

Around The Circle

news from Circle Of Concern
our community's charity

April 2009

From the President...

A couple of people need to be recognized as our new facility quickly becomes a reality.

The first is Gary Shannon. His wife Pat is on our Board. Gary has extensive experience in the construction industry, so Pat volunteered him to represent Circle in our relationship with our design/build team.

What he has done is amazing! With his direct and shrewd approach, Gary has saved Circle tens of thousands of dollars. He eliminated the unnecessary, oversaw competitive bids, policed our builder's invoices and insured that our best interests are represented.

Another dedicated volunteer and Board member, Joan Delabar, has been indispensable in directing us through the complex contract negotiations that are part of any big project. Her contribution and dedication are so appreciated.

People like Gary and Joan make my job easy!

~Jerry Caesar

March 2009
Services

FOOD PANTRY:
1,355 people fed
2,208 bags of food shared

FINANCIAL SERVICES:
\$4,762.84 aid to 45 families

2081 volunteers worked
2,058½ hours

New Center Update

Circle moves into the new center in just a few weeks!

Carpenters, drywallers, painters, electricians, plumbers, flooring and HVAC specialists have all been busy inside the new building. The concrete and asphalt crews are working outside. The landscapers are coming soon.

The new center will give Circle the space necessary to help the record number of families, and, provide Circle's volunteers with the working conditions they deserve.

Meanwhile, the weak economy has hit Circle from both sides: The need for our services has never been higher, yet the crisis has slowed fund raising for the new center.

Circle's **Today & Tomorrow Campaign** is still accepting donations towards the cost of the center. Many of you have received a letter from Circle asking for a special gift toward the cost of the new center. As stated in the letter, Circle will finish this project.

Unfortunately a \$500,000 chunk of the bill is set to be paid with borrowed money which Circle will have to re-pay, with interest in coming years. The more Circle can raise now towards the new center costs, the more money we will have in future years to help needy families.

Please remember that Circle still has \$125,000 left on our challenge grant: Every \$1.00 given to Circle becomes \$2.00 towards the cost of the new center.

By the way, on a Sunday afternoon after we move into the new center we will have a ribbon cutting and open house. We'll share that date in the May edition of **Around The Circle**.



Spring General Meeting

7:30 p.m. Monday,
April 27, 2009

Salem United Methodist Church
14825 Manchester Road, Ballwin
Just west of Ries Road, across from Lowe's

Please join us as we plan Circle's move into the new center; discuss the Letter Carrier's Food Drive, the Kid Bag program and other upcoming events, and learn about how the weak economy is sending a record number of people to Circle seeking help. All friends of Circle are welcome!



Glenn's Column

Good Bye Old Shoes

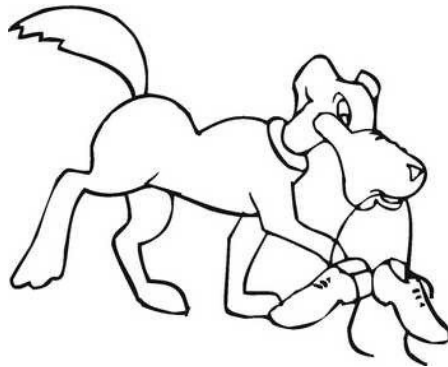
The other day I noticed black circles on the soles of my cordovan dress shoes. The heels used to have edges. We have a good shoe repair shop in Valley Park. Twice I've had the soles replaced and they've nailed several heels on that pair over the years.

Then, looking at where the uppers met the sole, I saw torn stitching and the first light crumbles of leather. It's time to put them in the bag for the shoe man.

Last month I used a highlighter to mark the water stained ceiling tiles in Circle's lobby. That makes it easier to see where the new leaks are after a storm. Rain water sneaks into the pantry around a window frame and the furnace liked to take the middle of the day off. You have to hold a couple of the doors just right at the end of the day to get the locks to catch.

A visitor asked me if I'm going to miss the old building when the new center opens. Not for a while.

We have helped a tremendous number of people with this building. In two decades of hard use we've given out millions of pounds of food and shared staggering amounts of toys, school supplies and other stuff with needy families.



Still, this building is just plain worn out.

Most every day I walk through the new center. In a few short weeks we went from a slab of concrete to a structure with a roof, windows and doors, wiring and ductwork. Schedules change all the time but now we know we will be in our new home by May.

Of course, the new building will surprise us with little things to fix. We'll have to make adjustments in how we do some every day things as we get used to so much more space.

Still, the new center will not change what we do at Circle. It will make it easier for us to do more. As you've read on the front page, the number of people coming to us for help continues to soar.

We simply cannot handle the current volume of food and families needing our services from this overworked building. Worse, we would have no way of accommodating those additional families sure to come to us later this year.

Oh, years from now I'll be among the many at Circle talking about the good old days at the old center.

Just give me a while to forget the mold, the leaks, the cold and crowded rooms and all the other little irritations.

~ Glenn Koenen



Exceptional Cooks & Exceptional People

Nora Amato, with help from her friend Nicole Michaels, submitted one of the winning entries for a local contest to win money for local charities. **Exceptional Cooks** launched a three-part cooking contest featuring casseroles, brown bag lunches and desserts. The winners then prepared a great meal for 100 people at St. John's UCC in Chesterfield on March 28.

A cookbook of the great recipes is coming (call Emily at Circle at 636/861-2623 to get a copy).

As a final part of the contest, friends of Circle Of Concern can vote on-line at www.dollarsmakingadifference.com to help Circle win the \$20,000 grand prize! Voting ends on April 17!

Thanks to **National City Bank** and **97.1 FM Talk** for sponsoring this innovative contest.

The People We Help

Tom and Linda both had solid, middle class jobs. He worked for a decade and a half for a major auto manufacturer and she was employed in the regional office of one of the nation's largest banks.

They found new jobs in the service sector: As Circle's volunteer Case Worker put it, "They are still [way] below Circle financial guidelines with both working."

They like their home "but are in danger of losing it soon." They've shed one car (keeping the older one) but have few other assets they can liquidate. The dramatic, sudden loss of income has left them short of money to pay basic bills.

With two children (one a preschooler), they worry about the impact of their situation on their kids.



Circle has provided Tom and Linda with food and we've helped with their gas and electric bills. The kids are signed-up for the Birthday Club and Circle volunteers have suggested ways to save money.

Unfortunately, we expect to meet many more families in their situation this year.

After losing jobs and struggling to make ends meet, Leo is joining the Army.

At age 30 he'll be one of the older recruits. He'll leave behind a son and an ex-wife he supports.

Other attempts at finding financial stability didn't go well. "We sorted through his bills – a huge stack, many unopened and he was surprised to find a court summons for unpaid rent," a volunteer wrote in Leo's file. He tried commission sales jobs and positions where he was paid a portion of the fees he collected as a courier. The commissions never reached the level advertised and the fees seldom covered his gasoline costs.

Circle has helped Leo with food, rent and utility bills. His son is in the Birthday Club to get presents this year.

This edition of
Around The Circle
was mailed on April 8



Three Great Ways To Help Pantries!

Two annual events and a new effort by a great group of volunteers will help refill Circle and other pantries in coming weeks.

The **St. Louis County Food Pantry Support** group is handing-out bags and collecting food in neighborhoods across the central corridor. They began distributing bags in March and will do this several times a year to benefit Circle Of Concern, Feed My People, Affton Christian Church's pantry, Webster-Rockhill Ministries and Kirkcare.

On Saturday, April 25, the Girl Scout's **April Showers** collection will gather shampoo, soap, paper products and other personal care items for local pantries.



Two weeks later, on Saturday, May 9, members of the **National Association of Letter Carriers** will pick-up food while they deliver the mail. The "**Stamp Out Hunger**" drive is the largest one-day food drive in the nation!



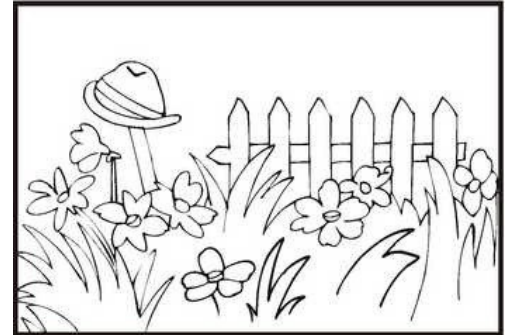
Please be generous to all these friends.

In recent weeks friends have made gifts to Circle in honor of special people.

Memorials

Randy Adams
 Paul & Ruth Adlersfleugel
 Thomas Aldridge
 Joseph J Bauer
 Marie Bellinger
 Irene C Beras
 Marshall Burnett
 Gladys Caesar
 Bob Clary
 Dr Fred Coutts
 Florence DeBasio
 Rosemary Durley
 Rita Elsea
 Robert Evans
 John Gelderman
 Nancy Glass
 Albert Gleason
 Molly Gleason
 Martha Gower
 Bob & Ginny Guinther
 Kenneth H Hamilton
 Marcia Harms
 Jim Hayes
 Christopher Heiland
 Irma J Holle
 Donald F Huelsman
 Lyle R Jeffers

David & Mary Jenkins
 Tony Johnson
 Chester Kamp
 Sandy Kimbrell
 William & Frieda Klein
 Dorothy A Kosednar
 Ellen R Kralovec
 Doris Kreher
 Jessie Kueker
 Darlene Lakin
 Tom Lauber
 James Londoff
 Carrie & Harry Martin Sr
 Larry Maurer
 Jezebel (Moon)
 Mary Katherine Murphy
 Don Muse
 Oliver Newberry
 Lisa Ostrem
 Kathleen Elaine Reardon
 Roberta Carol Riemer
 Chris Robeff
 Mary Ann Sandern
 Virginia Schenewerk
 Georgia Scott
 Emmett Shaughnessy
 Bob Sivon



Don Smith
 Laurie Sneden's Father
 Fran Sommer-Taylor
 Roberta E Sooter
 Robert Spalding
 Richard Spencer
 Richard & Helen Sponsel
 Don Stemmerman
 Bob Stone
 Mrs Gene Toddy
 Joyce Felt Weber
 Carol Weis' Mother
 Lucy (Wempner)
 Betty Lois Wendel
 Ivan West
 Rita Westerfield
 John C Wilson
 Audrey Wittler
 Leland Woodburn
 Frank Zerillo
 All Deceased Members of
 ERA—423 Organization



Circle Feeds Record Number Of People In First Quarter

This January, February and March Circle's pantry fed **27% more** people than the pantry helped in the first quarter of 2008.

In the first three months of the year Circle fed **4,194 people**. In all of 1990 (Circle's first full year of operation) Circle fed 4,700 people.

Circle remains on track to feed 18,000 to 20,000 people in 2009—a jump of 20% to 30% over 2008's total.

Honorariums

Bill Brenner
 George & Carolyn Burr
 Mr & Mrs Mike Butler
 Dorothy Buzzard
 Circle Volunteers
 Rhonda DeClue
 Marian A Dunk
 The Dunne's Grandsons
 Randall Fidler
 Grace Goodin
 Jeff Graham
 Ann & Bill Johnson
 Sharon Kirsch's Book Club
 Glenn & Patricia Koenen
 Cliff & Rena Lehmann
 Ben & Katie Leonard

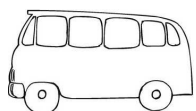
Victor Luechtefeld
 Jim Lundt
 Fred & Florence Marten
 Mary Methe
 Todd Minichiello
 Margaret & Robert Morrison
 Kathleen Neal
 Sam & Renee' Palazzolo
 Margie Pauls
 Betty Rademaker
 Madeline Raile
 Nancy Robbins
 Walter & Jody Robbins
 Norman & Lydia Rombach
 St Martin's Mary & Martha Guild
 Mr & Mrs Martin Schultz' Daughter

Bill Shelton
 Mr & Mrs Samiran Roy
 Samit Spencer Roy
 Anne Spiering
 Brian Sprague
 Rich Stegmann
 Kate & Ken Tretter
 Cathy Vivirito
 Sue & Felix Washburn
 Rose & Bob Westermann
 Mr & Mrs Will Westermann
 Mr & Mrs Herbert Wiegand
 Barb Woehle
 Anna Marie Zoughby



Circle notifies the person honored, or their family, when a gift has been made. (The amount of the gift is not shared.) Donations are used for the special purpose specified by the donor, or, they help support Circle's everyday operations. For special notification cards or gift envelopes, please call Circle at 636/861-2623.

Good News Department



- Students at **St. John's Lutheran School** in Ellisville collected a van load of food for Circle during *National Lutheran Schools Week* in March.

- The *Children's Sunday School* at **Manchester UMC** collected 114 boxes of breakfast cereal for Circle in March.



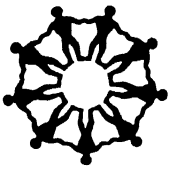
- *It's Girl Scout Cookie time!* Many area troops have donated cookies to Circle's pantry, allowing hundreds of families to get a special treat.



- It was "**π Day**" at **Esco Technologies**: On 3/14/09 employees brought in 'round' food items (such as Spaghetti's) or wrote checks for \$3.14 to help Circle's pantry.

- **Reagan Berkinshaw** and **Kirsten Van Rens** held a carnival in their Ballwin neighborhood to raise money for Circle.

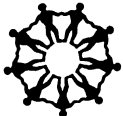
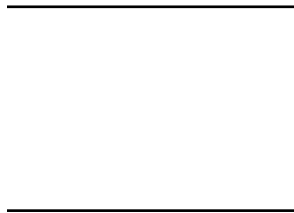




Circle Of Concern
our community's charity
P.O. Box 444
Valley Park, MO 63088-0444

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 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Wednesday evenings, April 15 & 22; May 6, 13 & 20 4 to 7 p.m.
Thursday afternoons, April 16 & 23, May 14, 21 & 28 1 to 5 p.m.
Saturdays, April 18 & 25; May 9, 16 & 23 9:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

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

Kid Bags Return!

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. 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

Breakfast Cereal
Jelly & Peanut Butter
Muffin/Biscuit Mix
Tomato Sauce
Spaghetti Sauce
Spaghetti & Other Pasta

NEEDS