



Heating Community Helps Love INC

Pennsylvania transitional home with heating equipment dating back to the 1970s gets a much-needed boost.

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Love INC – with a mission to mobilize churches and transform lives and communities – has set its sights on improving the lives of families in poverty by offering Homes for Hope, transitional housing for those in need, entirely through volunteer effort.

The organization was founded in 1977 and has since established its presence in 134 communities throughout 29 states, and has even expanded internationally with housing projects for those in need in Kenya. Take a look around; there may be a location near you (and if not, you could change

that).

Recently some good folks in the HVAC and hydronic industry learned about a Love INC Homes of Hope project in Lititz, Pennsylvania from a local affiliate based in nearby Lancaster.

The suburban 1970s home still had its original HVAC equipment, so it was long overdue for a mechanical makeover. The volunteers, however, also quickly saw an opportunity to help improve comfort levels and energy efficiency for the soon-to-move-in family of four.

And now, as winter bears down on the area, they're delighted that the work is complete.

Mechanical makeover

Several months ago, local volunteer Rick Thompson, a Warwick Township Homes of Hope committee member, representing St. James Catholic Church, asked friend and Laars Heating Systems' Eastern Atlantic Regional Manager Douglas DeAngelis for some advice to help with a nearby Love INC (<https://loveinclancaster.org/>) home undergoing improvements at a new Homes for Hope property.

The home's HVAC system – an old, inefficient and leaking air conditioning system and the original gas-fired furnace – were testing their resolve.

DeAngelis visited the home to find that there were multiple problems with the overall system, not the least of which was the system's inefficiency, even if properly repaired.

Knowing that comfort and energy efficiency could be achieved with a retrofit, DeAngelis made some notes. He also took into account the possibility of eliminating the home's existing, gas-fired water heater.



Afterward, DeAngelis contacted Charles “Chuck” Evans, a LAARS distributor and friend, for assistance in understanding the airside of the HVAC system. Evans is with Goodman Manufacturing, and is the Philadelphia region parts manager for Goodman Distribution, Inc., with 12 locations in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware.

An intriguing recipe

“When I made my first visit to the house,” DeAngelis says. “I was glad to see that it already had clean and well-installed sheet metal ductwork for year-round HVAC. So, we had a good foundation from which to work.”

A few weeks after that first visit, DeAngelis called Thompson with a recommendation to eliminate all of the old equipment and to replace it with a new, high efficiency, two-ton Goodman condensing unit and air handler paired with an A-coil for cooling.

The key components for space and domestic water heating: A natural gas-fired 140 MBH Laars Mascot FT floor-standing combination boiler/water heater with an integrated, stainless steel indirect water heater, and a hydro-air coil to be mounted just above the air handler’s A-coil.

Thompson was intrigued.

“Douglas gave me a basic explanation about how the equipment would work together,” he adds, “and that it would provide reliable cooling and heating, and also eliminate the need for a separate water heater – because that was sure to be the next need.”

While Evans spoke with Goodman managers about the good cause for donating equipment, DeAngelis asked managers at Laars to donate the floor-standing Mascot boiler.

Both were successful, so when DeAngelis next spoke with Thompson, he shared the good news. But Thompson had good news of his own.

Fortunately, a steering committee member connected with managers at Leola, Pennsylvania-based Triangle Refrigeration Co. – a nearby commercial and industrial mechanical contracting firm that had previously sponsored the ministry – and they, too, were eager to help.

What’s more, in the course of their work, Triangle purchased a Bindus Aquecoil hydronic heating unit, programmable thermostat, low-ambient lockout sensor, and a variety of supplies and materials – all to be donated to the Homes of Hope project in Lititz.

Enter Triangle Refrigeration

It wasn’t long before all of the materials, plus the skills and expertise, were available to complete the mechanical makeover.

Or almost available.

“After a few delays,” explains Eric Weaver, business development manager for Triangle, “when the work was to be done, all of our technicians were busy. But, we’d also decided that our involvement was to be a corporate gift, so it was only fitting that some of the managers would do the work.”

Eric's brother Dwain Weaver, director of refrigeration operations; Janson Zima, HVAC project manager; and Chad Heisey, refrigeration group field service supervisor, also joined forces with Eric to do the work at the Homes for Hope project.



“We were – well, at least I can speak for myself – perhaps a bit rough, having set aside field work some time ago,” Eric adds. “So it was a good ‘back to our installer roots’ experience.”

Eric joined Triangle back in 1994, when he started as an HVAC installation apprentice.

“This was a fairly routine project as far as the work goes, with the use of hydronic heat applied a bit creatively to provide heat in a home that had been served by a strictly forced-air system, previously,” Dwain adds. “It was a good departure from our routine work, and we were all very glad to help with the Homes for Hope project.”

Importance of relationships

“In our ministry, relationships are key – relationships between church volunteers and neighbors in need; relationships among churches, relationships with people across many church denominations, and relationships throughout the community,” explains Shawn Moyer, Love INC Homes of Hope coordinator based in Lancaster.

“Wherever our ministry flourishes in a community, healthy relationships grow, love thrives, and struggling neighbors receive support, friendship, and the kind of practical help they need,” he adds. “That’s why we’ve seen the development of such great relationships in communities through our Homes of Hope program – a transitional housing outreach ministry that seeks to end homelessness one family at a time.”

As a non-profit organization, Love INC needs healthy local relationships to help others throughout the many U.S. communities in which it operates.

“Goodness happens, and comes together for the benefit of those in need when stars align as they did for the house in Lititz, now a home for a family of four – exactly when they most needed it,” Moyer says.

According to Moyer, there are currently eight active Homes of Hope communities operating 11 homes in Lancaster County. Partner churches provide financial and volunteer support for the homes.

“Also, we work in partnership with local schools, community resources, and agency partners to provide a holistic response that strives to break the cycle of homelessness,” he says.

Moyer adds that each Homes of Hope recipient family is selected exclusively based upon their need. Key factors considered in the application process are income, family size, present living conditions and community input.

“Ideally, Moyer explains, the transitional homes provide families shelter for four to six months. This time helps families overcome the obstacles that led to homelessness.

“Our goal is to break the cycle of overwhelming costs and the inability to take on all needs at once, such as housing, transportation, health insurance and health care, schooling for the children, community and church involvement, etc. – enabling them to seek a long-term housing solution, and to stabilize their lives to allow all of the other facets of their lives to come back together,” Moyer says.