

Keeping Warm on the Hill (Story submitted to weekly neighborhood newsletter)

Beatrice and her husband Peter recently moved into their new home on Greenleaf Street and would like their first winter to be as warm as the community has been in receiving them. Like many houses on the Hill it was built in the late 1800s, and though it has been remodeled over the years, it doesn't hold the heat in like it should. With oil prices always trending upward, they knew they had to find an affordable way to keep warm and lower their heating bills.

After seeing some flyers posted around the Hill and an ad in the Observer they called up Hour Exchange Portland. Rob, an Americorps VISTA with the Hour Weatherization program says "When you add up all the tiny cracks around your baseboards and window frames or under your door it's like having a giant hole in your wall letting all the cold air outside come in and all the warm air escape out. So we seal them up, the materials don't cost much and it only takes a few hours. Anyone can do it if there's someone to show them how, which is what we do." "It's not a matter of being able to do the work, it's a matter of time" says Beatrice. The couple is busy with full time jobs, Beatrice is a pre-kindergarten teacher and Peter is a brewer at Sebago Brewery, plus a laundry list of projects that need to be worked on at their house and thought it would be good to let someone else tackle this one.

With **HEP's Step One Weatherization** you only pay for the cost of materials, the labor you pay for in service to others. As a member of Hour Exchange Portland, Beatrice earned service hours by doing what she loves, working in the garden. She spent hours she earned getting a massage and now home weatherization. At Hour Exchange Portland everyone's time is equal, an hour is an hour. If you give an hour of your time helping someone, providing a service, than you can receive an hour of someone else's time who provides a service you need. The idea is to spend more of your time doing what you enjoy, and have someone else help you take care of all those other things. Neighbors helping neighbors just makes you feel warm inside.

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