

## 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:

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

**March 25** – Hope House 5K Run/Walk, 6:30 p.m., Harbor Town Square, Mud Island.

**Apr. 12** – MLGW Conservation Day, 9-11 a.m., Dept. of Human Services, North Branch Office, 3230 Jackson Ave., and Welles Branch Office, 3360 South Third Street.

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

**April 30** – Special Olympics Sportsfest, various times, Rhodes College.

**April 30** – March of Dimes 2010 March for Babies, 8 a.m. (registration), 9 a.m. (walk), Shelby Farms.

## MLGW's 1st "Kruisin' for Kids" Benefits Le Bonheur

Their engines were roaring as MLGW employee volunteers gathered recently for the first Le Bonheur/MLGW "Kruisin' for Kids" Motorcycle Ride. Meeting on a beautiful fall Sunday, riders took their bikes on an hour-long, scenic ride from Bumpus Harley-Davidson to the newly expanded Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center. Kruisin' for Kids riders raised just over \$2,000, bringing the grand total for donations to the hospital to nearly \$15,000. All proceeds were donated to Le Bonheur Children's Medical Center.



The squadron of motorcycles looked impressive as they rode in formation to raise funds for Le Bonheur.



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

March/April 2011

## Mayor Visits Home of Smart Grid Demonstration Volunteer

Memphis Mayor AC Wharton hosted a news conference recently about the benefits of Smart Grid technology at the home of Carolyn Smith, an MLGW Smart Grid Demonstration project volunteer and president of the Orange Mound Civic Organization. At the news conference, Mayor Wharton and MLGW President and CEO Jerry Collins Jr. both spoke about the benefits of MLGW's Smart Grid demonstration project.

Ms. Smith's smart meter was installed on Nov. 20 in the first large deployment of 1,000 smart meters that were installed throughout Shelby County. In addition to receiving a smart meter, Ms. Smith received an in-home display that communicates wirelessly with her smart meter, providing almost instantaneous feedback on her electricity usage.



Mayor AC Wharton Jr. (left) and MLGW President & CEO Jerry Collins Jr. (right) presented Smart Grid Demonstration volunteer Carolyn Smith with an in-home wireless display for her smart meter.

## Call 811 Before You Dig ... It's the Law!

It's almost springtime! And you are probably tempted to break ground and start building a fence or planting a tree. But do you know what lies underground where you plan to dig? It can be a variety of natural gas, electric and water lines woven underground all around in your community.

Digging without calling can cause damage that goes from creating a water leak if you break a water main, to being very hazardous with the danger of explosion if you hit underground natural

gas pipes, or possibly suffering electrocution from buried electric cables. Don't risk hitting a utility line, disrupting neighborhood service, and facing potential fines and repair costs.

Before you begin digging, contact Tennessee One Call at 811 several days in advance to request this free marking service so you can dig safely. A professional locating crew will mark the underground utility lines on your property. Remember, the service is free ... and it's the law!



Recently, "Gentle Giant" Randolph confirmed his commitment to needy families with help for their utility payments.

## Z-Bo Helps Families in Need ... Again

Memphis Grizzly Zach "Z-Bo" Randolph has not only proven to be an excellent basketball player, he's also shown he is an extraordinary human being. For the second consecutive year, Z-Bo kicked off the New Year by assisting 100 families who had fallen behind on their utility bills.

To achieve his charity goals, he has worked through partnerships with a variety of organizations, including St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Memphis, MIFA's Holiday Hope Chest, and the Impact Baptist Church and Ministries. In recognition for his continued philanthropic and charitable efforts, last December Z-Bo received the NBA Cares Community Assist Award.



## Cooper-Young Wins Yearlong Energy-Saving Competition

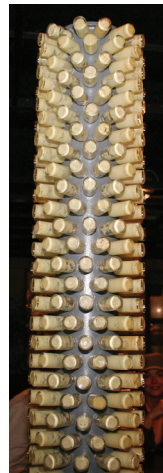
"The Smallest User" contest, a collaboration between MLGW and the journalism department at the University of Memphis, confronted two neighborhood associations, the Cooper-Young Historic District and the Evergreen Historic District. The two neighborhoods competed from January through December of 2010, to see which could reduce energy consumption more. The two neighborhoods received a grant from the University of Memphis and the Community Foundation to conduct the contest.

Final results showed that the Cooper-Young neighborhood saved an average of 12.7 percent more energy, while Evergreen's usage actually increased by 4.1 percent. These 2010 results were compared to 2008 data, since MLGW implemented in 2009 certain energy-saving programs that could have skewed the results.

During the contest period, a project blog was maintained by a

University of Memphis student, who catalogued stories from residents. Contest participants used diverse strategies to save energy, from drying their clothes outdoors to re-insulating their attics as Do-It-Yourself projects.

After the competition ended, Cooper-Young and Evergreen residents took part in a reception and awards ceremony for "The Smallest User" contest in February at Playhouse on the Square. The winner was officially announced at the event, which concluded the yearlong contest.



The winning neighborhood took home a glow-in-the-dark tower, which was to be placed in the office of the Cooper-Young Neighborhood Association.



## Space Heater/Electric Blanket Giveaway

Inadequate heating units and lack of money continuously leave many people in the MidSouth scrambling for heat in the bitter cold of winter. MLGW recognizes the need for assistance during frigid temperatures and tries to assist those who might find themselves without heat.

Last winter, MLGW partnered with the Neighborhood Christian Center (NCC) to administer its annual giveaway of space heaters and electric

blankets. NCC coordinated the selection of recipients and the distribution. Recipients had to meet certain criteria in order to be eligible for the heater/blankets, such as being 60+ years of age, handicapped, or certified as low-income households.

Customers can go to [www.mlgw.com](http://www.mlgw.com) for more weather tips on how to stay warm/cool, depending on the season, and keep energy costs down.

## The Jonnie Dawson Fund: A Great Initiative by MLGW Employees

Following the example of continuously serving others that she gave during her entire life, Jonnie Dawson's colleagues decided after her death in 2008 to honor her memory by creating the IBEW Jonnie Dawson Charitable Foundation.

Dawson, 64 at the time of her death, began her 30-year career at Memphis Light, Gas and Water as a key-punch operator and ascended the ranks to become the assistant business manager for IBEW, the public utility's union. During her fruitful tenure, she often donated her earnings to different causes, and devoted much of her time to improve working conditions at MLGW.

"She was one that believed in donating to charities," said Rick Thompson, Dawson's former boss and business manager at IBEW Local 1288. "She was a real outgoing person, and she always tried to help."



So in January 2010, when it came time for contract negotiations, the union proposed to the utility to allow MLGW employees to donate to the IBEW Jonnie Dawson Charitable Foundation fund. "They [employees] don't make very much money, but they believe in giving to the charitable foundation so we can give back to the community," said Thompson.

Employee donations started last May through payroll deduction, and by December, during a holiday dinner, a first round of awards were given to five local nonprofit organizations. Checks for

\$5,000 were distributed to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, Le Bonheur Children's Hospital, Mid-South Food Bank, YWCA and Shelby County Community Services Agency (CSA). The next quarterly round of checks will be given to nonprofits in the spring of 2011.

## MLGW Ranks Well on Fall 2010 Bill Comparison

MLGW always strives to deliver the highest quality utility service at the lowest possible rates. One way that we measure our performance is to examine how MLGW's average bills compare to those in other cities across the U.S. We survey approximately 50 utilities, including many that are geographically close to Memphis as well as utilities that are similar in size.

This publication provides us with a snapshot during the fall season of average utility bills effective October 1, 2010. These comparative surveys are not based on opinion or customer perception; they take into account actual published rates on record from energy providers across the U.S.



### Highlights of the fall survey include:

- MLGW ranks third overall in rates across combined (residential) services
- MLGW ranks first in rates for Water (residential) service
- City of Memphis ranks third in rates for Sewer (residential) service

The full rate survey can be found at [www.mlgw.com/ratesurvey](http://www.mlgw.com/ratesurvey).

## Some Customers Could Face Cutoffs Due to New Law

Some MLGW customers could face having their services disconnected if they have not yet complied with the federal Fair and Accurate Credit Transaction Act (FACTA), which requires that new customers provide proof of their identity within a 30-day period or risk having their services disconnected. The FACTA requirements went into effect January 1, 2011. FACTA mandates that all utility providers must properly identify all customers in order to safeguard them from one of the country's fastest growing crimes – identity theft.

The new law ONLY impacts those MLGW customers who began their services during or after October 2010, and who failed to complete and return the proper documentation required for a Residential Service Agreement (RSA) or a

General Power Service Agreement (GPSA) as stated in the service agreement between the customer and MLGW.

"There are more than nine million identities stolen in the United States every year, mostly for purposes of fraud," said Jerry Collins Jr., MLGW President and CEO. "MLGW does not want a single customer to be defrauded as a result of identity theft and has procedures in place designed to stop anyone who might be seeking to steal your identity."

Please note that if you are already an established, properly documented customer of MLGW, you need not take any further action at this time. However, if you alter your services in the future, you may be asked to update your identification as a protective measure for you.

## Hispanic Population Grows, MLGW Responds

For the past 20 years, Hispanic residents have been moving into Memphis' metropolitan area attracted by abundant work, especially in construction, and a relative low cost of living, compared to states such as Florida and California. The latest figures from the official 2010 Census show that in the metro area currently reside more than 52,000 Hispanics. This translates into almost double the 27,250 counted by the Census of 2000.

Data collected during the 2005-2009 period shows that Hispanic residents in the metro area have a median household income of more than \$36,000, compared to approximately \$60,000

for Anglos and almost \$31,000 for African-Americans. The survey also estimates that half of the Hispanic residents in the metro area, about 27,000, were born overseas.

In the last two decades, MLGW has been proactive in caring for the Hispanic population by having diverse resources to serve Latinos. The utility has published numerous booklets, brochures and flyers in Spanish; has produced TV and radio public service announcements; and has developed a Spanish version of its Web page with all pertinent information for Spanish-speaking customers.

MLGW continuously participates in



Latino community events with its own bilingual staff promoting utility's services, programs and general/educational information. To stay current, the utility has also been working on developing a social media presence in Spanish through Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. These new resources will be active later in 2011.