



**Special points of
interest:**

***Low income
families become
Homeowners***

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EICAP in *ACTION*

Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership



FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR....

Russell Spain, CCAP

I guess it is true that as you get older, time moves faster. Where did 2008 go?? It was a year that saw some major progress for EICAP and one that re-emphasized that there is still a need for the services that EICAP provides to individuals.

Most recently, EICAP has signed an agreement that will make it possible for the agency to move programs that currently are located outside the 357 Constitution Way building in Idaho Falls into one combined facility. Over the next two years or less, EICAP will move all of its Idaho Falls programs, except the East Head Start Center, into one building at 935 Lincoln Road. This will require that the building at 357 Constitution Way be sold. It is currently on the market and the hope is for an early, firm offer of purchase.

Staff is looking forward to this new chapter in the 40+ year history of Eastern Idaho Community Action Partnership.

With the news of dire straits in the national economy, eastern Idaho has not escaped. We are seeing more people in need of our services than ever before. We are seeing individuals that have met the income guidelines for years but have not needed our help before the economy hit bottom. Food banks are now seeing more people asking for food boxes than in the past. Energy Assistance is in full swing now and we normally help 4000+ households in our nine county area. This year we are expected to help nearly 7000 households.

Given all of the bad news in the economy, the one bright spot is that this area remains one of the most giving areas of the country. We received more food during the Boy Scout food drive than we have in several years, the recent Coats-for-Kids drive was very, very successful. Santa for Seniors has been rejuvenated this year and is helping seniors receive needed gifts that they may not receive otherwise. To all of that, EICAP says a big THANK YOU to eastern Idaho.

We wish each of you a very Happy and Successful 2009. May the year 2009 see an improvement in our economic status nationally and an improvement for those in our community who have needed our services in 2008.

From Mancole Fedder, EICAP Head Start Director

What is In-Kind?

Each year EICAP Head Start needs to acquire 20% of our total grant in locally generated in-kind or donations. The main purpose of in-kind is to obtain enough revenue to run our program. Ways to meet these requirements include locally donated supplies, volunteer time/services, transportation costs, as well as food or clothing used in Head Start. If we have *one volunteer, in each class, everyday* in our program, we would have *one third* of the in-kind that we need. This volunteer doesn't have to be a parent. It can be a grandparent, friend, neighbor, college student, cousin or more.

Once again this year, Wal Mart has donated \$1000 to our Head Start families for Christmas. Though this particular donation cannot be counted as in-kind because it will not be used in the classroom or in the home for Head Start purposes and goals, we are still very appreciative of their kindness and generosity. *continued In-Kind page 2*

Haven GED Progress Report

One of our latest graduates is in our transitional housing. She's been struggling with the math portion of the GED, but finally passed. One of her goals is to attend college in January and she started crying when she found out that she had passed.

Another recent graduate is an 18 year old boy who lived at the Haven a year ago with his mother and siblings. The family moved to California but he decided to stay behind. He got in trouble and his probation officer made him finish school. He's a very bright kid and has been working hard to complete his GED so he can go on to college. He said, "I remembered that the Haven staff had been nice to my family, so I wasn't worried about coming here."

To date, 124 individuals have started the GED program; 30 have completed their GED. The other 70 individuals are in various stages of the GED, from studying for individual tests to ready to take the test.

Tips to Save Energy..brought to you from the EICAP Weatherization Program

Heating and cooling your home uses more energy and drains more energy than any other system in your home. Typically, 45% of your utility bill goes for heating and cooling.

What's more, heating and cooling systems in the United States together emit 150 million tons of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere each year, adding to global climate change. These systems also generate about 12% of the nation's sulfur dioxide and 4% of the nitrogen oxides, the chief ingredients in acid rain.

✓Set your thermostat as low as is comfortable in the winter and as high as is comfortable in the summer.

✓Clean or replace filters on furnaces once a month or as needed.

✓Clean warm air registers, baseboard heat-

ers, and radiators as needed; make sure they are not blocked by furniture, carpeting, or drapes.

✓Bleed trapped air from hot water radiators once or twice a season; if in doubt how to perform this task, call a professional.

✓Place heat resistant radiator reflectors between exterior walls and the radiators.

✓Turn off kitchen, bath, and other exhaust fans within 20 minutes after you are done cooking or bathing; when replacing exhaust fans, consider installing high efficiency, low noise models.

✓During the heating season, keep the draperies and shades on your south facing windows open during the day to allow the sunlight to enter your home and closed at night to reduce the chill you may feel from cold windows.

Proud Hispanic Grandpa Becomes U.S. Citizen

from Andrea Leander, Medicare Fraud & Outreach

EICAP Area VI Agency on Aging



On November 4th, Rafael Rodriguez stopped by to proudly let me know that he voted for the first time in the Presidential Election. He speaks very little English and I had recently tutored him on the U.S. Citizenship test, which he passed and became a U.S. citizen on August 7, 2008.

Rafael, aged 65 and his wife, Carmen, aged 61, are members of the Grandparents Raising Grandchildren support group, which meets here on the last Tuesday of the month.

Emily Hoyt, coordinator of the group, has known them both since March of 2004, when they became guardians of their four grandchildren, ages 2 – 7. They have already raised a family of seven children who are all grown. At a time when most individuals are retired, they are starting over. They live in Hamer, Idaho with their four grandchildren, who are now ages 6 – 11. He works at a dairy, and she has a lunch wagon that serves food to the passing truckers on the highway and to the employees from the nearby potato factory. Always cheerful, you would never know that they are struggling, or that life is hard.

Rafael's philosophy is to work hard and never give up. He has been here in Idaho since 1985 and has always wanted to be a U.S. citizen. He is a wonderful example to others on how to persevere if you have a dream, and also of the opportunity that is available here in the United States of America.

In-Kind from page 1

The Idaho Falls Catholic Community and its Children's Stewardship program recently donated over \$300 to Head Start.

The children gave from their own personal savings accounts to EICAP Head Start for our family's and children's benefit. I have already sent them a thank you letter which was posted in their November 30, 2008 newsletter.

Donations in the form of supplies are continuously filtering in from businesses such as Office Depot, Desert Industries, Bed Bath and Beyond and so many more. Doctors, Dentists, and other community care centers often times

adjust their costs for our families to receive services.

On behalf of EICAP Head Start and the 241 children and their families that we serve, I would like to express our gratitude in the amazing generosity of everyone that has ever donated items or given their time to better the lives of our community's most precious resource; our children.



Low Income Families Become Home Owners:

In the current economic uncertainty low income families may feel there is no opportunity to become a homeowner.

EICAP's Mutual Self-Help Housing Program proves otherwise. The program is designed to make homeownership affordable by enabling future homeowners to help build their own houses. With this investment of time or "sweat equity", each homeowner pays less for their home than if it was built by a contractor.

Mortgage loans for self-help houses are made directly to participating families from USDA Rural Development. No down payment is required for a self-help loan and all closing costs are included. Mortgages are 33 or 38 years at a fixed interest rate and payments are based on a homeowner's income level. Mortgage



payments are deferred during the construction period.

If you decide to build a self-help house, you will contribute 65% of the labor required to complete your home. You will frame walls, install windows and doors, shingle the roof, do trim work, hang your kitchen cabinets and build a fence, all under the watchful eye of a construction foreman.



Self help families

are organized into groups of 6 to 10 families, the group works under the guidance of a construction foreman provided by EICAP. Construction guidance, oversight and power tools are all provided by EICAP.

Self-Help homes are designed to be affordable and energy efficient. All homes are three or four bedrooms, have two baths and a double car garage.

To qualify for self-help housing you must meet income guidelines, have acceptable credit and be willing to work the required hours during the construction of your home.



EICAP started building self-help homes in 1997. Since that time 150 families with a total of 288 children have made the decision to become homeowners through the self-help program.

If you would like to learn more about the Self-Help Homeownership Program, Call 208-522-5391 and ask for self-help housing.



Virtual Volunteers?

Virtual Volunteers are a hot new phenomena in the national service sector. A Virtual Volunteer can be anyone in American or the world who can use their internet connection to provide volunteer services to an organization.

EICAP's RSVP has successfully tapped the unlimited potential of Virtual Volunteers. RSVP recruited a talented State of Maine resident to create and maintain a first class website for the Clayton Area Historical Association (<http://claytonidaho.org>) RSVP found a professional transcriber in Rochester, Minnesota, to transcribe oral histories for the Sawtooth Interpretive and Historical Association in Stanley, Idaho. RSVP has also matched a designer from Nashville, Indiana, to help create a website for Clark County Economic Development in Dubois, Idaho.

In RSVP's experience, Virtual Volunteers love a challenge and the opportunity to work largely unsupervised from the comfort of their home. For a current listing of RSVP's Virtual Volunteer solicitations see <http://idahovolunteer.org>

The population of Virtual Volunteers is growing rapidly and is certain to become an ever more important piece in the jigsaw puzzle of volunteerism.

Can Virtual Volunteers work for you? The answer to that question depends on your imagination, your creativity and your willingness to think outside the proverbial box.

RSVP welcomes your inquires and questions about Virtual Volunteering. Contact: idahorsvp@gmail.com

**Eastern Idaho Community
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EICAP

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If you'd like to receive our newsletter electronically, please e-mail:

sbailey@eicap.org

and we will add you to our e-mail list.

The Energy Assistance Program is in full swing at EICAP. Go to our website, <http://www.eicap.org>, or call our office to see if you or someone you know will qualify. It's an income based program, but the limits have gone up as well as the benefits. An example is a household of four's gross income has to be less than \$2,827 per month. The program is available through the end of March 2009. Go to eicap.org, click on "Get Help" and go to the Heating Assistance page, or call our offices at 522-5391 or our Salmon office at 756-3999. Our toll free number is 1-800-632-4813.

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