

MLGW in the Community

Community outreach and volunteer programs are always part of MLGW's schedule. Some of the upcoming events that MLGW will be participating in include the following:

**Feb. 11** – 2-1-1 Info Fair, 9:30 a.m. – 3 p.m., Benjamin Hooks Central Library, 3030 Poplar Ave., Memphis.

**Mar. 11-13** – Southern Women's Show, various times, Agricenter, 7777 Walnut Grove Rd., Memphis.

**Apr. 14-17** – Africa in April, various times, Robert R. Church Park, 4th St. between Beale and Linden Streets.


**Apr. 29** – IAAP Seminar, 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Holiday Inn at the University of Memphis.

Successful 2010 United Way Campaign



MLGW's 2010 United Way Campaign was an exercise in faith and hope. Faith in our fellow employees, who even in these uncertain times would again step forward in providing for our community non-profits, giving hope for a better tomorrow to those in need. So far, our faith has been well founded.

Our slogan for 2010 was "emPowered to Meet the Need" ... and we truly were. There won't be a grand total until later in 2011. However, it appears we are doing very well in our overall goal pledges of \$716,100. Since this campaign is strictly an employee-only based campaign, it is especially gratifying to see the contributions mounting up. By the time each of us does what we can, our little becomes much, and our community is a better place for us all.



Community Outreach is produced by the Communications and Public Relations department of MLGW. If you have questions, concerns, or suggestions about this publication, please feel free to contact the Community Relations area of MLGW's Communications and Public Relations department at (901) 528-4820. Or call Glen Thomas, Supervisor, Communications and Public Relations, at (901) 528-4557. Address all correspondence to:

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Community OUTREACH

News to the Neighborhoods from Memphis Light, Gas and Water Division

January/February 2011

Did You Know ... that Memphis is Getting Smarter?

The smart meters throughout Shelby County are working! The MLGW Smart Grid Demonstration started in November and MLGW meter technicians have installed 1,000 electric smart meters for residential customers who volunteered to be participants in a three-year demonstration project. These Smart Grid pioneers are testing the effectiveness of smart meters and in-home energy



monitoring devices in helping customers to strategically reduce their consumption of electricity, resulting in a smaller bill every month.

The demonstration project enlisted volunteers from nearly every ZIP code in Shelby County, and MLGW technicians began the installation with customers in the 38128 ZIP code, which includes the Raleigh-Egypt area and portions of Frayser. The 38128 ZIP code area was chosen for the

initial installations because of the close proximity of volunteers to the Electric Meter department. This strategy enabled MLGW staff and representatives from SmartSynch, the Jackson, Mississippi-based vendor, to monitor installation progress and quickly address any issues. The remaining Smart Grid participants in other Shelby County ZIP codes had their meters installed in December.

Later this winter, several new features will be added to MLGW's My Account Web service, allowing Smart Grid participants to view time-stamped electricity usage data, which will be uploaded daily.

MLGW Wins PRSA Awards

The Memphis chapter of the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) honored MLGW's Communications & Public Relations department with six awards at its annual VOX Awards luncheon. The department's "Baby Steps" public service announcement campaign captured five different awards in the categories of Public Service Campaign, TV Presentation Under 5 Minutes, Audio Only Presentation, Audio Only Script and Video Script. In addition, MLGW's blog, "Bird on a Wire," won a VOX Gold Award.

Each year, PRSA honors the work of local public relations professionals with its VOX Awards. Area companies competed for various honors. Memphis Mayor AC Wharton Jr. was also honored at the luncheon for his efforts to enhance the image of Memphis and Shelby County.

MLGW launched its public service announcement campaign

for 2010, entitled "Baby Steps," in February. The campaign featured images of children and emphasized that simple, small acts can add up to make a big difference. Elements of the campaign can be found at [www.mlgw.com/babysteps](http://www.mlgw.com/babysteps) and the video PSAs are posted on MLGW's YouTube Channel at [www.youtube.com/mlgwwaystosave](http://www.youtube.com/mlgwwaystosave).

Launched in 2008, MLGW's Bird on a Wire blog features information about MLGW programs and services, as well as environmental and conservation issues. The blog is a multiple recipient of the VOX Gold Award.



MLGW Board Approves 2011 Budget

MLGW's Board of Commissioners recently approved the Division's 2011 budget. The City Council approved the \$1.9 billion budget on December 7.

"The budget includes no rate increase for the electric and natural gas divisions, and a 66 cent per month increase for

water," according to MLGW President and CEO Jerry Collins Jr. "MLGW's outstanding water quality will continue to be among the cheapest water supplies in the nation. The overall budget focuses on reliability, refurbishing existing infrastructure and compliance with regulations."

The 2011 MLGW budget also includes the following highlights:

- No layoffs.
- A decrease in overtime for the third consecutive year.
- \$13.9 million in green initiatives.
- \$5.1 million for Smart Grid network.

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## MLGW Hero Saves a Child

MLGW field employees can encounter a variety of obstacles while on the job including inclement weather, unsavory characters and ferocious pets guarding entryways to customers' meters. But when Billy Diotte of Troubleshooting & System Maintenance began his work day on October 5, 2010, he likely never expected to end his day as a hero for protecting a child from a raging dog.

As Diotte was working in Frayser that day, he witnessed a child being attacked by a pit bull – a breed that was responsible for more than half of the 388 dog bites in 2009 according to City of Memphis records. Rushing to save the child, Diotte sprayed the dog with pepper spray and fought to prevent the dog from attacking another child. He then called 911 and the Memphis Police Department, and an ambulance quickly arrived on the scene. Animal Control retrieved the dog.

Diotte's actions saved these children from serious injury, possibly even death. He was honored at the October 21 MLGW Board of Commissioners meeting. "Billy stepped into a very dangerous situation where many might not have. He was very courageous in protecting the children from the attacking pit bull," said Reggie Bowling, his manager in Electric Matrix.



MLGW Hero Bill Diotte wears medal and holds Hero Award certificate among Division executives.



At a time when temperatures drop and heating costs begin to rise, the need for utility assistance in the community increases drastically. MLGW's Gift of Comfort utility assistance program could be the perfect gift for a loved

## Give the Gift of Warmth this Holiday Season

one this holiday season. The program provides a means for individuals in the community to make a payment towards a specific customer's utility bill as a gift. Gift of Comfort certificates are available at all MLGW Community Offices and online at [www.mlgw.com](http://www.mlgw.com).

"The Gift of Comfort could be the perfect stocking stuffer for a neighbor or loved one during this holiday season," said MLGW President and CEO Jerry Collins Jr. "You choose the person who benefits from your donation. It's simple and very effective, and is just one of

many assistance programs that MLGW offers its customers."

To give a Gift of Comfort, you only need to know the recipient's address. Gifts can be for any amount and will show in the form of a credit on the recipient's MLGW bill. Donations can be made anonymously or a portion of the certificate can be detached and presented to the recipient.

Just go to the following link to download the Gift of Comfort form: <http://www.mlgw.com/images/gift.pdf>.

## Portable Heaters: Stay Warm Safely

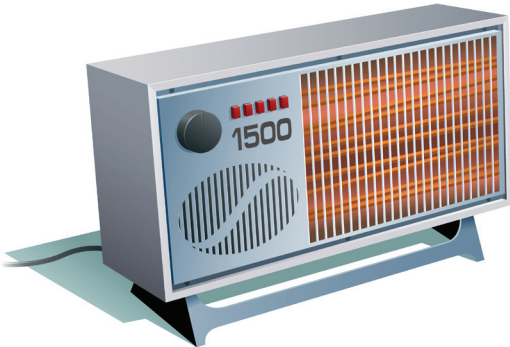
The use of space heaters has the double purpose of keeping you warm during the winter months while saving you money on heating costs. However, you must learn how to use space heaters safely and effectively. To achieve this double purpose, follow these safety

guidelines:

- Read and follow the manufacturer's warning and directions.
- Position portable electric heaters away from furniture, curtains, bedding and other combustible items.
- Never leave heaters unattended. Because many heaters become hot to the touch, keep them out of reach of children and pets.
- Do not use space heaters overnight while everyone is sleeping.
- Place the space heater on the floor for maximum efficiency and stability.
- Make sure your space heater has no frayed wires. Do not plug space heaters into outlets or extension cords with several other items.

- Run the electric cord behind furniture or at the edge of the room to prevent tripping.
- Avoid using a space heater in a bathroom. However, if you do, never touch a portable heater if the floor or any part of your body is wet.
- Plug the heater into a circuit that has no other appliance or device in operation.

Remember, portable heaters are responsible for more than 4,000 fires in homes across the country each year. These fires account for approximately 40 percent of heating-related fire deaths. So be safe while enjoying the warmth and savings these devices provide.



## MLGW Produces Winning Results in Annual Heart Walk

MLGW employees set out to make an impact in the American Heart Association's Heart Walk campaign this year. They began with an impressive commitment to the cause with Jerry Collins Jr., President and CEO of MLGW, serving as Chair for the 2010 Mid-South Heart Walk. Local celebrities also accompanied the company's monthly downtown walks with employees.

MLGW employees were prepared for the walk at AutoZone Park, and many showed up to join fellow Memphians to walk and raise money for the cause.

By the end of the campaign, MLGW raised a whopping \$15,100 for the American Heart Association.

The icing on the cake came when MLGW's campaign t-shirt won first place in the citywide t-shirt contest. MLGW's "Energizing Your Heart" t-shirt competed against other companies throughout Memphis and Shelby County. The t-shirt was designed by the Communications and Public Relations department, and was worn during the walk.



## Fire in the Hole!

Building a fire may not be in your plans today. However, here are a few things you should know about your fireplace, even in warm weather. Your chimney may be sucking conditioned air out of your house. Many older homes were built with fireplaces designed to burn wood or coal, and many have no or inoperable dampers. If you use your fireplace and burn wood, be sure you have a properly functioning damper that is closed when not in use and opened



before use.

Wood burning fireplaces give lots of ambiance, but often deliver little net heat to a home. If you have vented gas logs, you must have any chimney damp-

er fixed in the open position. These gas logs produce colorless and odorless carbon monoxide, and the only safe way to use them is with a permanently opened damper. If you have these logs, consider retrofitting them with modern ventless models which burn cleanly and deliver 100 percent of the heat to the indoors (with a closed damper or sealed chimney). Look into the pros and cons of ventless gas logs and don't neglect fireplace safety.

## Project Max Keeps Enriching Lives

The year we just left behind was indeed a very strong one in terms of work done in our communities through MLGW's Project MAX program. Project MAX, an initiative that began 26 years ago to help the less fortunate in our communities, such as the elderly and the disabled, has been based on volunteer work from MLGW employees who invest some of their time off with one very specific purpose, to help others and better our community through hard, unselfish work. Through the build-up of wheelchair ramps, weatherization, plumbing, painting and even building homes, every year Project MAX volunteers benefit our community. The following is a summary of the work that Project MAX performed throughout 2010:

- April 10 – Spring Kick-Off.** Through the work of 42 volunteers, three wheelchair ramps were built, three homes weatherized, plumbing work was performed on three homes, and 70 energy kits were distributed.
- April 17 – Spring Kick-Off.** Through the work of 34 volunteers, three wheelchair ramps were built, three homes weatherized, plumbing work was performed on two homes,

and 70 energy kits were distributed.

**August 14 – Bridges Classic.** Through the work of 67 volunteers, three wheelchair ramps were built, 10 homes weatherized, and 70 energy kits were distributed.

**October 23 – Energy Awareness Month.** Through the work of 71 volunteers, six wheelchair ramps were built, three homes weatherized, plumbing work was performed on two homes, and 70 energy kits were distributed.

**October 29 – Energy Awareness Month.** Through the work of 42 volunteers, three wheelchair ramps were built, two homes weatherized, plumbing work was performed on three homes, and 70 energy kits were distributed.

