

Around The Circle

FEBRUARY 2010

CIRCLE OF CONCERN
OUR COMMUNITY'S CHARITY

New Members Elected to Circle's Board of Directors

During Circle's Annual Meeting the general membership elected two new members and re-elected three to Circle's Board of Directors.

Ted Heitmeyer of Fenton and Brad Burton of Oakville were elected to the board. Ted is a volunteer driver and pantry worker at Circle. Brad is retired from Coca-Cola. Both will serve three-year terms.

Jerry Caesar, Sally Edmiston and Barb Staniszewski were re-elected. Jerry and

Sally will serve three-year terms and Barb will serve for two more years.

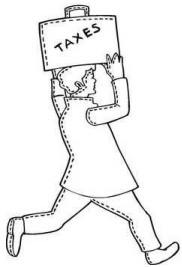
After the election, the board selected its officers for 2010: Jerry Caesar returns as President, Doug Schaeffler as Vice President, Nancy Parker continues as Secretary and Sally Edmiston remains Treasurer.

At the meeting the general membership approved Circle's 2010 budget. Circle expects to receive and spend \$1,530,365 including \$900,000 in donated food and other in-kind items; \$135,000 for food purchases and \$150,000 in rent & utility assistance and other aid to families.

2009 Missouri Food Pantry Tax Credit

Monetary donations and in-kind gifts (for which receipts have been kept) are eligible for the credit.

Donors to Circle Of Concern and other Missouri-based pantries may be able to get a state tax credit for 50% of the value of their gift.



The Food Pantry Tax Credit does come with some restrictions: To claim the credit you must have a form completed and signed by the food pantry. The credit is limited to \$2,500 per tax payer, and, there is a cap of \$2 million for the entire state. (If more credits are claimed than the cap allows each taxpayer may get a prorated amount of credit.)

Circle Of Concern has the forms for the Food Pantry Tax Credit. If you would like Circle to send you a form please contact us at 636.861.2623 or circleofconcern@att.net

JANUARY SERVICES

Food Pantry

1,699 People Fed

2,766 Bags of Food Shared

\$65,789.31 worth of donated
food shared with families

Financial Services

\$15,340.57 aid to

100 families

Volunteer Support

232 volunteers gave 1,893.75
hours of their time.



*All good things must come to
an end...*

Circle ended 2009 owing just \$125,000—on a project cost of \$1.31 million—on the mortgage for the new center. The monthly payment on that debt is \$2,500.

As promised, Circle Of Concern in phasing out the capital campaign that built the center now that the greatest part of the project is complete. The Today & Tomorrow bank account will be soon closed.

Gifts to maintain the building and pay off the mortgage will still be accepted and used as the donors wish. And, after three

seasons in the new building a number of small projects (an awning over the rear delivery door, curbing in the front and such) have presented themselves. These projects will be a part of an on-going effort to make the center more efficient.

Thanks to every one who helped Circle Of Concern get into its new home.

From the President

At the beginning of each year, Circle's Board conducts a long-term planning meeting to establish specific priorities for Circle. At this meeting we also agree upon objectives for the next five years and determine what immediate steps are necessary to accomplish those longer term goals.

An important element in the process is understanding the capabilities of our organization. We must pragmatically determine what we are able to accomplish. It requires the Board to be very selective in choosing its goals.

Circle's primary objective is to continue to feed an expanding number of needy people. This will require

more food from various sources, additional volunteers, better computer systems and longer hours of operation...just a few things. We will also need to raise more money to support this increased demand. At the same time, the Board wants our charity to cleverly and efficiently add new services to assist our client base.

The annual long-term planning meeting is critical in insuring the orderly, efficient growth of Circle. We must maximize our ability to serve the local poor. I thank the Board of Directors for their continued efforts in accomplishing this objective.

~ Jerry Caesar

The People We Help

Irene stays busy in her golden years. She enjoys being the loving grandmother of a five-year-old. She also cares for her son, now nearing 40, who suffers from mental health issues and Tourettes Syndrome. And, she spends a considerable amount of time taking care of her health problems.

Over the years her lungs have grown weaker and weaker. She now requires oxygen several times a day. Her heart has given her trouble too. She has also had a series of household accidents—falling down her basement stairs, dropping a table edge on her foot, and such.

Money has always been in short supply. For years Irene has battled to get disability payments for her son. Three times lawyers and doctors made his case, three times he has been turned down. Her very modest Social Security check never gives her enough to stay current on her bills.

Things really got tight a couple years

ago. She and her son had to move to get away from neighbors very acquainted with law enforcement. Even with Section 8 help, rent and utilities take most of her income. And, for most of a year after the move Irene had to scrounge for furniture and appliances to fill the new place.

Circle shares food with Irene every month. We have helped out over the Holidays and we have paid against her utility accounts.

.....
"I'm gonna look all around the house," **Felicia** said. "I know I can find that 55 cents so that Evan can get his prescription."

Both Felicia and her husband Evan have pages of medical issues. At least five times over the past decade she has been told she has just months to live. In recent months Evan's problems have been more pressing. He has been hospitalized numerous times and all the people at the urgent care center know his name.

After one recent trip Evan needed ten new prescriptions. Despite having MO HealthNet

(Medicaid), Evan needed \$13.95 for the required co-payments to get them. Circle paid the \$13.95.

Unfortunately a week later Evan was back in urgent care with flu-like symptoms and probably complications from his stew of medications. The doctors stabilized him, sending him home with another prescription and that 55 cent co-pay.

Felicia and Evan have a son still in school. Also in the home is a daughter (herself low-functioning) and a grandchild. The

five-person household struggles to get by on about \$1,400 a month, most from Evan's disability payment. After rent & utility bills they have nothing left for other expenses.

It is improbable that this family could survive without regular help from Circle.

Circle shares food with Felicia's family helps with utility bills & gas vouchers for medical trips, plus the occasional prescription.





Spring Cleaning

Over the next few weeks Circle will be reviewing entries on our mailing list. If your address label has any mistakes, please let us know so that we can correct the information. (Just mail in the label with the changes marked.)

Also, if you no longer want to get Around the Circle, let us know and we'll remove you from the list.

By the way, Circle Of Concern does not share or sell its mailing list.

Received in the Mail



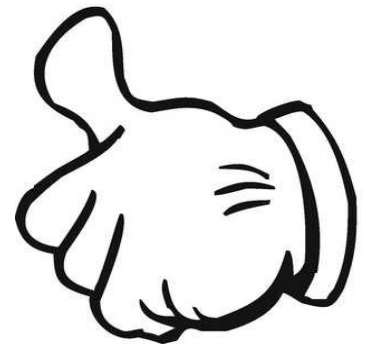
“Thank you so much for making this Christmas a very special one...Toy Day was wonderful for my youngest. All the hard work and generosity is overwhelming.”

“I wanted to thank both of you and Circle Of Concern for your compassionate assistance. Your organization has a dear way of giving hope during fearful times. I will not forget how wonderful it was meeting you...”

“As my first year of college comes to an end. I would like to thank you for the assistance your scholarship has provided. Thank you for helping me pursue my education so I can make a difference in the lives of others”

Good News Department

- Members of the **West County Democrats** collect food for Circle at all their regular meetings.
- The friendly people at **Schnuck's** corporate office and at their Twin Oaks store made special gifts to Circle for the Holidays.
- **James Meihaus** of Ballwin volunteers in the pantry each week. He also brings in items to fill holes in our shelves.
- **Girl Scout Troop 1164** from Ballwin Elementary collected children's books.
- **S.O.C.K.S.-Serving Our Community Kids**— donate 22 cartons of packs of new underwear to Circle's Holiday Program.
- The **SACC** program at Kirkwood YMCA collected toiletries and funds for Circle this January.
- **Daisy Troop 2903** did a fundraiser for Circle at Hanna Woods Elementary School, Rib City and other sites in the area. The young ladies collected food and toiletry items for local families.



Noted with Sorrow

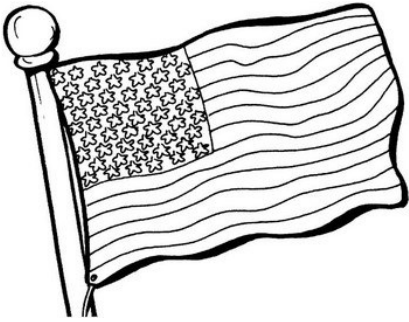
Sam Palazzolo, a long-time volunteer at Circle Of Concern, passed away on January 20th.

Along with his wife Renee he volunteered in the pantry every Friday and when Circle acquired the warehouse they both worked extra days ensuring the building was organized and full of food. In addition to this, Sam was the Vice President of the Board. He was also a part of the Scholarship Committee, interviewing students for Circle's scholarship program—a role that tied in his educational background as a retired teacher at Parkway West Middle School.

Sam was a proud father of four and grandfather to nine. He also leaves behind many friends. He will be missed by all of us at Circle.

A special scholarship will be awarded in Sam's honor this spring.

The Work Continues



The Sunday after the earthquake devastated Haiti, the General coordinating the relief efforts appeared on one of the news shows. He explained the challenges of getting millions of pounds of

supplies to a country with a barely functioning one-runway airport and damaged seaports. Thousands of American soldiers and marines, to be under his command, were flowing into Haiti. Victims of the disaster needed medical care, food and shelter.

Toward the end of the satellite interview the newsman noted that the General had been slated to stay, with his staff, in the Montana Hotel the day of the earthquake. The ambassador asked the general to stay at the embassy so they could have more time to talk.

The newsman stated that two of the General's top aides had to be evacuated to the U.S. due to serious injuries. Another aid had yet to be found. The General nodded. He said nothing.

Part of the military tradition is to carry on with the mission, despite adversity.

Last month we lost a good friend. I don't think Sam Palazzolo ever said no when Circle asked for his help. Even weakened by illness he did all that he could for Circle.

Yet, despite our grief, Circle's work continues. The stream of hungry and needy people still flows in our door.

This month our board and staff will have our annual long-term planning session. We must take steps now to have the resources to help families this year, next year and through 2015.

For example, in the past decade pantry demand tripled. Planning and saving made it possible for Circle Of

Concern to build the new center to respond to that need and careful expansion of our volunteer ranks gave us the workers we needed to assist all those hungry people.

Looking ahead, we see months where the pantry will feed 3,000 people. That will require more pantry sessions, more volunteers and more food. We have to figure out how to do that.

Circle's mission does not change. The scope of the system which fulfills that mission must adjust, must grow. The families in this community need for Circle to be here for every one who needs help.

Sam understood that. Circle was a big part of his life for many years. We know he wants us to continue our work.

*~Glenn Koenen
Executive Director*

Whoops! Honorariums

Last month's listing of Honorariums missed a pair of good friends of Circle honored last year:

**Lynn & Dee Stemme
Gene & Carol Stukey**

Coming soon to your mailbox: Circle Of Concern's 2009 Annual Report.

**The document will also be available later this month on Circle's website,
www.circleofconcern.org**



Many Ways to Give

Have some stocks or bonds just sitting around the house?

Circle Of Concern maintains special accounts to accept gifts of appreciated stock or securities. (Circle sells these items soon after they are received, as market conditions dictate.)

Many friends have also included Circle Of Concern in their wills. Bequests should be made to Circle Of Concern, a Missouri corporation.

For more information on how to make special gifts to Circle please contact Sally Edmiston at 636.861.2623

Fundraiser!

Cut out the flyer to the right and visit California Pizza Kitchen in Chesterfield Mall on Sunday February 28th for a fundraiser benefiting Circle! You can dine-in, carry-out or even have an event catered and 20% of the purchase will go to Circle Of Concern

During the last week of each month Circle will have a similar fundraiser, so plan to dine & donate each month!

JOIN US *for an* EVENT WHERE
**GIVING WON'T JUST FEEL GOOD,
IT'LL TASTE GOOD.**

Circle Of Concern

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 28, 2010

We're having a fundraiser at California Pizza Kitchen. Just bring in this flyer on the date listed below, present it to your server when ordering, and 20% of your check will be donated to our organization.



**California Pizza Kitchen
Chesterfield Mall
636-536-6910**

Eligible groups include non-profit schools and 501c3 charitable organizations. Donation amount excludes proceeds from tax, gratuity, gift card and retail purchases. Valid for dine-in, take-out and curbside service. Not valid on delivery. Manager, please attach this flyer to the guest check. Event proceeds void if flyers are distributed in or near the restaurant.

Volunteering At Circle

As Circle expands services & hours we are going to need a number of new volunteers. If you are interested in volunteering there is a spot just for you!

Join Circle's dedicated volunteer crew! We have a variety of positions available that can fit into nearly any schedule. Volunteer as often as once a week or just fill in when others are on vacation. There are positions for those comfortable with office work—answering phones and working on the computer—or for those interested in sorting & distributing the food we give to the families.

If you are interested in finding out more information about volunteering please visit our website, www.circleofconcern.org and on the volunteer page fill out the application and send it to Emily at Circle or via email at Emily.Circle@att.net

Circle of Concern



P.O. Box 444
Valley Park, MO 63088-0444

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Circle Of Concern our community's charity

Mission Statement:

Circle Of Concern feeds the hungry and provides long-term and emergency assistance to low-income families in western St. Louis County.

We create opportunities for needy families to re-establish themselves as productive members in our community.

Circle Of Concern is a member of:

Chesterfield Chamber of Commerce
Fenton Area Chamber of Commerce
West St. Louis Co. Chamber of Commerce
Interfaith Partnership
Metro St. Louis Food Pantry Association
Valley Park Business Association

112 St. Louis Ave. * Valley Park, MO 63088 * 636.861.2623

www.circleofconcern.org

Open every Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9:30 am—2 pm

1st, 2nd, & 3rd Wednesday Evenings 4 pm-7 pm

2nd, 3rd, & 4th Thursday Afternoons 1pm-5 pm

2nd, 3rd & 4th Saturdays 9:30 am-2 pm

**Donations are accepted weekdays 9 am-3 pm
and Saturday mornings.**

Executive Director

Glenn Koenen

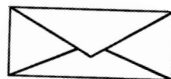
Pantry Director

Linda Johnson

Associate Director

**of Programs &
Volunteers**

Emily Fishman



This edition of *Around the Circle* was
mailed February 10, 2010

Current Needs

Canned Fruit
Canned Meat
Shampoo/Conditioner
Bar Soap/Toilet Paper
Pudding or Jell-O Mix
Muffin or Cake Mix



Internships Opportunities

Circle Of Concern is looking for students needing to complete internships for college credit—or individuals wishing to gain experience in a variety of fields. From Public Relations, Office Administration to Special Events & Fundraising. Circle will provide chosen applicants with hands-on experience that will compliment their current skills with new resume building endeavors.

If you know of anyone interested in applying for the Internship Program please have them contact Emily at Emily.Circle@att.net