

## From the Chairman – What Compels Someone to Give?

*By Chris Strippelhoff, Chairman of the H.E.A.T. Board of Directors and Vice President of Member Services at the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia.*

It is a question worthy of reflection, whether one is pondering about human nature in general, or more specifically seeking to understand how to be most effective in delivering on a charitable organization's mission. I must admit that the general aspect regarding human nature interests me as much or more than the specific interests associated with my role as a Board Member of H.E.A.T.

I know people who are very generous with their time, talents and resources, and I also know people who are very well off and talented, but refuse to give to any cause no matter how virtuous. It is this second group that puzzles and saddens me. One of the most important things I've learned over the years is that you cannot help someone else without also helping yourself. As I have served on the Board of H.E.A.T., and especially as

Chairman these last three years, I have been touched by the stories of the many people who have received a "hand up" during difficult times. Their stories drive our Board and Staff. The mission is critical and it is worthy; of this I am convinced.



With double digit unemployment continuing to affect our way of life, and the prospect of a prolonged economic recovery, the needs continue to mount. We are seeing a growing segment of the "new needy," people who never thought they would be in a position of serious want. This growing demand for help has our Board and Staff focused even more intently on the question posed above. If we can understand what compels someone to give, and master reaching them, we can more

*Continued on Page 3*

## Increased Demand For Aid Expected As Poverty Rate Rises

Recently released U.S. Census Bureau Statistics for 2010 showed a steadily rising poverty rate across the nation. In Georgia, the rate increased from 18.3 to 18.7 percent – the fourth highest in the country – impacting 1.83 million citizens.

The state's dependence on construction and real estate contributed to the stubbornly high 10 percent unemployment rate, which translated into increased need in many critical areas, such as food and health insurance assistance. As cooler weather descends, H.E.A.T. is preparing for an increase in the need for home heating assistance as well.

Other information from the Census follows:

- The poverty level is officially defined as \$22,314 for a family of four and \$11,139 for a single person.
- All races and ethnic groups experienced an increase in poverty rates with the exception of Asians, who remained unchanged at 12.1 percent.
- Rates among children and people 65 and older remained high at 22 percent and 9

percent respectively.

For the first time in their lives, some middle-class citizens entered the ranks of the poor last year. Carmen Robles, a first-time H.E.A.T. recipient, lost her job after eight years in the construction industry when the housing market crashed. "You never think you'll have to ask for help," says Carmen. "But sometimes things happen that are beyond our control."

The face of need has changed, but without home heating aid, families across the social spectrum in Georgia could be forced to go without heat for extended periods of time this winter – days or even weeks. This puts all family members, particularly children, the elderly, or the sick, in danger. Given the high poverty rate, H.E.A.T. expects more applications for aid and is preparing to help as many people as possible to avoid having to make this difficult choice.

"H.E.A.T. is a wonderful organization, and I hope and pray it will always be around to serve as a safety net for those who need it," said Carmen.

# The H.E.A.T. Factor



A NEWSLETTER OF THE HEATING ENERGY ASSISTANCE TEAM, INC. [www.heatga.org](http://www.heatga.org)



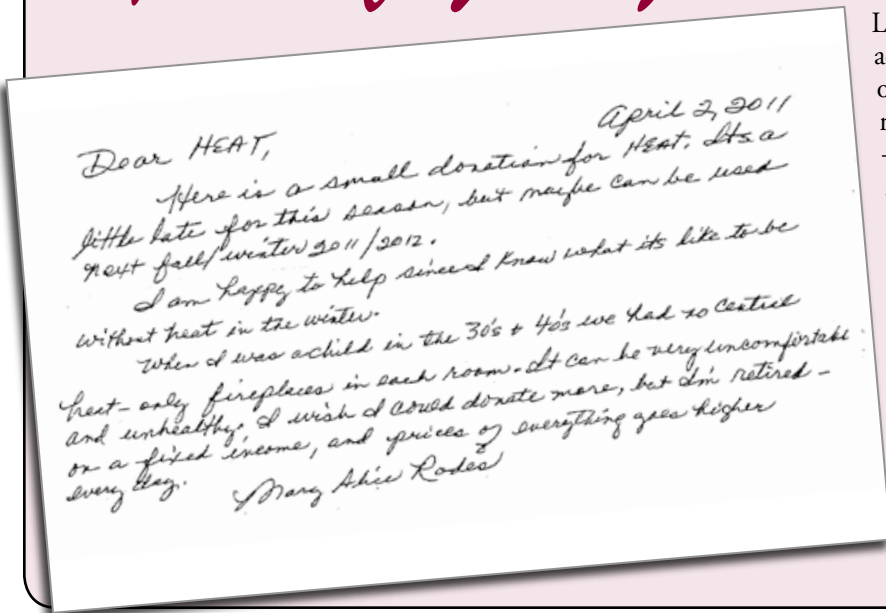
# Spirit of Giving

Mary Alice Rodes –  
long-time H.E.A.T. Donor



Last year, private citizens accounted for nearly one-third of all support received by H.E.A.T. – more than \$230,000 in donations. What makes this even more amazing is that people continued to give despite the economy. Why? Each story is unique. Each reason is personal. Perhaps it's The Golden Rule for some. Maybe it's "paying it forward" for others. Or maybe it's simply empathy, a personal understanding of a neighbor's hardship.

We aren't usually privileged to know the reasons behind our donors' decisions to support us. But every so often, we get a glimpse into their hearts and minds, as this letter shows.



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 Bank, N.A.  
 P.O. Box 930112  
 Atlanta, GA 31193



## Triple Play! Claxton Wins MGAG H.E.A.T. Award Again

For the third consecutive year, Claxton has won the Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia's (MGAG) H.E.A.T. award. The prize recognizes the city that raises the most money per active customer by inspiring its residents to help neighbors in need pay their heating bills.

Claxton kicks off its "Gift of Warmth" campaign in the fall with a letter inviting residents to help less fortunate families with their heating expenses. Residents can donate monthly through their utility bills, or make a one-time donation via check or online at the H.E.A.T. website. "Gift of Warmth" notices, advertisements, and campaign information are featured on the City's local cable network and in its newspaper to inspire participation.

Claxton collected nearly \$1,800 (\$2.11 per active customer). City Administrator, Gayle Durrence, accepted the award during MGAG's 2011 Annual Membership Meeting.

"We applaud Claxton on its third win," said Chris Strippelhoff, chairman of H.E.A.T.'s board of directors. "Its residents' dedication to helping their neighbors is evident, and H.E.A.T. is grateful for their continued support."



(L) Janet Joseph, executive director, H.E.A.T. and (R) Gayle Durrence, Claxton's city administrator

# WINTER IS AROUND THE CORNER

## Tips on WINTERIZATION to help you stay warm and save money

**Have your heating system professionally serviced once a year** to keep it running as efficiently as possible. Keeping your furnace clean, lubricated and properly adjusted will reduce energy use, saving up to 5 percent of heating costs. If your system is older, consider installing a more efficient system.

**Change your furnace filter frequently**, and replace or clean it once a month or as needed. A dirty filter restricts airflow and increases energy demand. You can also consider switching to a permanent filter, which will reduce waste and hassle. Fiberglass filters trap 10 to 40 percent of debris; Electrostatic filters trap around 88 percent, and are much better at controlling the bacteria, mold, viruses and pollen that cause illness and irritation.

**Set your 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 you lower the thermostat during the heating season, you'll save between 1 and 3 percent on your heating bill. Seniors and individuals with health problems may require a warmer setting.

**Dress warmly indoors** to allow lower thermostat settings. A light long-sleeved sweater is worth about 2 degrees in added warmth, while a heavy sweater adds about 4 degrees.

**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.

**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.

**Check the insulation level in your attic.** Proper insulation can reduce your heating and cooling bills by up to 30 percent. Making sure your floors, attic and walls are well insulated reduces drafts and keeps temperatures more consistent throughout your home.

**Run fans in reverse.** Most people think of fans only when they want to be cool, but many ceiling units come with a handy switch that reverses the direction of the blades. Counterclockwise rotation produces cooling breezes while switching to clockwise makes it warmer: air pooled near the ceiling is circulated back into the living space – cutting your heating cost as much as 10 percent.

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

**Rearrange furniture or shorten draperies** so heating registers and air returns aren't blocked.

*From the Chairman – What Compels Someone to Give? Continued from Page 1*  
effectively deliver on the mission of H.E.A.T. (By the way, our mission is to prevent human suffering by providing energy assistance for Georgians in need.)

The question posed may be answerable in theory, but probably not with much certainty. Human nature is difficult if not impossible to understand, at least in secular terms. I believe firmly that we ought to help our fellow man. H.E.A.T. addresses a basic human need, and it does so with minimal administrative expense. In short, it is a worthy charity to which people may give with tremendous confidence.

I will leave you with one final thought regarding the question posed ... as Jesus said, *"I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me"* (Matthew 25:40 NIV). This is what (or more appropriately, Who) compels me.

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

### Contributors

Barbra Buoy-McCray, Volunteer Writer  
Terry Redman, Georgia Natural Gas/SouthStar Energy Services

**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.

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

H.E.A.T., Inc.  
2167 Northlake Parkway  
Suite 112  
Tucker, Georgia 30084  
Phone: (678) 406-0212  
Fax: (678) 406-0558  
E-mail: info@heatga.org  
Web: www.heatga.org

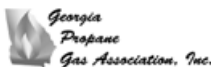
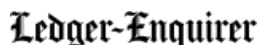


Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Atlanta, GA  
Permit No. 2114

**MANY THANKS TO OUR GENEROUS SUPPORTERS**



**Georgia Natural Gas**



- 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
- City of Douglas
- City of Dublin
- City of Eatonton
- City of Elberton
- City of Hartwell
- City of Lawrenceville
- City of Madison
- City of Pelham
- City of Perry
- City of Royston
- City of Statesboro
- City of Sylvester
- City of Sylvania
- City of Thomson
- City of Tifton
- City of Toccoa
- City of Union Point
- City of Waynesboro
- City of Winder
- Municipal Gas Authority of Georgia