

September 2019 | Washington • Idaho

Caring for caregivers

Energy Fairs provide more than just LED bulbs and energy assistance.

Chris Gingrich retired from his job as a road construction company estimator in 2017, and as a retiree, he and his wife, Paula live on a fixed income.

"I heard about Avista's energy fair at the Spokane fairgrounds and I said, 'You know, with what we're living on, we just might qualify for this.'"

At the fair, Chris picked up a booklet about caregiver support, thinking of his 93-year-old mother living in her own home next door. "I never expected to find that at an energy conservation day. It turned out to be quite helpful," Chris says.

Shortly after attending, Chris's mother fell, breaking her wrist. Unable to independently care for herself, she moved in with Chris and Paula.

Chris is accustomed to the juggling act of preparing road bids—material costs, size and complexity of projects, weather conditions, and competitors. Now, the Gingrich's were juggling all his mother's basic needs in addition to her pain management and physical and occupational therapy appointments.

There's an emotional toll to caregiving. "How to be a caregiver—that's a whole other ballgame," Chris says.

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A new leash on life

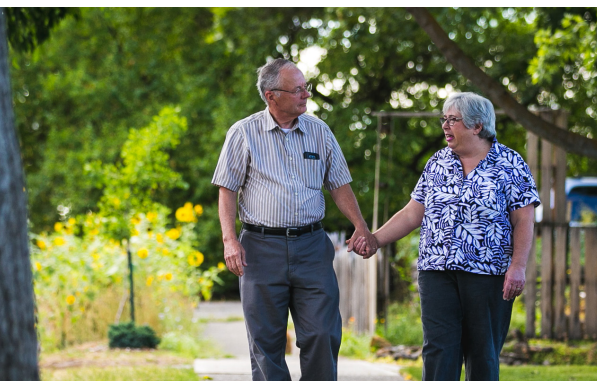
Using the power of pets to inspire all participants with a new purpose.

They say all dogs go to heaven. If that's the case, Cathy King and her tireless crew are guardian angels at Canines With A Cause (CWAC), a non-profit program that saves healthy, adoptable dogs from high-kill shelters. The dogs serve as companions and assistants to veterans.

The nearly 10-year-old program, founded in Salt Lake City, Utah, and introduced into Idaho in 2019, harnesses the potential of shelter dogs to save three lives in one go. A rescued dog, who is extensively evaluated by professional trainers, is sent to a participating prison where vetted inmates receive the opportunity to give back to their communities by training the dogs as service animals. The newly-minted service dog is paired with a veteran who has completed an eight-week Beginning Handler Course.

Then begins an up to 24 months-long comprehensive training, dependent on the veteran's needs. CWAC serves approximately 70 veterans at any given time, with more than 100 others on the waiting list. By providing military veterans with a service dog at no cost, CWAC empowers all participants—the dogs, the inmates, and the veterans—with a new purpose, healing emotional and psychological wounds, through unconditional love, support and companionship.

"The act of training their own dog becomes part of the therapy," explains Cathy. "Vets have to engage with people when they take their dog out for walks, or go to the store to buy food. For some vets these simple acts are huge milestones in their recovery."





<<Continued from Front Caring for caregivers

Chris remembered the booklet he'd picked up at the energy fair. In it was information about a 6-week class for caregivers and a caregiver support group. The support group, sponsored by Frontier Behavioral Health, meets twice a month.

"Caregivers deal with depression and being overworked," says Chris. "It's good to have people who can relate to that, have ideas about ways to adjust, and know about resources."

Chris is grateful he learned about the support group at the energy fair. "I thought we were just going there for electricity and gas assistance and energy savings. We found a lot more."

To learn about energy savings and valuable community services, plan on attending one of our fairs.

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Avista Outreach by email at: avistaoutreach@avistacorp.com or call us at: (509) 495-8500.

ENERGY ASSISTANCE DAYS WITH ENERGY FAIR

Tues. & Wed., October 1 – 2

8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Spokane County Fair & Expo
Center, Bay 3, 404 N Havana St
Spokane Valley WA

Wednesday, October 16

10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.
Spokane Community College,
Colville Center Kalispel Hall
985 S. Elm St, Colville WA

ENERGY FAIR

Wednesday, October 23

3:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Silver Lake Mall
200 W Hanley Ave,
Coeur d'Alene ID



Plug into safety



Without electrical outlets, we'd have to grind our coffee beans with a hammer and entertain ourselves with puppet shows.

But no matter how often we use outlets, it's important to use them safely. Here are some do's and don'ts when using electrical outlets around the house:

- Do protect young children with plastic safety caps in unused outlets.
- Do be sure to insert plugs completely; don't even leave a little bit of prong exposed.
- Do replace deteriorated outlets with the help of a qualified electrician.
- Do upgrade your home to present safety standards if possible.
- Don't unplug electronics or appliances by pulling on the cord at an angle.
- Don't plug too much into one outlet. Outlets contribute to many fires every year.

Your safety matters to us. Please visit myavista.com/safety to find more safety information.

When's the last time you replaced your furnace filter?



Regularly changing your furnace filter can greatly improve the efficiency and extend the life of your furnace. But it's a task most of us tend to forget.

We have a great solution to help you remember to change your furnace filter, even if you've got this down like clockwork and you just want the convenience of doorstep delivery.

Join our furnace filter program and we'll send you email reminders every three

months. If desired, you can also choose to receive money-saving manufacturer's coupons, or even have new filters conveniently delivered to your door.

There are many great reasons to replace the air filter in your furnace, including creating better operation and extending the life of your furnace, as well as the benefits of reduced energy use and cleaner indoor air quality.

Never forget that filter again. Sign up today at myavista.com/changemyfilter.

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