



# ECHO UPDATE

QUARTERLY NEWS TO KNOW FOR VOLUNTEERS



## Notes from the Director's Desk

by Anita King and Mike Baier, Executive Director(s)

### *Good Bye from Anita*

Yes--Germany awaits! Early in the new year I'll be heading there to join my husband for a new adventure! This'll be the last article I'll write.

Thank you, thank you, thank you for your continued willingness to donate your time and talent to our wonderful ECHO community. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with such a talented and generous group of people in support of such a beautiful mission.

I know that under leadership of our new Executive Director, Mike Baier, ECHO will continue to do great things! I wish you all the best, and if anyone ventures into Germany, don't hesitate to contact us.

Again--Thank You.

*Anita King*

### *Hello from Mike*

With only five years experience at ECHO and little to none of that experience in directly engaging our clients, I can not fill Anita's shoes. But, as I search for a pair of shoes that will fit me, I'm confident of moving in the direction she has set to meet clients' needs.

Setting and keeping on any helpful direction requires organizing all of our volunteers' energies. We do that through team building and the free exchange of ideas to come up with the best solution. At ECHO we are where the rubber meets the road, and I look forward to the journey together.

*Mike Baier*

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# VOLUNTEER PROFILE: Executive Director(s)

by Jane Curtis, Outreach Chair



**ECHO's Executive Directors Meg Brantley, Anita King, Pat Gauthier, and Mike Baier**

**Executive Director - The glue that keeps it all in place at ECHO. Like all positions at ECHO it is voluntary which is highly unusual at Community Based Organizations. We are saying goodbye and hello to two very talented leaders.**



## ANITA KING

A 21-year career in the US Air Force was not a requirement for success as the Executive Director of ECHO, but it no doubt gave Anita King a lot of leadership and problem-solving experience to fall back on as she took on that role in 2017. In addition to experience, Anita brought a can-do spirit, a positive outlook, and visionary thinking to the position. Sadly for ECHO, Anita has resigned her ECHO position to join her husband David who is now working in Stuttgart, Germany.

In 2006, Anita initially responded to a church bulletin's announcement that ECHO needed Spanish-speaking volunteers. She was an ECHO family counselor until a work assignment took the Kings to Germany in 2012. When Executive Director Meg Brantley learned that Anita was returning to our area in 2017, she recruited her (while she was still in Germany) to be Director of Client Services upon her return. After Meg retired months later, Anita stepped in as Executive Director.

When asked about her work at ECHO, Anita said that she saw herself as a "transition manager." Changing from her focus on client services to leadership of all aspects of a vibrant organization was a challenging transition, but the uncertainties of the Covid pandemic truly put her skills to the test. For a time, Anita and Family Counselor Charles McClelland dealt with many clients with a few volunteers in the Food Room and at the Donation Door to provide basic ECHO services. She was committed to keeping clients and volunteers safe from a (then) little-understood health threat. She also maintained a commitment to serve a community where need was burgeoning. Those factors drove (continued...)

## Volunteer Profile - Executive Director(s)...continued

more changes in a short time than ECHO had experienced over years of evolving. Anita had to innovate to keep the flow of vital assistance going. Some of those innovations have remained even as volunteers and clients returned to normal activities in the building.

Anita was proud that ECHO implemented new ideas such as Yard Sale coupons for clients and offering food choices for clients in the Food Room. She encouraged chairs to determine what clients really need rather than relying on tradition to dictate ECHO programs and practices. Even as she prepared to end her tenure, she was envisioning changes that ECHO could make in the years ahead to better serve elderly or physically challenged clients or to make ECHO's mission more widely understood in our service area.

Anita's energy and enthusiasm were vital in keeping ECHO growing in its mission during normal times and in keeping the flow of assistance steady during one of ECHO's toughest periods. It takes a special person to give their time and talent as a full-time volunteer. ECHO was privileged to have Anita in that challenging role. The best wishes and gratitude of hundreds of volunteers go with her as she leaves.



### MIKE BAIER

Mike Baier, ECHO's incoming Executive Director, initially found ECHO through his military service. Mike's U.S. Army career began in 1969 and took him to numerous assignments in 9 states and 7 countries. He was living in Daventry in Springfield in the late 90's for his enrollment in The Senior Seminar, a State Department executive development program for those whose careers required them to represent the U.S. in foreign nations. In addition to its requirements, The Senior Seminar encouraged a year's commitment to a local volunteer organization. Mike chose ECHO and worked for a year in the cramped conditions of the original building before its 2005 expansion.

Returning to Fairfax County after his retirement from the Army, Mike was engaged in defense contracting work locally and in Afghanistan. He says he was following his wife Hyeson's example of community service when he started volunteering at ECHO again. He became involved with the Donation Door and the Food Room and served several days each week.

In the role of Executive Director, Mike brings a background of career achievements and vast experience with people of diverse languages, ethnicities, and cultures. He also brings a curiosity, saying "I learn something new every day at ECHO." And, perhaps best of all, he brings an expectation that neighbors help neighbors, a core value of our organization.

# SAYING GOODBYE TO ANITA

It is with a heavy heart that we say farewell to Anita King as ECHO's Executive Director. Her tenure has guided ECHO through good times and difficult times and her contributions will remain long after she takes her leave. Thank you Anita for your time and talent.



Enjoy a special tribute to Anita and her contributions to ECHO.  
<https://www.echo-inc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Anita-Slide-Show.mp4>

## Holiday Meals and Toys

### HOLIDAY SHOP BROUGHT JOY IN GIVING AND RECEIVING

by EileenShort, Co Chair

**ECHO's Holiday Shop was once again a very huge success! Thanks to the many volunteers that helped this year. We were able to provide toys to approximately 230 families/565 children. Due to the generosity of our donors, our children received more individual toys than in years past. Thank you to Co-Chairs Eileen Short, Linda Priddy and Patty Maton.**



## Holiday Meals

Fran Eck, Co-Chair of the Holiday Meal Program along with Sue Anne Sobert reported that ECHO donors sponsored over 210 families with Thanksgiving meals.

Christmas meals this year were offered to clients in the 22150 zipcode where the greatest number of our clients reside. This program channels generosity into holiday joy for the families we serve.



## Food Room Shopping List

by Lucinda Marvin, ECHO Food Co-Chair

# ECHO PANTRY

## THANKS FOR ADDING ECHO TO YOUR GROCERY LIST



December 1, 2022

Thank you for including ECHO Food Room needs on your shopping list. Here are a few things to keep in mind when shopping:

- Choose sizes appropriate for our average family size of four.
- Include an assortment of food to ensure a variety of items for our clients.
- **ECHO cannot give our clients expired food, open food or repackaged food.**
- Because of the wonderful generosity of our community, ECHO is blessed to already have a more than ample supply of canned pumpkin, cranberry sauce and stuffing. However, we are short on many other items such as personal care products and the items listed below.

### FOOD ITEMS

- Pancake Syrup
- Condiments
- Lemon Juice
- Masa Flour
- Sugar
- Canned Fruit
- Honey
- Instant Coffee
- Tin Fish
- Cinnamon
- Canned Meat (Spam is a favorite)
- Crackers
- Canned/Shelf Stable Milk
- Basmati Rice
- Hot Chocolate
- Juice (Large Bottles or Box)
- Garlic Powder
- Onion Powder

### NON-FOOD ITEMS

- Laundry Detergent
- Deodorant
- Shampoo
- Toothbrushes (esp. childrens)
- Toilet Paper
- Feminine Hygiene Products
- Shaving Cream/Razors
- Facial Tissues
- Band-aids
- Paper Towels
- Brown Paper Grocery Bags



[www.echo-inc.org](http://www.echo-inc.org)  
for more details

## Houseware Needs

by Kathy Siner, Housewares Co-Chair

ECHO's Housewares Department will be extremely grateful to receive King and Queen bedding, bath towels, saucepans with lids, large pots, blenders, coffee pots, and irons.



# Notes from the Clothing Room

by Paula Kwartunas

The clothing department's daily goal is to process donated clothes and move them to the client room the same day the clothes are received. We are currently focused on ensuring eligible clients and their families have an assortment of winter clothes to choose from, especially winter coats, hats, gloves, and scarves for the Winter Season.

The following are the top clothing donations needed:

**Men's:** Winter Coats S/M/L, Underwear 32/34, 36/38, Sweatpants S/M/L, long-sleeve T-Shirts/Knit Shirts/Sweaters S/M/L

**Boy's:** Winter Coats 14, 16, 18, Jeans 14, 16, 18, long-sleeve T-Shirts/Knit Shirts/Sweaters 10 thru 18, Sweatpants 10 thru 18

**Women's:** Winter Coats S/M/L, Underwear 5 thru 10

**Girl's:** Winter Coats 14, 16, 18, Jeans 14, 16, 18, long-sleeve T-Shirts/Knit Shirts/Sweaters 5 thru 18, Leggings/Sweatpants 5 thru 18



## COATS, COATS, COATS!

Every clothing donation is important and in the winter coat donations are golden. One donation effort that deserves recognition was made by Eagle Scout Daniel Belloni. Daniel has organized a coat drive with a goal of collecting 100 coats for ECHO. His latest delivery in early December yielded 70 coats.



## From Director of Support - Joan Wheaton

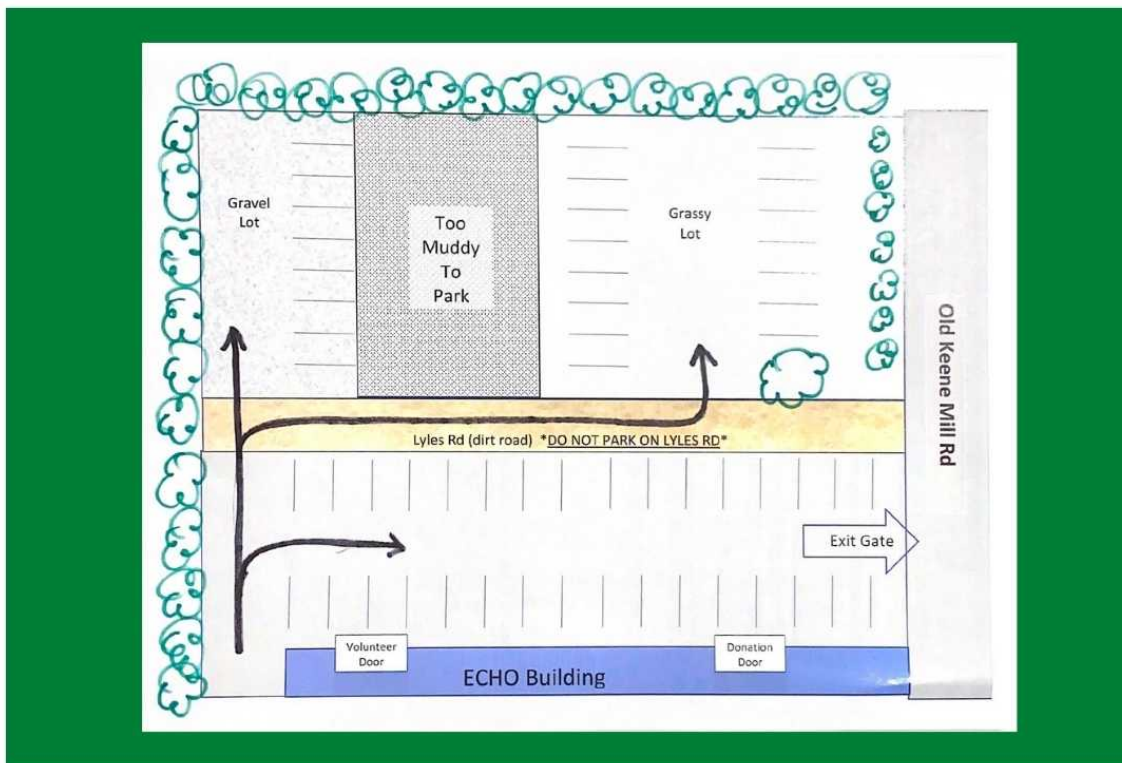
### Parking at ECHO

We are once again upon the season where the ECHO grassy field parking becomes muddy and soft in the lower areas. To help volunteers avoid the worst part of the field, a portion of the field will be blocked off with yellow caution tape.

Please take a look at the attachment to see an overview of the 3 ECHO parking areas. Please note we will be using the grassy area closest to Old Keene Mill Rd which is higher and dryer than the muddy area. The spots are not marked on the grass so please use the image as a guide.

Also please do not park in the 6 client parking spaces or on Lyles Road.

Thanks for your cooperation.



### Yard Sale News

With the help of about 100 volunteers, the yard sale event was held on Oct 29 at St Bernadette's gym. Since the spring yard sale, the proceeds have been:  
 Fall Yard Sale Fri and Sat sales - \$10,147.50. In-house sales - \$6,028.55. Gold/Silver - \$570.00. Total \$16,746.05.

In other yard sale news, **Kathy Freund** has agreed to be the committee chair for the yard sale. Also, **Debbie Moreau** and new volunteer **Rachel Hoover** have agreed to be the co-chairs for the yard sale event starting next spring. Hooray!!!





# BE AN ECHO ADVOCATE

ECHO Volunteers are the life blood of our mission to bring relief to those in need. Each volunteer gives time and talent to our operations. In addition to all the things volunteers do for ECHO there is one more important job to be done.

## Networking!

"Word of mouth" advocacy about what ECHO is and what ECHO does for the community is one of the most important ways we spread the word about our services to our community. We ask that when you have the opportunity, please let others know about ECHO.



To help you in this effort, here are 5 facts about ECHO to start a conversation:

1. ECHO's vision is to be the conduit through which neighbors who have enough can share with their neighbors who don't
2. ECHO is an all-volunteer organization supported by a Board of 25 local faith communities
3. ECHO has served needs in the Springfield/Burke area for over 50 years
4. ECHO serves a great number of Spanish-speaking neighbors and welcomes volunteers with language skills to enhance communication
5. ECHO's website has great information on services, donation needs, and volunteer openings: [www.echo-inc.org](http://www.echo-inc.org)



Your help as an  
ECHO Advocate is appreciated

# HELP WANTED: SPECIAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Contributed by Beth Clark, Volunteer Coordinator



*There are so many ways to help at ECHO.  
See if your skills match a need*



Check the ECHO website to see new opportunities as they come available. Go to [www.echo-inc.org](http://www.echo-inc.org) and click the Volunteer tab and go to Adult Volunteer Positions Needed Right Now, or email [Volunteercoordinator@echo-inc.org](mailto:Volunteercoordinator@echo-inc.org).

**Clothing** –1 volunteer Monday and Tuesday mornings and Tuesday evenings; 1 volunteer 1st & 3rd Friday mornings. Assist clients as they "shop" for clothing for their families.

**Clothing support** – 1 volunteer Monday mornings

**Counselors** – Assistant Counselor Monday mornings, Tuesday and Thursday evenings; counselor Monday through Friday mornings

**E-Bay/online sales**

**Facilities Maintenance Lead** – Using the team of facility maintenance volunteers, this Lead will coordinate needed maintenance and repairs in and around the building. When requested, this Lead will work to implement requests from various other area leads including researching and purchasing various supplies as needed.

**Food Room** – One volunteer Monday mornings to be part of a crew that goes to Wegmans at 8:00 AM to pick up donations from the loading dock. Can use personal vehicle or get qualified to drive the ECHO van and use the van. Duties: arrive at Wegmans at 8:00 AM to load donations into the vehicles, drive to ECHO and unload donations in the food room and help place in freezers or refrigerators. This is usually completed by 9:00 AM.

**One volunteer Friday mornings—Inventory Management** in addition to normal duties. MUST be able to lift 40 pounds above the head, be comfortable on a ladder while moving material.

**CONTINUED...**

## HELP WANTED: SPECIAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES...CONTINUED

**Securities Lead** – One volunteer is needed to ensure that ECHO’s emergency and safety policy/procedures are implemented, and updated as needed. This position includes keeping track of who has been assigned the keys to ECHO’s building, ensuring that “loaner” keys are returned, and that any updates to key holders are submitted to admin for updating the database.

**Social Media Committee** - Looking for volunteers with knowledge of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to post information about ECHO’s work in the community. The goal would be to extend ECHO’s current outreach to community members who follow social media platforms. This task can be done remotely and time on task would be flexible. This is a great opportunity for those who cannot commit to regularly scheduled volunteer hours. For more information and to share your ideas contact Joyce Giuliani, Director of Communications and Outreach at [communications@echo-inc.org](mailto:communications@echo-inc.org).

## Teen Program Alive and Well

by Andrea Hellier, Teen Program Co-Chair

The 2022-2023 Teen Program kicked off Wednesday, November 2nd. We are delighted with the response from teens, adults, and ECHO program chairs. We have had a full complement of six teens each Wednesday who are anxious to help and anxious to return. We have limited teens to two slots each to allow more students to learn about and volunteer at ECHO.

The teen program serves as a vehicle to educate our youth about the struggles of families in their immediate area and encourage active participation in supporting these families. We encourage all the areas within ECHO to support the Teen Program by identifying jobs the teens can perform weekly as one-time or ongoing weekly projects.

*Special thanks to Andrea Hellier and Jane Gordon and their teams for stepping up to chair the Teen Volunteer Program. The program is back in operation helping teens learn the value of service to the community. Many thanks.*





## BOD FAITH COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

### First Baptist Church Baby Formula Program

By Jane Curtis, ECHO Outreach Chair



A program that started with retrieving baby formula samples that were going undelivered and unused to distribute them to families in need, has grown into a vital assistance program for our community. Since 2016, First Baptist Church of Springfield, partnering with the Neighborhood and Family Resource Centers, has participated in a program called the FBCS Baby Formula Ministry. The Resource Centers are sponsored by Fairfax County's Health and Human Services system. Because of the baby formula shortage, companies no longer send samples, so the program has had to evolve. More recently, ECHO has become a partner too, and now provides major financial support.

Rick Priest of First Baptist is the volunteer who works with the staff of the Family Resource Centers of Springfield and Culmore to get the formula to families who need it. The Resource Centers send him a list of the families and their formula needs. He works with Debby McElroy, ECHO Admin, who orders the formula and has it shipped to him. Rick packages the specific brand of formula required for each infant, (or its approved substitute during the ongoing shortage). He labels the packages and delivers them to the Family Resource Center at Springfield Gardens Apartments and the Family Resource Center of Culmore in Falls Church where they are distributed.

In some cases, a member of First Baptist will identify a family in need of formula and Rick delivers directly to that family or the church member. Rick delivers formula for about 50 - 55 families a month.

ECHO also sends formula that is donated to ECHO by the public to First Baptist since ECHO's Food Room no longer supplies clients with infant formula. ECHO ended its distribution of formula when Food Room volunteers found that they could not stock the range of different formulas that families needed.

## First Baptist Church Baby Formula Program...continued

ECHO's support has allowed Rick to deliver larger sizes which has then enabled him to go from weekly to monthly deliveries. The ongoing baby formula shortage has made the program more challenging. Sometimes Rick must provide approved substitute formulas since he and Debby can't predict how much of what types of formula will be available month to month.

The FBCS Baby Formula Ministry is an example of how government, faith communities, and non-profit service agencies can form alliances to help our neighbors live and thrive in our community.

