing with utility shut offs and other emergencies as they arise.

Since the beginning of the year Delaware County Outreach has seen 299 households with 810 people in these households. We have provided the following services: 139 LIHEAP applications were taken. 21 crisis applications providing assistance in case of a shut off or for deliverable

fuels were completed. We did customer advocacy for 32 households and negotiated with vendors for 25 households. Information and referrals for housing, emergency services, nutrition, and direction to other agencies were done for 60 households. We had 62 families access the Delaware County Food Bank and 22 families utilized the hygiene program. We have talked with Head Start families and done 15 applications for the next school year. Pre-school scholarship applications are also completed with every Head Start application. Emergency/Crisis Childcare applications were taken for 15 families in these households.

The end of April brings the end of fuel season, May and June bring us more Head Start applications, more emergency situations, and the beginning of summer. We are working on some funding for pool passes for summer recreation for Delaware County, hopefully that will come to fruition. We keep doing what we do and take on whatever comes next.

I am using the disclaimer that weather people use, and predicting a good summer. Since they don't have to be very accurate I am safe in my prediction. I guess we'll take whatever we get, hopefully with no disasters.

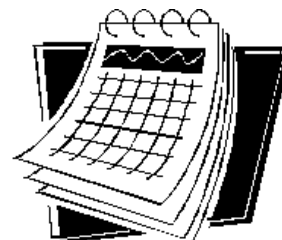
*Sheila Freiburger*

Delaware County Outreach Center Coordinator



### ENERGY ASSISTANCE (LIHEAP)

Budget talks out of Washington don't bode too well for programs that assist the low-income population. With most of the current fiscal year funding is secure, the next fiscal which



starts in October, is still very much in question. Extreme cuts in Energy Assistance and the Community Services Block Grant would severely hamper our ability to help low-income households. Although nothing is finalized, it seems there could be other ways to balance the federal budget than to forget the poor. With the unemployment rate still rather high and with high energy prices, it would be beneficial to the low-income population that funding for low-income programs should be increased and not be cut back.

April 1<sup>st</sup> means the end of the Iowa's Winter Moratorium Law, which prohibits regulated utilities from disconnecting low income



households who are approved for Energy Assistance. The Iowa Utility commission reports that at the end of February there were 41,008 utility

accounts state-wide that were past due with over \$38,986,281.00 being owed. Outreach staff is currently taking many phone calls from clients with disconnects notices. One of the best ways to avoid disconnection of service is to make a repayment agreement for the past due amount. This consists of dividing the past due amount by 12 and paying off the past due amount over a period of 1 year. In addition, the current bill must also be paid along with the past due amount.

The Energy Assistance program is still taking applications and will until Friday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. This following is a break down of the number of applications taken and the amount of funds dispersed to area heating vendors through March 31<sup>st</sup>.

**APPLICATIONS/FUNDS DISPERSED**

	Taken	Approved	Amount
Delaware Co.	789	733	\$ 328,200
Jackson Co.	1,037	984	\$ 434,420
Dubuque Co.	<u>3,345</u>	<u>3,133</u>	<u>\$1,314,260</u>
TOTALS	5,171	4,850	\$2,076,880

*Jim O'Toole*

Energy Assistance & Community Services Program Manager



**WEATHERIZATION**

The Weatherization Program staff participated in the Green and Healthy Homes meeting sponsored by the City of Dubuque. The purpose of this meeting is to network weatherization and city grants like lead paint hazard and healthy homes program. Collaboration with GHHI and Weatherization will offer our client's a more complete project for healthy, safe, and energy efficient homes. We are looking forward to working with our partners in the housing programs.

*Mike Strader*

Weatherization Program Manager

**LOCAL COALITION PROVIDES EITC AND TAX ASSISTANCE**

During the past income tax filing season, Operation: New View Community Action Agency again served as the lead agency in a coalition of local organizations to promote the federal Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and free tax filing services. The EITC Outreach Task Force included numerous partner organizations.

In addition to promoting the EITC to low-income working families, the task force was instrumental in providing free tax preparation sites in Dubuque, Delaware and Jackson counties.



Our agency would like to express our sincere thanks to all of the individuals and organizations who contributed to the success of this project.

**TAX SEASON ENDS**

Tax season has finally come to an end. The last day to file your federal income taxes was Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, thanks to Emancipation Day in Washington. Iowans have until Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> to file.

Operation: New View hosted their first VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance) site this tax season. In Dubuque we operated Mondays and Thursdays from 6:00-9:00 p.m. In Manchester we operated February 12 and 26 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. In Maquoketa we operated February 5 and 19 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.





A total of 22 individuals volunteered over 180 hours since January. Our volunteers prepared 96 federal returns and 98 state returns. What a way to start our first year as a VITA site!! Our site brought back \$226,908 in federal and \$16,999 in state dollars back into our tri-county area. And \$84,630 was EITC (Earned Income Tax Credit). A special thanks to all of the wonderful volunteers that donated their time to make our VITA site successful.

Stay tuned, next issue will contain the statistics for all of the VITA sites in the area. Thanks again to all of the volunteers that made Operation: New View a successful site. Happy Easter!

*Becky Jenkins*

Special Projects Coordinator



We're Here to Help You . . .

- Heating Assistance
- Emergency Cooling
- Home Weatherization
- Head Start Preschool
- Childcare Food Program
- Santa's Helper
- Coats for Kids
- Financial Literacy Classes
- Earned Income Tax Credit
- Free Tax Preparation

**Operation: New View  
Community Action Agency**  
**563/556-5130**  
[www.operationnewview.org](http://www.operationnewview.org)

**OPERATION: NEW VIEW  
COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY**



**OUR MISSION STATEMENT**

The mission of Operation: New View Community Action is to mobilize federal, state, and local resources within Dubuque, Delaware and Jackson counties to focus on planning and operating programs designed to eliminate poverty by serving the needs of low-income people and providing them with the opportunities, motivation, skills and knowledge to become self-sufficient and to reach their full potential.



**OPERATION: NEW VIEW WEBSITE**

Our website is up and running. We've add a few things, changes some (of course) and invite you to take a look at what's happening at Operation: New View Community Action Agency. We're open 24/7 – check us out!!!

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