

Around The Circle

news from Circle Of Concern
our community's charity

May 2009

From the President...

Circle's primary function is to provide our clients with food and other emergency services. All year long, we work diligently to sustain families in crisis.

Once a year, Circle moves to break the "cycle" of poverty by offering scholarships to high school seniors. Circle's Scholarship Program has given opportunities to deserving young people for over 40 years. In 2009, 17 students are sharing a total of \$28,000 in scholarships.

The Scholarship Committee is headed by Board Vice President Sam Palazzolo. This year's judges were Jean Campbell, Becky Pierce, Carl Quicksall and Barb Staniszewski. They have again worked hard to select the most deserving scholarship applicants.

We would like to expand this program because it represents an opportunity to improve people's chances of escaping long-term poverty. Congratulations to this year's winners!

~Jerry Caesar

April 2009 Services

FOOD PANTRY:

1,355 people fed
2,199 bags of food shared

FINANCIAL SERVICES:

\$7,285.39 aid to 52 families
183 volunteers worked
1,946¾ hours

Circle Moves In To New Center

After months of construction (and years of waiting), Circle moved into the new center over the first weekend of May. We began helping families from the site on May 4. The larger, more efficient building will give Circle decades of service.

Special thanks to the volunteers who moved us across the parking lot to the new center. Our friends at Salian Commercial Construction completed the LEED-certified building ahead of schedule.

By the way, the old center building will soon be demolished to create more parking and landscaping space. Fixtures from that structure have been donated to Habitat For Humanity.

New Center Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting 2:00 p.m.

Sunday, June 7, 2009

112 St. Louis Avenue

Valley Park, Missouri 63088



Please join us as we celebrate the official grand opening of Circle Of Concern's new center with a ribbon cutting, tours of the facility and light refreshments. All friends of Circle are invited!

Circle's **Today & Tomorrow Campaign** is still accepting donations to reduce the center's debt. For more information visit www.circleofconcern.org.

Exceptional Cooks Project Earns Circle \$20,000 Prize

The **Exceptional Cooks** contest and subsequent on-line voting in the **Dollars Making A Difference** campaign have earned Circle Of Concern the **\$20,000** first prize from **National City Bank**, plus an additional \$2,300 based on the number of on-line votes we received.



Nora Amato, with help from her friend Nicole Michaels, put together the four-part **Exceptional Cooks** contest in March. That successful event qualified Circle to compete for on-line votes with two other charities. Circle received the most votes.

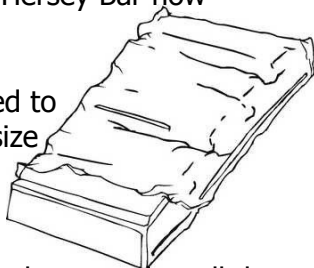
Rick Sems, head of Missouri operations for **National City Bank**, and friends from Emmis Communications presented the check to Circle on May 1.

Thanks to all the friends of Circle (and friends of friends) who ventured onto the Internet to vote for Circle.

Glenn's Column

Rain and wind made a mess of the day, so I decided to go to the grocery store. Every one else did too. While waiting to check-out I decided against reading about Dr. Phil's marital woes and looked, longingly, at the candy rack: The basic Hersey Bar now costs 95¢.

I recall when the price jumped to a dime. Over the years the size and cost of that Hersey Bar changed scores of times.



Of course, the same thing has happened to all the things we buy from ice cream (which used to come in half gallons) to gasoline. The heavy push of inflation keeps lifting prices. At times a few prices drop, but the trend over the decades remains clear.

Economists put inflation into context. They look at how long the typical worker has to labor to earn that Hersey Bar or gallon of gas. By that measure some things are cheaper. Back in the mid-1970's I worked an hour at Venture to earn enough for my after shift cheeseburger, fries and soda snack. Today the Value Meal with those same items equals about 45 minutes labor at minimum wage. (Of course, today my after work snack is a glass of water.)

The Cost of Living

All these trends find Circle Of Concern. Yes, in "hours of labor" milk is cheaper today than it was a decade ago. Still, when we get 100 gallons delivered on Wednesday the wholesaler wants \$233. That's an improvement from the \$312 they got a few months ago but it still adds-up to thousands of dollars a year. That's the price you have to pay if you want milk.

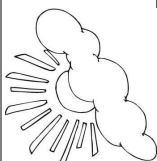
This month we moved into our magnificent new center. For the first time in Circle's 42 year history we have modern, efficient space. The lay-out is very friendly to the families visiting us, as well as being practical for the volunteers. The structure meets all code requirements and is highly energy efficient.

We have been very thrifty in the design and purchasing of the center. We spent as little as we could to get the durable building and decent fixtures we need. Still, the numbers on those invoices were pretty big. Over the 30, 40 or 50 years of service, however, the cost to Circle is very reasonable.

Meanwhile, I don't know what a Hershey Bar will cost in 20 years. I bet it's a lot more than 95¢.

~ Glenn Koenen

This edition of
Around The Circle
was mailed on May 13



Kid Bags Return!

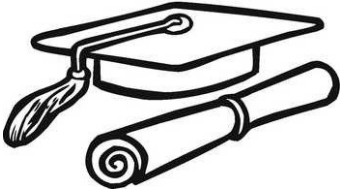
It's almost time for summer vacation!

Again this summer, Circle will share **Kid Bags** filled with mac & cheese, canned pasta, cereal, juice, peanut butter and jelly and other nutritious foods kids like to families with children. The extra food will help families replace the free school meals the kids get most of the year.

Circle will also place activity books, coloring books, crayons and other fun things in the bags.

You can help by collecting the food and other goodies we need to fill more than 1,500 of these special Kid Bags. For more information call Circle at 636/861-2623.





Circle Awards Scholarships to 17 Young People

A special panel of volunteer judges reviewed scores of applicants and selected 17 young people who attend high schools in this area to receive 2009 Circle Of Concern Scholarships. This year \$28,000 in grants were awarded.

Kelly Eaton

Parkway South High School
The Walter Beranek Scholarship

Anika Arties

Parkway North High School
The St. Martin's Scholarship

Bianca James

Parkway West High School
The Arlene Frazier Scholarship

Jennifer Lancaster

Valley Park High School
The Jane Bedell Scholarship

Billie Lee Robinson

Valley Park High School
The Fannon Thompson Scholarship

Plamen Kostadinov

Marquette High School
The Rockwood Teachers Scholarship

Corbin Presson

Parkway South High School
The Bob Stone Scholarship

Shanay Anderson

Marquette High School

Genesis Harsley

Lafayette High School

Khadijah Johnson

Marquette High School

Deonte Pierson

Parkway South High School

Jennifer Puckett

Marquette High School

Yasser Rasheed

Valley Park High School

Ryan Schott

Valley Park High School
The Bruce Cranston Scholarship
(by St. Mark Presbyterian Church)

Brian Tate

Marquette High School

Ryan Tate

Marquette High School

Kori Weaver

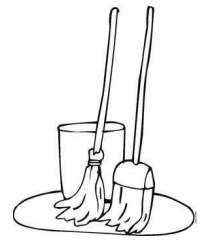
Parkway West High School

The People We Help

A few years ago we told you about Terrance, a gentleman in his late 50's who found himself homeless after losing his job. His situation had gotten him very depressed.

Thanks to a lead from Circle's Job Board, Terrance found a custodial job with an area business. He got an apartment across the road from work. A good employee, he did his job well and even earned a couple of promotions. His position evolved to where he was spending a lot of time at work on a computer. Almost two years ago he let us know that he no longer needed Circle's help.

The recession caused changes at Terrance's workplace. Some senior managers (including the people who hired Terrance) were out placed. Last month the broom swept Terrance out of his job.

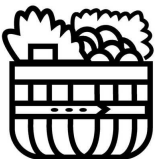
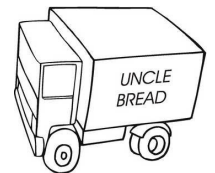


Terrance has been looking for work ever since. He's been thrifty so he doesn't have any past due bills. He worries that he soon won't have medical coverage because COBRA is so expensive. He is also very aware that most employers aren't looking for people nearing 60 for low skills jobs.

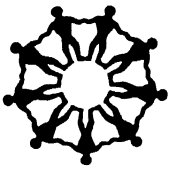
Circle is helping Terrance with food and we are ready to assist him with his most basic bills.

Good News Department

- Employees at **Savvis** in Maryville Center collected – and delivered – three truck loads of food and personal care items for Circle in April
- The **Ladies Auxiliary** of the *Knights Of Columbus #9981* in Chesterfield made a special gift to Circle's food pantry.



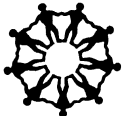
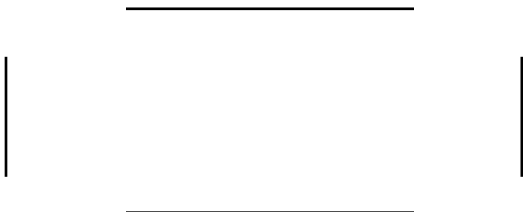
- The **St. Louis County Food Pantry Support Group** collected 6,800 pounds of food for Circle and four other pantries in late March and April: They're holding another drive in June.
- At her 90th birthday party **Glenna Massler** of Creve Coeur had friends bring food for Circle's pantry.



Circle Of Concern
our community's charity
P.O. Box 444
Valley Park, MO 63088-0444

Address Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG.
U S POSTAGE
PAID
VALLEY PARK, MO
PERMIT NO. 444



Circle Of Concern
our community's charity

Providing emergency food and other aid to families residing in the Parkway, Rockwood, and Valley Park school districts. All services are by appointment. Donations are tax deductible and appreciated. Call 636-861-2623 for information.

Valley Park Center
112 St. Louis Avenue
Valley Park

Open every Monday, Wednesday & Friday 9:30 am to 2 pm.
Wednesday evenings, May 20; June 3, 10 & 17 from 4 to 7 pm
Thursday afternoons, May 21 & 28; June 11, 18 & 25 from 1 to 5 pm
Saturdays, May 16 & 23; June 13, 20 & 27 from 9:30 am to 2 pm

Donations accepted weekdays 8:30 a.m. till 3:00 p.m.
and on Saturday mornings.

Circle Of Concern
P O Box 444
Valley Park, MO 63088-0444
Phone 636/ 861-2623
www.circleofconcern.org
circleofconcern@att.net

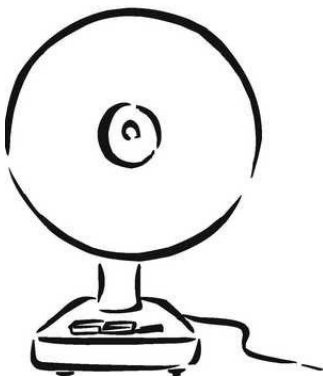
Glenn Koenen - Executive Director
Linda Johnson - Food Pantry Director
Emily Fishman - Assoc. Director of Programs & Volunteers

Member:

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

Around The Circle

To donate to Circle using your debit or credit card, call Emily at Circle at **636/861-2623** during business hours or visit circleofconcern.org



Hot Weather Ahead!

This summer Circle will again share box fans and window air conditioners with the families we help. (The air conditioners are reserved for seniors and people with serious health issues.)

You can help with a special gift to buy 20" box fans (they cost about \$15 each) or 110 volt window air conditioners (\$95 each). Please write-in "fans/AC" on your check or on the Circle envelope in this newsletter.

CIRCLE NEEDS

Breakfast Cereal
Jelly & Peanut Butter
Spaghetti's
Canned Pasta With Meat
Canned Meat
Paper Grocery Bags



Circle Will Be Closed Memorial Day, Monday, May 25