

Around The Circle

MARCH 2010

CIRCLE OF CONCERN
OUR COMMUNITY'S CHARITY

Circle's 43rd Birthday March 2010

Circle is another year older! Founded in March 1967, Circle is now in our 43rd year of serving the West County Community. Please join us in a birthday celebration by helping collect items for our Birthday Club.

This program provides children up to age 11 with birthday gifts and supplies for a birthday party. Parents will fill out a wish list for their child and a volunteer at Circle makes sure a wrapped gift is ready a few days before the child's birthday so the parents are able to give them a present. Birthday Bags accompany the gifts and provide cake mix, icing & all the supplies needed to hold a birthday party for the child.

On our wish list for our Birthday Bash are the following items:

- Gift wrap: paper and/or bags and ribbon.
- Gift cards to toy stores or discount retail stores.
- Items for a birthday party—> cake mix, icing, candles, party plates, party favors, etc.
- Toys for boys or girls up to age 11.



Throughout March collect any of these items with your friends, family, co-workers and then join us on Wednesday March 31st at our 2010 Birthday Bash.

FEBRUARY SERVICES

Food Pantry

1,621 People Fed

2,634 Bags of Food Shared

\$62,649.69 worth of donated
food shared with families

Financial Services

\$11,308.10 aid to

84 families (94% more than 2/09)

Volunteer Support

234 volunteers gave 2,086.75
hours of their time.

Circle Of Concern ~ Spring Meeting

Monday March 22, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.

Salem Methodist

14825 Manchester Road, Ballwin
(across from Lowes & Applebee's)

Join us as we discuss April Showers, Letter Carrier's Food Drive, Scholarships & other spring activities. We'll also preview some improvements to be made to the new center and we'll review the increase in demand for help this year.



From the President

We have just completed our Board of Director's Long Term Planning meeting, reaching some very interesting conclusions about the projected future of our charity.

Most significantly, the Board anticipates an ongoing compounded client growth rate of 15% annually. This means that in three short years, Circle will feed 50% more clients than we feed now. It is our responsibility to grow to meet this obligation. The impact of this growth will be felt in all areas of the organization, including increased food supply requirements, additional volunteers, more sophisticated computer systems and an enhanced financial function.

We will also be required to raise more money to support our larger client base. We will expand fund raising efforts in various areas including grant requests, special events and corporate support opportunities. We will also work hard to increase our profile through the community we serve.

There are lots of challenges to meet as Circle anticipates future demand. Your Board will continue to put us in a positive position to address these expanded needs.

~ Jerry Caesar

The People We Help

Elliot has a house in a nice middle class area: he expects the home to be sold out from under him soon, making it easier for him to declare bankruptcy.

A while back Elliot was injured at work. The union construction job came with worker's compensation coverage, so, for a good while he retained a decent income. Unfortunately, the state administrative judge referred his case to the Second Injury Fund due to a prior work-related situation and, well, that fund is out of money.

Elliot isn't able to return to

construction work due to his injuries. Well into middle age, he will probably qualify for disability payments when his case gets clear of the state.

In the meantime, he tries to get by on Food Stamps, help from Circle and what financial help his kids can share. □



“Bailey got a few more hours this month, but they are still struggling,” a Circle volunteer recently wrote in the file. She and her fiancée came to this area so he could return to college. She works as-needed running child care at a local health club and takes care of the couple's young daughter. He works in retail as his classes permit.

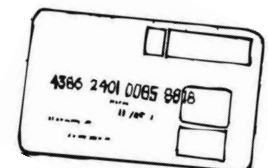
Money is always tight. Last month the couple earned less than \$1,000. Bailey would like to go to community college classes to gain skills for a better job, but that isn't possible this year. She is very aware that she's not getting any younger (she is in in their 30's).

Circle helps the family with food, and we've paid on her utility accounts. Bailey's daughter is in the Birthday

Online Donations

Did you know you can donate to Circle using your Visa or Mastercard just by visiting us online? Go to our website, www.circleofconcern.org and click the Donate Now button. You'll be taken to a secure site where you can either complete a one-time transaction or create an account so you can make future donations or even set up a recurring donation to have your credit card automatically charged.

If you have any questions please contact Emily at 636.861.2623



Quilting for a Cause!

The Bits 'n Pieces Quilt Guild's show and quilt auction will help Circle Of Concern and other charities.



This even will be held on March 20 & 21 at Queeny Park.

For more details visit bitnpiecesguild.com

Good News Department

- **Alexander Godnier** of Chesterfield saved pennies to make a donation to Circle's pantry.
- Friends of **Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian** have started a weekly collection of items for Circle.



- **Girl Scout Troop #106** from St. John's Lutheran delivered boxed dinners, peanut butter and soup to Circle.

- The employees at **Eaton Corporation's** Fenton office are collecting food for Circle.
- **Megan Fogarty** of Chesterfield celebrated her 6th birthday at Bounce U. Her friends gave more than 50 toys and gift cards to Circle in her honor.
- **Eddy DeLong** collected dental products for his birthday and donated them to Circle.
- **Andrew Boden** of Fenton collected food at his 7th birthday party.



Find Circle Of Concern on facebook! We have a fan page and you can become our friend on the website.

Keep updated with events and statistics that are posted every week!

What's In A Family Order

Each family visiting the pantry for a regular order receives better than a one-week supply of food—that is more than 63 meals for the average family of three. (The average household helped by Circle has three members.)

What does a family get?

Purchased items:

- 2 pounds of ground beef
- 1 pound of hot dogs
- 1 tray (about 2.5 pounds) of chicken
- 1 gallon of milk
- 1 dozen eggs
- A bag of fresh fruit —> apples, oranges, bananas, etc
- A bag of potatoes and onions
- 1 pound of carrots and one head of lettuce
- 8-10 boxes of 100% fruit juice.



Non-perishable items:

- 4 cans of meat/fish products
- 5 cans of soup and pasta
- 1 jar of spaghetti sauce
- 1 pack of pasta
- Jelly & peanut butter
- 2 boxes of cereal
- 6 cans of vegetables
- 2 cans of fruit
- 2 boxes of macaroni & cheese
- Biscuit or muffin mix
- Crackers or snacks
- Hamburger helper or other boxed meal
- 1 pack of Jell-O/pudding
- 1 bottle of salad dressing
- 1 bag of rice
- 2 bars of soap
- 2 rolls of toilet paper

- 1 roll of paper towels
- 3 personal care items (shampoo, toothpaste, etc)

Perishable Items:

- 1 bag of bread
- 2-3 dessert items

In addition, snacks and other "extras" are available for a family to select at the pantry counter when they pick up their order. And, dairy, products, produce and other things received from local stores are added to the orders when they are available.

Food orders do vary by family size. A family of six would get twice as much meat, two gallons of milk and similar increases compared to a family of three.

The Importance of Who You Are

A couple of months ago our home phone fell to the floor. The unit was so old it had been made in the United States, so, we bought a new *home phone system* with three handsets, built-in speaker phones, caller I.D., multi-box answering and all sorts of features I'll probably never figure out.

Of course, it came with one of those long questionnaires to complete to activate the warrantee. It seemed right to register that new phone in the name of the newest member of our household. Oh, Kim She Koenen doesn't have much income and, sad to say, she'll never finish high school. She does like running and outdoor sports but isn't much of a reader.

Somewhere a commercial database has begun tracking our friendly Jack Russell Terrier. I expect she'll soon be getting some exciting offers in the mail.

Meanwhile, at Circle one of our caseworkers asked me to talk with a young woman. Years ago the lady's parents had—without telling her—transferred a utility bill into her name. Now that utility wants thousands of dollars or she'll lose her current service.

So the young woman faces a difficult choice: turn on her parents or hire a lawyer to fight a complicated (and perhaps futile) battle to clear her name.

Classic English literature abounds with stories of people fighting to preserve their honor. Today many of us battle to preserve our credit ratings (our financial honor) in the face of identity thieves. The importance of who we are—especially financially—can't be overstated.

The Census, however, is an odd duck. Yes, it becomes an incredibly large and detailed database. The questions aren't as personal as a doctor's but the Census does learn a lot about us.

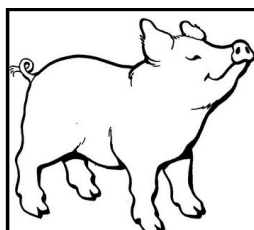
At the same time, those Census answers drop into an electronic black hole. The totals are important to the government but the personal information disappears for generations.

Those Census totals will be used by every level of government to allocate election districts and apportion money. Economic data gathered by the Census gives groups—including Circle—information necessary to plan for the future. It is critical that the Census get complete and accurate information from all of us.

As a result, while all of us have to be careful about safeguarding our identities we also have an obligation to answer all those Census questions (knowing that information won't be abused).

I wouldn't be surprised if Kim She gets put on another warrantee card (the dish washer has been acting up) but we won't be putting her on our Census form unless they ask about adorable pets.

~Glenn Koenen



During March Circle is providing a spring ham to every family on their monthly visit. ... Just one of the additional programs Circle is implementing to provide more support for the needy families we serve.

Honorariums Memorials

In recent weeks friends have made gifts to Circle honoring special people. Special gifts are used for the purpose requested by the donor. The person honored receives the name and address of the donor (but not the donation amount). For information on how to make a gift please call 636/861-2623.

Barbara Brown
 Ron & Sue Copeland
 Helen Debruler
 Inge Goessl
 Mary & Russ Huber
 Glenn M. Koenen
 Pat Koenen
 Ben & Katie Leonard
 Jean Plesko
 Jerry Probst
 Walter & Jody Robbins
 Al & Nancy Schikore
 Grace Stricker
 Marilyn Teichert
 Kate & Ken Tretter
 Carole Vohsen
 Bob & Rose Westermann

Kathryn Lee Bettis
 Roger F. Boughman
 Ann Donohoo
 Jackie Drain
 Joseph Drain
 Rita Elsea
 Marilyn J. Fager
 Pird & Ruth Fox
 Jonathan Frank
 Bertha M. Giessman
 Albert Gleason
 Don Grelle
 Ramona Hartwig
 Lauren Hawse's Mother
 Harley Heffington
 Olga Henricks
 Joseph Jaboor
 Gerald & Rosemary Kientzel

Darlene Lakin
 Earl H. Lankau II
 Patricia Mahmood
 Norbert McHugh
 John Meara
 Dean Medlock
 Richard Moder
 Dean Morse
 Barbara K. Nicely
 Sam Palazzolo
 Richard Powers
 Hilda Schreiber
 Robert Simeone
 Edward George Smith
 Richard Spencer
 Shirley Starkey
 Sue Stotler
 Jim West
 John C. Wilson
 Gib Zubal

Scholarship Competition Underway

Applications for Circle's 2010 Scholarship Competition have been sent to local high schools. Over the next few weeks young people who live in the area or attend school in Circle's service area (Parkway, Rockwood and Valley Park school districts) will send the completed forms back to Circle.

Next month a panel of volunteer judges will review every application, then call semi-finalists for interviews. Awards will be announced in early May.

Circle Of Concern has awarded scholarships each spring for more than 40 years. Circle's grants can be used for professional trade school, community college or four year studies.



This year Circle expects to award \$35,000 in scholarships—including a new award honoring Sam Palazzolo, Circle's former Vice President and long-time scholarship judge who passed away earlier this year.

Gifts to the scholarship program are still appreciated. Again, this year Circle is seeking *Dollars For Scholars* donations from groups which can pledge \$1 or \$2 per member to help support these great opportunities for deserving young people.

Circle of Concern



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

Address Service Requested

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VALLEY PARK, MO
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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

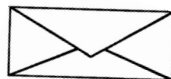
Glenn Koenen

Pantry Director

Linda Johnson

Associate Director

**of Programs &
Volunteers**
Emily Fishman



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

Current Needs

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

Volunteer Needs

Circle is privileged to have many dedicated volunteers. We will be expanding our hours of service and need more volunteers. Currently we are looking for volunteers that are interested in:

- Wednesday Evening 4-7 pm Intake Work
 - Saturday Receptionists
 - Friday 9:30-2:30 Intake Work
 - Casework - flexible.
- Also, support staff. People with computer knowledge (MS Access), special events/fundraising.

Visit the volunteer page online for an application.