



ECHO UPDATE

QUARTERLY NEWS TO KNOW FOR VOLUNTEERS

Notes from the Director's Desk

by Anita King, Executive Director

Volunteer Spirit!! One definition I loved is that volunteers are those that donate their time and energy for the benefit of other people in the community and for the greater good... and I am constantly amazed of you—our ECHO Volunteers! For the greater good is noble and more importantly selfless—again I can only say thank you. It is the selflessness that each of you brings to the table every day that makes ECHO so special.

Every day I am blessed to witness the hard work, the innovation, the selfless giving of oneself to help ECHO help others. COVID changed the world and has changed ECHO. We are facing new challenges and ECHO tackles each one of these challenges with our common sense of purpose---helping others the best way ECHO can. ECHO changes include all of our NEW Volunteers and all that they bring to ECHO. Please do take a moment to introduce yourself and welcome them to our ECHO Family.

Collectively we all make a difference.

continued...

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Notes from the Director's Desk continued

Ideas, better ways to serve, inspiring thoughts are always welcome. New ideas lately include: Moving to a Food Choice Food Pantry, Car Repairs for Clients Program, Significantly expanding our Diaper/Formula Program, Writing/Submitting a Grant for a Food Room Refrigerator and an ECHO Cargo Van, Moving to a digital Donation Receipt Program, our Volunteer Newsletter format, and many more. And, while our face to the client is changing, from an internal perspective please know we are also working on our infrastructure to better serve our clients and community. Looking around hopefully you've noticed these infrastructure changes such as our Door Replacement/Upgrades, the installation of the outdoor Canopy for Clients, the mega scale to quickly weigh our food donations, and others.

However, with all that is happening....none of this could not happen without the amazing spirit and selflessness of the ECHO volunteer. Your Volunteer Spirit makes all the good ECHO does possible. THANK YOU!!

Anita King



Diaper Program



Client Choice Food Pantry



Canopy at Client Entrance



Mega Scale for Weighing Food Donations

COVID Status Update

COVID-19

ECHO is doing great at remaining on top of our "game" to be vigilant, to be conscious of our environment, and to do our utmost to protect our volunteers, our clients, and our donors. At this time volunteers may wear masks at their discretion unless dealing with clients or donors at which times masks should be worn. We are still signing in and out at in the Admin Office in order to help with tracking should the situation present itself. Thank You for all your efforts!

According to the Fairfax County Health Department...

"Over the past two weeks in the Fairfax Health District, cases of COVID-19 have risen by 62%; the daily number of cases has about tripled. Despite this surge in cases, hospitalizations continue to be low, and the community level remains at "low."

For more information on a local level to help guide you through healthcare options during the pandemic go to <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/covid19/>

TESTING NEW ECHO DONOR PROGRAM

Contributed by Michael Baier, Donation Management Chair



Over the coming months ECHO will be adapting widely used information technologies to better manage donations, and more efficiently record donations. Under the ECHO Donor Program, donors in our current data base will receive through regular mail an ECHO business card with a barcode on the back that accesses that donor's file of previous donations. In the Donor Program, like a library card, the donor presents the ECHO Donor card at the Donation Door. A Door volunteer scans the barcode to begin a short process to record the donation, updating the donor's file. A possible future enhancement will allow volunteers to print the Thank You letter at the door or email it to the donor. Currently ECHO ADMIN volunteers access the donor files weekly to prepare and send out appropriate letters of appreciation. As with all ECHO data, the Donor Program strictly adheres to our privacy policy – sharing donor data with NO ONE outside of ECHO. Joining the Program is as simple as signing up at the Door and is another step ECHO is taking into the Information Age.

Add ECHO To Your Grocery List

The list below contains items that are frequently requested by our clients. For your convenience you can save this list to consult when grocery shopping. A more extensive list of items is available on the ECHO website. Thank you for keeping the pantry stocked.

ECHO PANTRY

THANKS FOR ADDING ECHO TO YOUR GROCERY LIST

- Cooking Oil
- Bag Beans and Lentils (red and black preferred)
- Bag Rice
- Spaghetti Sauce
- Box Pasta
- Coffee (including instant)
- Tea (including green and herbal)
- Flour (Masa and wheat)
- Sugar
- Tortillas
- Can Tomatoes
- Pancake Mix and Syrup
- Box Potatoes
- Honey and Jelly (Fruit preserves preferred)
- Tin Fish such as sardines
- Crackers, nuts, dates, almonds
- Mayonnaise
- Lemon and Lime Juice
- Laundry Detergent
- Shampoo/Conditioner
- Shaving Cream/Razors
- Children's Toothbrushes



www.echo-inc.org for
more details

A Note About Water



ECHO volunteers work tirelessly and the need for a water break is part of the day's or night's work. We would like to encourage volunteers to bring their own reusable water bottles from home. The water bottles we have in the refrigerator are donated and may not always be available consistently. This would also help cut down on ECHO's plastic use. Filtered water is available in the refrigerator. So come prepared with your own H2O from home to quench your thirst.

ECHO Has Partnered with *Wegmans*

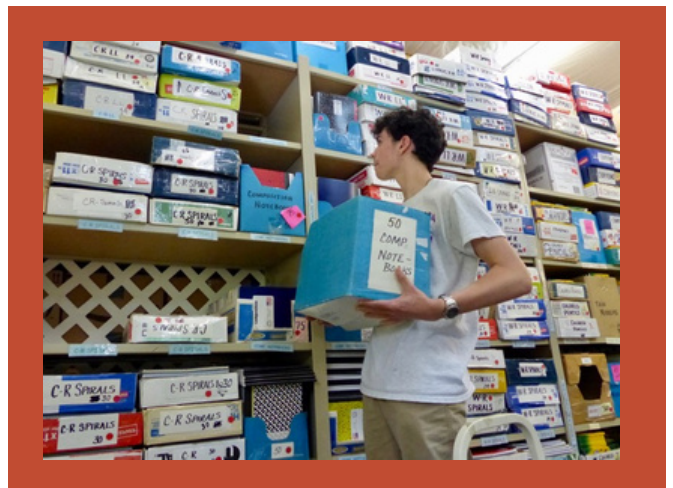


An exciting new opportunity has opened to ECHO. Every Monday morning, an ECHO group goes to Wegman's in Kingstowne and receives an average of 750 pounds of meat, produce, bakery items, prepared meals and salads. The volume is large enough that food can be shared not only with clients who come in for food but also with those coming in for other appointments such as clothing and financials. These extra offerings are a welcome surprise for everyone involved.

It's Summer Backpack Time

Contributed by Sandy Milam, Backpack Chair

It's June and time for ECHO Backpack volunteers. We will be starting and ending earlier this year because of a shift in the FCPS schedule. We will pack from 2 - 5 on Monday and Thursday afternoons June 27 through August 18. Students 13 and older as well as adults are welcome to join us but these hours cannot be used for court assigned community service. Folks can sign up on our Sign Up Genius site <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4DAFAC2FAAF4C16-2022> and can email echobackpacks@gmail.com if they have any questions.



Clothing Room's BIG Change-over

by Jane Curtis, Outreach Chair



Kathy Marchetti, Paula Kvartunas, Barbara Minton

Small Blessings and Big Smiles

As Kathy Marchetti and Barbara Minton were planning to step back from their leadership roles as Co-Chairs of Clothing, Paula Kvartunas was retiring from a professional career as a Regional Human Resources Manager and looking for a way to use her time to be active and do something to help people. It seemed like a match made in heaven when Paula began volunteering at ECHO. Kathy and Barbara immediately noted her organizational skills and her commitment to ECHO's mission.

Paula had heard of ECHO through her stepdaughter who was a local teacher. After she reached out to Beth Clark, Volunteer Coordinator, last November, she started volunteering weekly in Clothing. Kathy and Barbara have been mentoring her and have transitioned to volunteer jobs as Paula has assumed the leadership role.

When asked about the changes that they had noticed in ECHO's Clothing operation over the decades, Barbara and Kathy agreed that the increase in the volume of donations has been striking. They attribute that increase to the publicity ECHO receives through the member congregations as well as through its social media presence. The community responds generously to ECHO's published needs, even using the Amazon wishlist to fulfill requests for brand new items that are most urgently needed.

(continued...)

A recent conversation among Paula, Kathy and Barbara revealed similar observations when they spoke about the small miracles that volunteers get to witness regularly: a person, whose only Christmas gifts had been supplied by ECHO during a difficult year in her childhood, coming in to make a huge donation as a grateful adult; a client who was out of work and who had the help of all the Clothing Room volunteers to put together just the right clothing for her job interview; children who have requested that their birthday gifts be shoes for ECHO to give to children in need; the Clothing Room running out of large size t-shirts only to find the next donation box to be full of large size t-shirts.

Kathy and Barbara have decades of service, and Paula is just beginning, but they all agreed that, along with the satisfaction of the mission, the friendliness and laughter of the volunteers make their time at ECHO rewarding and fun. Plus, as Paula pointed out, working in Clothing burns a lot of calories!

Currently Paula is at ECHO about three days a week. Kathy and Barbara have worked together so well and happily for so many years that even after days together in the Clothing Room, they shared nightly phone calls to talk about the next day's plans and challenges. Paula, Kathy and Barbara are looking for a Clothing Co-Chair and hope that heaven has another perfect match in mind.

Please welcome Paula when you see her and congratulate Kathy and Barbara on a job amazingly well done.

SAVE
THE
DATE

ECHO Volunteer Recognition Picnic

Join in the fun celebrating ECHO and sharing the team spirit that makes ECHO strong.

When: Sunday September 18, 2022

Where: Burke Lake Park, Shelter A

Watch for details in the coming months

ECHO T-SHIRTS FOR SALE

Scale document down

\$10

Use them
for ECHO
Events!!



Use
them for
Fun!!

SIZES: M, L, XL, XXL

Get YOURS at the Front Office

**ALL Proceeds will go to
ECHO's New Parking Lot**

ECHO Dry Pond/ Native Plant Garden

Contributed by Joan Wheaton, Director of Operations

Back in 2006 when the ECHO building was expanded, ECHO was required to construct a storm water management area in the form of a dry pond. The purpose of the dry pond was/is to control the storm water runoff. The ECHO pond allows storm water from many downspouts and surface drains to collect at the base which then slowly releases into the sewer system via a small hole in the base of the concrete control structure which is located near the ECHO entrance.

But like many areas at ECHO, the dry pond multitasks. It is also a Virginia native plant area as well as a Monarch butterfly waystation.

With \$100 in plants from local native plant nursery, Earth Sangha, and the assistance of other volunteers, Karin Knopes started cultivating a large variety of Virginia native plants which continue to flourish today.

Recognizing there are at least two varieties of milkweed, which are host plants for Monarchs, and many varieties of nectar plants for Monarch butterflies, Karin applied for, and was granted, a certificate declaring the ECHO dry pond a Monarch Way Station. In the early years several volunteers had helped maintain the plants, including current volunteer Donna Tracey. But as can be expected of any native planting areas, at this point the pond mostly does "its own thing" throughout the year. The "dam" area (at the entrance end of the pond) requires regular trimming (by members of Facility Maintenance) to stay in compliance with Fairfax County. Annual maintenance involves cutting back dead growth in the spring and removing invasives as needed though the growing season - these tasks are done by LDS Elders with supervision.

Pictured on this page: Name: Golden Ragwort

Latin Name: Packera aurea

Note: Continues the yellow of spring flowers after daffodils are spent. Deep green heart-shaped leaves stay on after blooming is done. Many insects enjoy its pollen. Host to Northern Metalmark butterfly.

Meet Some of the Residents of ECHO's DRY POND

A lot goes on in the dry pond on the side of the building facing Old Keene Mill Rd. This fenced-in area is a Virginia Native Plant delight. On your next visit to ECHO stop by and enjoy some of these beautiful plants in a natural setting. We thank ECHO volunteers who have shared their gardening skills to provide this beautiful setting.

Name: **Sweet Goldenrod.**

Latin Name: *Solidago odora*.

Note: makes good tea and blooms in between the months of July and September and also attracts a lot of bugs like beetles, bees, and butterflies because it is a nectar-rich plant.



•Name: **Swamp mallow**

•Latin Name: *Hibiscus palustris*

•Note: usually grows next to water and can bloom from June to September and is a good plant that attract bees and hummingbirds.

•Name: **Butterfly weed**

•Latin Name: *Asclepias tuberosa*

•Note: Butterflies love the plant and it can bloom from June to August.



•Name: **Swamp milkweed**

•Latin Name: *Asclepias incarnate*

Note: attracts a lot of butterflies and blooms during July until August but is one of the only plants that caterpillars eat.



Name: **Mountain Mint**

Latin Name: *Pycnanthemum flexuosum*

Note: can be used to make insect repellent and can bloom from July through September and attracts a lot of very helpful bugs like bees as well as hummingbirds.



Spring Yard Sale Update

APRIL 2022 YARD SALE RESULTS

FRIDAY/SATURDAY SALES \$8,804.21

CLIENT COUPONS REDEEMED \$760.00

IN-HOUSE 1 NOVEMBER 2021 TO 23 APRIL 2022 \$4,742.00

TOTAL \$14,306.21



The ECHO Yard Sale is a "labor of love." The teamwork that brings it all together has made this a successful fund-raising event for ECHO over many years. This year a new client-centered initiative suggested by an ECHO volunteer was put into play. Client Coupons!

Our clients were given official ECHO coupons worth \$20 to spend at the Yard Sale. As you can well imagine, that can buy quite a lot and the fun of picking things out is part of the experience.

We are happy our clients could join in the fun.

Great ideas from volunteers keep ECHO's mission alive.



HELP WANTED: SPECIAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Contributed by Beth Clark, Volunteer Coordinator

Read on to find a new direction for your special skills.

Volunteer Needs – June 2022 Check the ECHO website to see new opportunities as they come available. Go to www.echo-inc.org and click the Volunteer tab and go to Adult Volunteer Positions Needed Right Now, or email Volunteercoordinator@echo-inc.org.

Admin support – Monday, Wednesday, Thursday mornings

Backpack program – Pack backpacks with grade-appropriate school supplies for clients' children. Packing will occur from 2 - 5 on Monday and Thursday afternoons June 27 through August 18. Students 13 and older as well as adults are welcome to join us but these hours cannot be used for court assigned community service. Folks can sign up on our Sign Up Genius site <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0F4DAFAC2FAAF4C16-2022> and can email echobackpacks@gmail.com if they have any questions.

Clothing – one volunteer Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and 1st Saturday mornings;
2 volunteers Tuesday evenings. Assist clients as they "shop" for clothing for their families.

Clothing support – Monday and Friday mornings. Sort and shelve incoming clothing donations so they are available for clients.

Counselors – All mornings and evenings but especially
Tuesday morning – Spanish counselor; Wednesday morning;
assistant counselor Monday morning

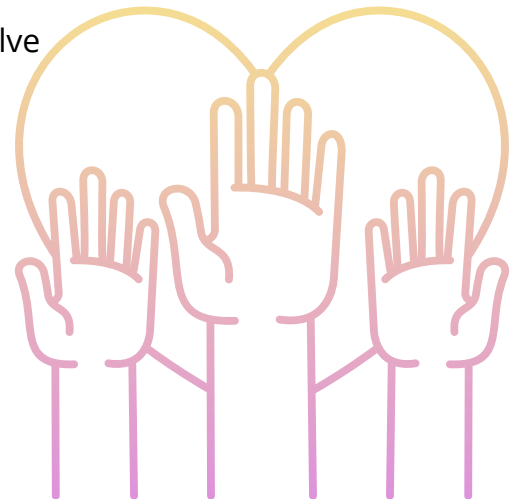
Donation Door – Tuesday evening – 1 volunteer

E-Bay/online sales

Enrichment Package Help - If you like toys, there's a special place for you helping with the Enrichment Packages.

Looking for one or two volunteers who would like to sort through the toy donations. It would involve checking to make sure all pieces are with a toy and the toy is clean and in working order. It also involves checking games and puzzles to make sure they have all of the parts and pieces. This would be done after regular ECHO hours.

Facebook coordinator - The Social Media Committee at ECHO has an immediate opening for a Facebook coordinator. We use Facebook extensively for getting the word out to a larger community about events, news and celebrations. If you enjoy social media and have experience on Facebook, please contact Joyce Giuliani, Director of Communications for more information at communications@echo-inc.org.



SPECIAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES - Continued

Facilities Maintenance - Looking for volunteers to join our maintenance team. The team is responsible for daily repairs, upkeep, and general maintenance of the various areas in and around the ECHO building. Typical jobs may include regular HVAC filter replacement, thermostat programming, HEPA filter cleaning, some cleaning and other tasks as needed. Occasional assistance with larger projects. Most tasks can be performed during ECHO's normal business hours, approximately 4-6 hours per month.

Food Room – Thursday evening – 2 volunteers; 2 volunteers – Saturday morning. Spanish speakers a plus. Sort and shelf donated or purchased food, restock shelves for client shopping, assist clients as they shop for food for their families.

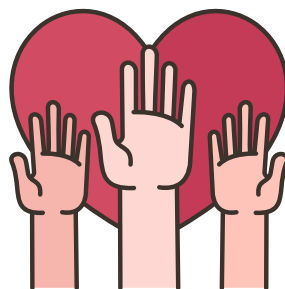
Housewares – Tuesday evenings

Yard Sale Committee Chair - Responsible for the oversight of the three parts of the yard sale committee - In-House Yard Sale, Yard Sale Category Management and the Semi-Annual Yard Sale Event. We have a team that currently manages the In-House Yard Sale and the Yard Sale Categories.

Yard Sale Event Lead - We are in need of someone or a group of people who can coordinate all aspects of the semi-annual yard sale event. A majority of the work starts approximately 6 weeks prior to the event and there are procedural documents available for guidance. There are many volunteers who will assist with all aspects of the sale but a leader is needed to ensure success.

Photographer

We're looking for a volunteer(s) interested in photography to help document ECHO's special events and help with photo shoots for various projects. This is a great volunteer opportunity for anyone who enjoys documenting events and capturing activity highlights. Help with maintaining photos on ECHO's Flickr account would be a task for this person. Duties would be on an as-needed basis and work on Flickr could be done from home. For more information contact Joyce Giuliani at communications@echo-inc.org



Special Gifts to ECHO in FY 22 from Area Businesses and Organizations

Contributed by Jan Auerbach, Chair, Donation Recognition Committee

The businesses and organizations listed below made gifts to ECHO through outreach efforts. All donations make the work done by ECHO possible and we welcome local partnerships such as these to assure that we can lend a hand to those in need in our community.

In 2021, **Sheehy Volkswagen and Subaru of Springfield** once again stepped up to help their neighbors in the Springfield and Burke, Virginia communities. For the ninth consecutive year, the dealership made generous contributions to ECHO. Encouraged by the Catalogue for Philanthropy, ECHO launched its first online fundraising appeal the Tuesday following Thanksgiving. For the #Giving Tuesday effort, non-profit organizations were encouraged to seek a challenge match to provide a strong incentive for donors and to double the impact of their gifts. Sheehy pledged a gift of \$5,000 that allowed ECHO to set a fundraising goal of \$10,000 for the purchase of food coupons to give to clients. Thanks to the Sheehy challenge, ECHO exceeded its Giving Tuesday goal with gifts totaling \$13,500. In December, Sheehy contributed \$8,000, an increase of \$3,000 above its matching grant pledge. In addition to its financial donation, Sheehy sponsored a food drive that resulted in 160 pounds of donated food.



At a luncheon on October 12, 2021 to which Bob Vitter and Anita King were invited, the **Exxon/Mobile Spouses Club** committed to raise money to support ECHO. In December 2021 club members donated a total of \$12,585 plus food to fulfill their commitment.

On May 19 Wahed Hossaini, a member of the **Bangladeshi community of greater Washington** met with President Bob Vitter to present ECHO with a check for over \$8,000. The funds were the result of his annual End of Ramadan Food Drive that he has been conducting for the last eleven years to support ECHO. We thank him and the community for their support!



For the fourth year in a row, our friends at **Language on Demand** donated \$5,000 to ECHO. The company, located on Little River Turnpike in Annandale, provides a full range of language and staffing services to business and government clients.



BOD FAITH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Burke Presbyterian Church's Communion Table

Submitted by Kathy Fleming, Board Representative for Burke Presbyterian Church



When she read that the ECHO food room had been “slammed” with requested and distributed food doubling that of donations, Kathy Fleming, Board representative from Burke Presbyterian Church, decided to do a new thing. The motto for BPC is “Behold, I am doing a new thing,” (Isaiah 43:19) so she asked new pastor, the Rev. Rebecca Messman, if she could display most needed items on the communion table.

As it was being designed, the church requested a communion table large enough that the congregation could gather around it to share the Lord’s Supper as the family of God. Said the Rev. Messman, “The communion table is our hub. It is where we feel nourished in love and where we taste grace.” With her encouragement, notices in the church weekly email, and notes in the Sunday bulletin, church members responded with exceedingly generous donations. Lucinda Marvin, ECHO’s food room coordinator commented, “Most of us are such visual learners,” and recognized the effectiveness of the display. Throughout Lent, the table featured food to help welcome new Afghan neighbors. During her installation service, the Rev. Messman highlighted the artistry of giving what we have to God in beautiful hope and connection with our neighbors. She invited members and guests to bring a non-perishable item for ECHO. Future plans include displays of cooking oil as it continues to become more expensive and of personal care items that receive a lower response in the church’s annual collection.