

# Personal Stories of the Impact of High Gas Prices

## 1. Nancy Wheeler

Resident  
Romeoville, Illinois

### *High Gas Prices Prevent Much Needed Doctor Visits*

“Wheeler, 54, said she’s seeing two doctors for two medical issues, but she’s reluctant to follow their advice if it involves numerous weekly trips for physical therapy. ‘I simply cannot attend any therapy because of what it will cost me to get there and back several times a week,’ she said. ‘My husband needs the gas before me, because his round trip to work and back is 60 miles a day.’ Nancy fears she will have to cut trips to the doctor, as well, and reduce the amount of medicine she buys if the prices continue to climb.”

(Cindy Wojdyla Cain, “Can we cope with gas costs?”, *The Herald News*, June 1, 2008.  
[http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/heraldnews/business/981158,4\\_3\\_JO01\\_GAS\\_S1.article](http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/heraldnews/business/981158,4_3_JO01_GAS_S1.article))

## 2. Benjamin Brewer, M.D.

Doctor  
Forrest, Illinois

### *Patients Can’t Afford Medical Treatment*

“I saw a patient with a swollen knee from a flare-up of an old injury. I suspected some torn ligaments and suggested an MRI. The \$1,000 deductible was too high a hurdle, with gas running nearly \$4 per gallon. So she’ll ice it down and take ibuprofen and limp along for the time being.”

(Benjamin Brewer, “Even doctors guess at health charges,” *The Wall Street Journal Online*, May 21, 2008.  
[http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121131339853207935.html?mod=googlenews\\_wsj](http://online.wsj.com/article/SB121131339853207935.html?mod=googlenews_wsj))

## 3. Caroline Saunders

Single Mother  
New Jersey

### *Single Mom Cuts to Two Meals a Day to Save Money for Gas*

“I’ve cut my meals to two meals a day, that’s every day. I drink free coffee at the office, but as far as breakfast, I don’t eat,’ Saunders said. Saunders uses the extra money saved ... to pay for the gas needed to drive her 11-year-old daughter wherever she needs to be. ‘I’m hoping that it won’t get much worse because I don’t know what else I can do.’”

(“Pinched at the pump, ‘World News’ viewers share personal stories,” *ABCNews.com*, May 13, 2008. <http://abcnews.go.com/Business/Story?id=4849076&page=2>)

#### **4. Nancy Richardson**

Retired Nurse  
Cowiche, WA

##### ***70 Year Old Nurse Has No Choice but to Keep Working***

“Nancy Richardson ended her nursing career four years ago to care for ailing family members. Now, at the age of 70, she’s looking for work again. She doesn’t have a choice.”

(Erin Snelgrove, “Seniors send out SOS in face of staggering economy,” *Yakima Herald Republic*, June 2, 2008. <http://www.yakima-herald.com/stories/4589>)

#### **5. Sandi Bowen**

Commuter  
Reeders, PA

##### ***Can’t Catch up on Bills***

“I haven’t been able to catch up because gas has taken all that extra cash and there is no extra cash anymore ... I’ll cut my cell phone, I’ll cut my computer connection at home to save money until this gas crisis is over,” she said. ‘I know all my friends live paycheck to paycheck. I live paycheck to paycheck, and every dollar counts. It’s the difference between being able to afford to buy a sandwich in the cafeteria, or am I bringing soup from home. It’s that close in your budget where -- can I afford to pay my phone bill, can I afford to get new tires for my car?’”

(“Pinched at the pump, ‘World News’ viewers share personal stories,” *ABCNews.com*, May 13, 2008. <http://abcnews.go.com/Business/Story?id=4849076&page=2>)

#### **6. Carole Holden**

Retired Teacher  
Springfield, MO

##### ***Retired Teacher Lives off Only Cereal, Cheese, and Peanut Butter***

“She said she has cut her food expenditures as much as she can -- sticking to cereal, cheese and peanut butter -- and after facing a \$300 utilities bill, she turned off her heat last month, in order to pay for medicine, utilities and gas. If prices get any higher, she will consider turning to a food pantry for the first time in her life.”

(Linda Leicht, “Agencies see more in desperate need of help,” *News-Leader [Springfield, MO]*, May 4, 2008. <http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080504/NEWS01/805040371/1007>)

## 7. **Dirk Moyer**

Self-Employed Business Owner  
Silicon Valley, CA

### ***Business Owner Says the Math Doesn't Work***

“Most people would laugh. What do you want?’ Moyer hears them ask. ‘It just feels like we're chasing this American dream that's not really a dream. It's more like a nightmare... We're spending more than we're making, even with two good-paying jobs,’ Moyer says. ‘The math doesn't work.’”

(Mike Cassidy, “How Silicon Valley families are downsizing their lives,” *Mercury News*, June 1, 2008. [http://origin.mercurynews.com/valley/ci\\_9444900](http://origin.mercurynews.com/valley/ci_9444900))

## 8. **Pablo Buenrostro**

Butcher  
Silicon Valley, CA

### ***Butcher May Have to Find a Third Job***

“Sitting on the family’s front porch as her mother, Maria Aguirre, grills beef for dinner, Victoria Aguirre says maybe Buenrostro will have to find a third job... Buenrostro says his gas costs have increased by \$100 a month for his commute to the Mi Pueblo in Hayward. He’s started going longer between haircuts and has stopped sending money to his mother in Mexico as frequently as he once did. The couple now hauls the family’s cans and bottles to recyclers to collect the deposit.”

(Mike Cassidy, “How Silicon Valley families are downsizing their lives,” *Mercury News*, June 1, 2008. [http://origin.mercurynews.com/valley/ci\\_9444900](http://origin.mercurynews.com/valley/ci_9444900))

## 9. **Brandon Hooker**

Owner, Affordable Bobtail Trucking Company  
Dallas, TX

### ***Trucker Can't Make it without Raising Prices by 26 Percent***

“Affordable Bobtail used to run the routes many big trucking companies would reject – the...marginally profitable loads. ‘We’ve had to increase our fuel surcharge 26 percent on top of the run, and I’ve actually lost customers,’ said Mr. Hooker, ‘But I can’t run without increasing my prices.’”

(Scott Farwell & Michael E. Young, "Dallas area residents feel the grip of soaring gas prices," *Dallas Morning News*, May 28, 2008.

[http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/stories/DN-gasstories\\_28met.ART0.State.Edition2.4612925.html](http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/stories/DN-gasstories_28met.ART0.State.Edition2.4612925.html))

### **10. Sandra and Bob Herreld**

Co-owners of an Independent Trucking Company  
Chicago Area

#### ***Paying \$1,600 a Week at the Pump***

"My husband drives and I keep the books plus work a full-time job,' she said. The Harrelds spend much of their time on the road [and it] costs \$1,600 dollars a week to fill their truck. 'Personally, it's very stressful on a daily basis ... only the important bills are being paid right now, Sandra said. 'Shutting down that would be a last resort, and we'd be forced into bankruptcy.'"

("Pinched at the pump, 'World News' viewers share personal stories," *ABCNews.com*, May 13, 2008.

<http://abcnews.go.com/Business/Story?id=4849076&page=2>)

### **11. Allen Taylor**

Appliance Repairman  
Delhi, NY

#### ***Small Business Owner Faces Going Out of Business***

"With gas costs pinching his customers so much, Mr. Taylor says he is reluctant to raise his prices. 'I'm worried with the way the gas is going now, it's going to put small-business owners like me out of business,' he said. 'There's only so much we can charge, only so much people will pay.'"

(M.P. Dunleavy, "Places to go, but dreading the fill-up," *New York Times*, May 17, 2008.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/05/17/business/yourmoney/17cost.html?scp=1&sq=places+to+go%2C+but+dreading&st=nyt>)

### **12. Mike Leonard and Roger Connely**

Independent Truck Drivers  
Illinois

#### ***Independent Truck Driver: Not Really Making a Living Anymore***

"I carry 300 gallons of fuel,' Mike Leonard said. 'Every time I fuel up if I was to fuel up every time it'd cost me about \$400.' Leonard added, 'We're not really making a living

anymore, just getting by.’ ‘If our trucks were to break down or blow a transmission or a motor right now we’d be out of business,’ Connely said. ‘We can’t afford to fix them.’”

(Monica Hooper, “Fuel costs burn everyone,” *Log Cabin Democrat [Conway, AR]*, May 28, 2008. [http://www.thecabin.net/stories/052808/loc\\_0528080006.shtml](http://www.thecabin.net/stories/052808/loc_0528080006.shtml))

### **13. Anne Marie Dimeglio**

Owner of Joey’s Pizza on the Beach  
Panama City, FL

#### ***Pizzeria Owner Faces Mounting Costs***

“The next time you want a pizza delivered it could cost you a lot of dough. ‘We started a delivery charge, which we never had before.’ Dimeglio says not only has delivery charges gone up, but so have the prices of food. ‘It affects us; all of our deliveries coming in. For all of my products, produce, and everything that comes in because everyone is surcharging,’ Dimeglio said.”

(Josh Gauntt, “Local businesses feeling effects of high gas prices,” *WJHG.com*, May 29, 2008. <http://www.wjhg.com/home/headlines/19369964.html>)

### **14. Officer James Willingham**

Police Officer  
Tulsa, OK

#### ***Tulsa Police Cut Back on Patrolling***

“There’s no doubt, police put more miles on their cars than the average driver. And now the high cost of gas is making them reconsider how they patrol. So more part-time officers are patrolling by bicycle to help save on gas. It’s affordable, but Officer Willingham says it’s still tough to catch the bad guys.”

(Abbie Alford, “Fuel costs affect Tulsa patrols,” *Fox23.com*, May 27, 2008. [http://www.fox23.com/news/local/story.aspx?content\\_id=58f6da22-f613-4648-97bc-6f35ce30b1bd](http://www.fox23.com/news/local/story.aspx?content_id=58f6da22-f613-4648-97bc-6f35ce30b1bd))

### **15. Carlton Cross**

Pastor, Oakley Chapel  
Rogers, Arkansas

#### ***Church Faces Drop off in Giving***

“Difficult economic realities have an impact on the church. ‘If our church members are short on money because of the prices they’re paying for gasoline, then the church is automatically going to be short. If they’re not giving the money to the offering plate, then we don’t get the money to run the church,’ said Pastor Carlton Cross. They are seeing a

drop-off in giving, because all the giving is going in the gas tank, but the services will go on.”

(“High gas prices affect area churches.,” *The Oak Ridger [Oak Ridge, TN]*, May 29, 2008.  
<http://www.oakridger.com/news/x2143030913/Gas-prices-affecting-summer-plans>)

## **16. Marva Watkins**

Driver, Kid One  
Montgomery, Alabama

### ***Healthy Kids Initiative Threatened by High Gas Costs***

“As drivers across the nation face rising prices at the pump, Kid One is also really feeling the squeeze. Since 1997, the group’s simple mission has been to remove transportation as a barrier to quality health care throughout the state. Right now, Kid One’s biggest challenge is paying for gasoline.”

(Robyn Bradley Litchfield, “Gas costs squeeze kids’ service,” *Montgomery [AL] Advertiser*, May 29, 2008.  
<http://www.montgomeryadvertiser.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20080529/LIFESTYLE/805290309>)

## **17. Bill Mahony**

Charity director, Meals on Wheels  
San Antonio, TX

### ***Charities Decrease Meals Served to Combat Gas Prices***

“Meals On Wheels officials said they’re very nervous about how much fuel prices are costing the charity, which is estimated to be about \$2,000 per month. ‘That translates into about 500 meals a month that we could be serving to clients, or about 22 clients a day,’ charity director Bill Mahony said. ‘We have 300 clients ready to go to add to our program, and we don’t have the distribution capabilities to do that right now.’”

(“Meals on Wheels facing gas price crunch,” *KSAT.com*, May 23, 2008.  
<http://www.ksat.com/news/16378941/detail.html>)

## **18. Helen Marr Johannesen**

Volunteer, Meals On Wheels  
Amarillo, TX

### ***Meals on Wheels Slowing Down***

“High gas prices are preventing drivers from volunteering their time and vehicles to help out one local charity that relies on their services. Volunteer HelenMarr Johannesen is not

letting the price of fuel slow her down. The high price of gas is forcing some volunteer's to make some changes in their routes.”

(“Meals on wheels hurt by high gas prices,” *NewsChannel10.com*, May 29, 2008. [http://www.newschannel10.com/Global/story.asp?S=8398001&nav=menu429\\_2](http://www.newschannel10.com/Global/story.asp?S=8398001&nav=menu429_2))

### **19. Martin Nadelman**

Alamance Community College President  
Graham, NC

#### ***College Students: Lunch or Gas?***

“‘I’d hate to see students making a choice between eating lunch and filling up their car with gas,’ he said. ‘But I think that’s the situation some of them are going to be in.’”

(Mike Wilder, “Food or gas: Community college president fears students face bad choices,” *The Times News [Burlington, NC]*, May 30, 2008. [http://www.thetimesnews.com/news/college\\_14040\\_article.html/president\\_community.html](http://www.thetimesnews.com/news/college_14040_article.html/president_community.html))

### **20. Scott Elliott**

Meridian Community College President  
Meridian, MS

#### ***Community College Cutting Classes***

“[My] students, who on average drive 30 miles round-trip to campus, could save \$200 or more a semester based on recent pump prices. When you’re...working a minimum-wage job and [taking] care of a child or two, that could be a lot of money.”

(Mary Beth Marklein, “Community colleges cut classes to curb gas costs,” *USA Today*, May 28, 2008. [http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2008-05-28-college-gas\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/education/2008-05-28-college-gas_N.htm))

### **21. Lisa Marek**

Shelter Manager  
Gainesville, GA

#### ***“It’s Awful Here,” Says Animal Shelter Manager***

“‘It’s awful here,’ she said. ‘With the economy being so bad, hardly anyone is adopting. We’re getting more people wanting to bring in animals. Many of them are losing their homes and going into rental situations where they’re not allowed to have pets...In some cases, people are bringing in pets because they just can’t afford to take care of them anymore.’”

(Debbie Gilbert, “Packed shelters reflect slow economy,” *Gainesville [GA] Times*, May 14, 2008. [http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/news/archive/5686/.](http://www.gainesvilletimes.com/news/archive/5686/))

## **22. Pat Maynard**

Founder, Stevens Street Baptist Church Care Centers  
Cookeville, TN

### ***More People Needing Charity***

“We had 35 people in at the [Stevens Street Baptist Church’s Care] Center yesterday asking for help,’ she said on Thursday. ‘That’s more than usual, and these days we’re seeing more middle class people. They can’t afford gas, and some don’t have insurance to help pay medical bills.’”

(Mary Jo Denton, “More people needing charity,” *Herald-Citizen [Cookeville, TN]*, May 31, 2008. <http://www.herald-citizen.com/index.cfm?event=news.view&id=4136E03B-19B9-E2E2-679DF5C47C6AB69C>)

## **23. Brooke Ash**

Community Social Worker  
Springfield, MO

### ***Single Mothers Are Crying Because of Gas Costs***

“I am seeing ... more crisis calls,’ said Brooke Ash, a community social worker for Community Partnership of the Ozarks. ‘By that I mean particularly single mothers just crying, very upset, because the cost of gas is higher, food is higher. When you’re paying more out of pocket for that, you have less to pay for utilities or rent ...I’m just getting a lot of calls from people who sound so stressed and emotionally drained.’”

(“Feeling the financial stress,” *News-Leader [Springfield, MO]*, May 25, 2008. <http://www.news-leader.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008805250384>)

## **24. Donna Byers**

Commuter  
Whitney, TX

### ***Long Commute is “Kicking My Butt”***

“Donna Byers burns 10 gallons of gasoline a day commuting from her home near Lake Whitney to her job in north Carrollton. ‘That’s 110 miles each way, and \$37 to \$40 a day for gas,’ Ms. Byers said, ‘I’ll tell you, it’s really kicking my butt.’”

(Scott Farwell & Michael E. Young, “Dallas area residents feel the grip of soaring gas prices,” *Dallas Morning News*, May 28, 2008. [http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/stories/DN-gasstories\\_28met.ART0.State.Edition2.4612925.html](http://www.dallasnews.com/sharedcontent/dws/news/localnews/stories/DN-gasstories_28met.ART0.State.Edition2.4612925.html))

## **25. Ernest Lawson**

Lexington, AL

### ***Because of High Prices, “Most People Can’t Afford to Go Anywhere”***

“The prices are pinching everyone. If you think about it, people have a house payment, car payment, maybe a boat payment, and all that insurance - most people can’t afford to go anywhere,” he said.”

(Sheena Barnett, “Tourists still driving despite high gas prices,” *Northeast Mississippi Daily Journal.com*, June 2, 2008.

<http://www.djournal.com/pages/story.asp?ID=274302&pub=1&div=News>)

## **26. Bill Powers**

Program Manager with the Dept. of Homeland Security  
Burke, VA

### ***Finding Vanpools Is Striking Gold***

“Bill Powers started looking for transportation alternatives when he began spending \$200 a week to gas up his Jeep Commander back in March, up from about \$125 in November. He always enjoyed the flexibility of having his own ride, enough even to forgo the transit subsidy his employer offered. He began calling vanpools and soon realized that he wasn’t alone: He called six before finding an opening. ‘I finally struck gold about two or three weeks ago,’ said Powers, who now hops into a van with 14 others.”

(Lena H. Sun & Jonathan Mummolo, “Stung at the pumps, more hop on a bus: D.C.’s outlying transit systems rush to add capacity; Metro worried,” *The Washington Post*, May 27, 2008: p. A01.

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/05/26/AR2008052602371.html>)

## **27. Janice Cook**

Volunteer, HELP Charity  
Kentucky

### ***“Volunteers Can’t Afford to Get Here”***

“The biggest bill we have a month is the gas bill,” said volunteer Janice Cook. The gas is hurting more than the budget. Sanders says they’re losing volunteers. ‘Volunteers can’t afford to get here. They just don’t have the gas,’ Sanders said.”

(Angela Sparkman, “Gas prices affecting charity organizations,” *WYMTnews.com*, May 9, 2008.

<http://www.wkvt.com/wymtnews/headlines/18814364.html>)

## **28. Melissa Douglas**

Resident  
Clinton, Tennessee

### ***Gas Prices Cause Cutback in Vacation Plans***

“Rising gas prices are putting a cramp in her family’s summer vacation plans -- a sentiment echoed by Webb and other local citizens. ‘We usually take at least two vacations a year, to Disney World or the beach,’ Douglas said. ‘There’s probably not going to be any long vacations this year,’ she said.”

(Leean Tupper, “Gas prices affecting summer plans,” *The Oak Ridger [Oak Ridge, TN]*, May 30, 2008.

<http://www.oakridger.com/news/x2143030913/Gas-prices-affecting-summer-plans>)

## **29. Stephanie Kaufmann**

Cathedral City, CA

### ***Gas Prices Changing Every Aspect of Life***

“She says gas prices are affecting every aspect of her life. ‘It’s definitely hurting me. Things definitely get put on a budget.’”

(Eddie Quezada, “Gas prices have people changing their lifestyles,” *News Channel 3*, May 29, 2008.

[http://www.kesq.com/Global/story.asp?S=8392037&nav=menu191\\_2](http://www.kesq.com/Global/story.asp?S=8392037&nav=menu191_2))