

## Cost Saving Tips:

- Unplug any electrical device when not in use.
- Turn off the lights when you leave the room.
- Don't let the water run while brushing your teeth.
- Change furnace filters monthly. Your furnace will run more efficiently.

## MCCA ON THE WEB

MCCA'S new website features information about MCCA programs, job postings and more. Check us out at [www.mccainc.org](http://www.mccainc.org).

## Inside This Issue

Program Updates:	2
Emergency Assistance	
Dreams for Peace	3
Senior Program	3
Energy Assistance	4

## NeighborWorks® Affiliation Provides Funding and Technical Support

Mid Central recently received its charter as a member in the NeighborWorks Network of the Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation (NRC). The affiliation will provide Mid Central Community Action a new source of funding, training and technical assistance.

"This is an historic achievement for Mid Central Community Action," said John Burrill, Executive Director of MCCA, explaining that NRC conducted a detailed review of MCCA's practices and procedures before admittance.

Mid Central Community Action's experience in first time homeownership



Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation representatives presenting John Burrill & Rick Barrera of MCCA with a check for \$75,000.

programs made it a perfect candidate for the NeighborWorks Network. "Our commitment to helping people move to self-sufficiency in the area of affordable housing is a common thread both organizations share," said John Burrill.

In September, MCCA held a chartering ceremony to announce the affiliation. The ceremony was held at the Bloomington Center for the Performing Arts. The Neighborhood Reinvestment Corporation

awarded MCCA a check for \$75,000 during the ceremony. MCCA will use the money for expansion of its affordable housing programs, including hiring a full-time Housing Director.

Based in Washington, D.C., NRC is a congressionally chartered, nonprofit corporation that implements and supports efforts to create healthy neighborhoods.



## MCCA First Stopover For ICAA 2004 Tour

*"The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have too little"*

*Franklin D. Roosevelt*

Mid Central Community Action was selected as the first stopover for Illinois Community Action Association 2004 Tour. The Tour was the initial kickoff for the Dialogue on Poverty: Finding Perspectives & Creating Solutions.

The Dialogue on Poverty will actively involve representatives from all sectors of our community in the ongoing discussion about poverty in Illinois. Mid Central Community Action's Dialogue is planned for Spring 2005.

Tour members were welcomed by MCCA's Staff & Board Members, Bloomington's Mayor Judy Markowitz, Bloomington City Council Members, Rep. Dan Brady, Sen. Bill Brady, and Friends of MCCA.

## From The Desk Of The Executive Director

Since the last Observer was published, Mid Central Community Action was granted its charter as a NeighborWorks® organization. Our previous issues outlined some of the resources available to us as a result of the affiliation. With NeighborWorks' support, we are now searching for a Director of Housing Development, and hope to be conducting interviews soon. We are in the early planning stages of major projects that will create units of housing for families in both McLean and Livingston Counties.

Our Countering Domestic Violence program recently received a grant from the Illinois Criminal Justice

Information Authority. We now have important resources to help support our community-wide efforts in victim services, prevention and education in the ongoing challenges of domestic violence.

The energy assistance program has seen many changes as the program moved to a different department at the state level. In addition, a new internet based system has been instituted.

As is often the case with major changes, there have been many delays and much frustration on the part of our customers, staff and State officials, not to mention the

utility companies. However, we are seeing day by day improvements, and ultimately we will have a system that works much better than the old one!

I could fill this letter with stories of all the good work Mid Central Community Action is doing everyday. Instead, I would like to extend a **Big Thank You** to our customers for their patience, to our staff for their hard work, and to our Board of Directors for their support, as well as all of our other stakeholders and volunteers for their caring effort.

*John Burrill*  
*Executive Director*

## Weatherization Program Seeking Applicants

On January 4, 2005 the Weatherization Program will begin taking applications to help make homes more energy efficient. Applicants must be income eligible (applicants receiving assistance from LIHEAP are automatically eligible) and own their home, or have the cooperation of the landlord. Properties that have been weatherized since September 1993 are not eligible.

Areas addressed by the program include: replacement/repair of furnaces and water heaters, wall and attic insulation, air sealing or replacement of doors and windows.

Applicants must bring social security cards for everyone in the household, proof of home ownership or rental agreement, documentation of income for all household members

for the past 12 months, and most recent gas and electric bills. To schedule an appointment, call Mid Central Community Action at (309) 829-0691 after January 2, 2005.



## Changes In Emergency Services

The Community Services Block Grant has made several changes for 2005. MCCA's non-food pantry will close after December 10, 2004.

After December 10th, non-food items will be approved on a case by case basis.

In addition, the Emergency Services

Program was expanded to include emergencies other than rent and car repairs. "If a crisis can be documented, and income guidelines are met, we will look at emergency needs on a case by case basis," says Noel, CSBG Coordinator. Noel said changes have been made to provide better services to MCCA clients.

### Financial Assistance For First-Time Home Buyers

Central Illinois Coalition for Affordable Housing

Families wishing to purchase their first home are encouraged to call our office for information regarding a five year forgivable grant program to assist with closing costs/down payment assistance. For income guidelines and additional information call (309) 829-0691.

## Dreams for Peace

By Ricole L. Schultz, ICDVP  
Countering Domestic Violence/Neville House

As the holidays approach, many of us carry with us hopes for peace, goodwill and expectations for self-renewal with the coming of the New Year. My own anticipations include love, peace and celebrating with family, hopefully some much needed relaxation, and of course plenty of really good food. The holidays for many are satisfying, feeling surrounded by love, joy and family.


For families dealing with domestic violence this holiday, the desire for peace may be silenced by the bleak reality that this year may be no different than the last. For families living in fear, or those who are running for their lives, the wish for

peace this holiday may be only a distant dream. Children experiencing domestic violence have valid reasons to be apprehensive of the holidays. Remembering past holidays, children begin this season with escalated fear, anxiety, heightened stress and dread. Families left homeless due to domestic violence may feel forced to return to their abusers when homeless shelters fill up due to cold weather.

How can we help these families have a safe and happy holiday? We must keep these families in mind during our own holiday celebrations and not forget that stresses from holidays may turn a high risk situa-

tion into a deadly disaster. Families need to be prepared to flee in case of danger and people who work with families should be prepared to help create extensive safety plans. Families where domestic violence is occurring should be prepared to set realistic holiday expectations for their children. With help, encouragement, and support these families may not have such grim expectations for the holidays.

**Together**, we can help make a difference and end the cycle of violence. For more information contact the Countering Domestic Violence Program at (309) 828-8913.

 CDV/Neville House has purple magnetic ribbons for \$5 each. Proceeds benefit Neville House. Call (309) 829-0691 ext.237 to help support Neville House!

## Mayors Manor Tenants Attend Heartland Community College

Mayors Manor has two tenants attending Heartland Community College. Candi, a tenant of Mayors Manor since January 2004, is majoring in foreign language. Richard is taking general courses. Richard has resided at Mayors Manor since 2002. "Richard and Candi are motivated to change their lives," says Pat, Case Manager of Mayors Manor. "Our goal is to help people move to self sufficiency. Richard

and Candi are headed in the right direction," said Pat. Mayors Manor, MCCA's permanent affordable housing program is located at 504 W. Washington Street. Mayors Manor was developed in response to a need to address the issues of homelessness in McLean County. Mayors Manor currently has one vacancy. For more information call the Case Manager at (309) 827-

### Mayors Manor Wish List

Sheets  
Blankets  
Household Supplies  
Towels  
Bus Tokens  
Irons  
Pots/Pans  
Silverware

## Senior Program Served 981 Seniors in FY2004

MCCA's Livingston County office in Pontiac served 981 seniors this program year. "Many seniors received services 2-3 times during the year," said Rosalie, our Senior Advocate. Rosalie keeps seniors informed of programs at Mid Central Community Action. She also provides assistance with completing applications,

making referrals and conducting home visits. MCCA's senior program has an advisory council that meets quarterly to review and guide the senior program. This group is made up of seniors and other providers from Livingston County. For more information contact MCCA's senior program at (815) 844-3201.

### Senior Calendar

On January 5, 2005, the senior program will assist seniors with Circuit Breaker Applications.

LIHEAP Taking Applications— Seniors who have not applied since September 2004 should call our Senior Program at (815) 844-3201.

Mid Central Community Action  
 923 E. Grove  
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Our Mission

*Building Community By Helping  
 People Move To Self Sufficiency.*

## New Staff To Assist With Home Energy Program

MCCA welcomes three new staff members to assist with the **Energy Assistance Program**: Bernadine, Kathie and Amy. Bernadine comes to us through the Experience Works Program. She is currently employed part time as an Energy Assistance/Fiscal Clerk. Kathie, our new intake staff, has an Associate Degree in Business from Lincoln College. Amy, our new Screener, attends Heartland Community College.

The **Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)** is taking applications to assist eligible low-income households pay for winter energy services. The amount of

the payment is determined by income, household size, fuel type, and geographic location. For Further information, please contact LIHEAP at (309) 829-0691.

*Who Is Eligible?*

# of people living in household	Gross income 30 days prior to application date
1	\$1,164
2	\$1,561
3	\$1,958
4	\$2,355
5	\$2,752
6	\$3,149
7	\$3,546
8	\$3,943



*Special Thanks*

*MCCA Staff*

Noel      Rosalie      Tammie  
 Nancy      Lori      Latricia  
 Renee      Donna      Samantha  
 Marilyn      David      Andy  
 Tina      Kelly      Mary Jane  
 Sara      Marina      Kathy  
 Lloyd      Jane P.      Elizabeth  
 John      Jane M.      Nathaniel  
 Janice      Leola      Bernadine  
 Karen      Trina      Michael  
 Dion      Holly      Pamela A.  
 Mindy      Joanna      Deb  
 Curtis      Laura      Rosanna  
 Angela      Theresa      Pam M.  
 Jason      Kathie      Ricole  
 Mary R.      Andre      Kimberley  
 Amanda      Catherine      Devona  
 Patricia      Kenneth      Courtney  
 Ann      Mary P.      Amy  
 Kathy      Olanna      Cathy

*Interns*

Donna & Eric