

# Circle Of Concern

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# AROUND THE CIRCLE

## CIRCLE OF CONCERN OUR COMMUNITY'S CHARITY

### JUNE 2010

#### 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.

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

[www.circleofconcern.org](http://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.**

<b>Executive Director</b> Glenn Koenen	<b>Pantry Director</b> Linda Johnson	<b>Director of Programs/Volunteers</b> Emily Fishman
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**This edition of Around the Circle was mailed on June 9, 2010**

**Circle Of Concern is a member of:**

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

#### Summer General Meeting

7:30 p.m.

Monday, June 28

St. Mark Presbyterian Church

601 Claymont

(west of Baxter/Holloway, south of Clayton)

Ballwin MO 63011

Join us as we look ahead to Circle's first Trivia Night and the Back To School program, as well as reviewing the record demand for pantry help.

#### MECS & Delta Tau Support Circle's 2010 Scholarship

Two groups have made special gifts towards this year's scholarship program.

MECS, an international company based in Chesterfield, has sponsored two scholarships in Circle's 2010 Scholarship Program.

Delta Tau of ESA, a sorority with a long history of helping Circle, funded a special grant for a young woman in this year's scholarship program.

Special gifts such as these allow Circle to award more and larger grants to deserving young people.

#### May Services

##### Food Pantry

1,533 people fed with 2,519 bags of food  
\$59,410.70 worth of donated food shared

##### Financial Services

\$6,628 aid to 46 families.

##### Volunteer Support

236 gave 2,174.5 hours of their time

#### The Cost Of Food

Circle buys perishable items – fresh fruit and vegetables; milk and eggs, and, frozen meat – to add to food orders.



The average cost per family is \$15.22.

Each family order includes potatoes at 22¢ a pound, chicken at 79¢, lean ground beef at

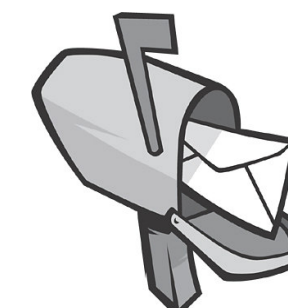
\$2.28 and milk at \$2.86 per gallon. All food is bought wholesale, with delivery to the pantry included in the price.

Circle expects to spend more than \$130,000 on perishable food this year.

#### Letter Carriers Collect 32 Tons Of Food For Circle

Wow!

The members of the National Association of Letter Carriers branch 5050, based in Ballwin, collected more than 32 tons of food for Circle on May 8. The Stamp Out Hunger food drive has brought in more than one billion pounds of food since its inception 18 years ago.



Thanks to our local letter carriers, the more than 100 people who helped Circle that day, and, everyone who put out food next to their mailbox.



#### Current Needs

Canned Fruit

#### 2010 Brick Order

If you would like to order a brick to be placed at the walkway of our new center please place orders by Monday August 9, 2010.

Please visit our website, [www.circleofconcern.org](http://www.circleofconcern.org) and at the bottom of the Today & Tomorrow page there is a link to the site to order bricks.

For \$100 you can engrave a 4x8 brick or for \$250 engrave an 8x8 paver. You will also have the opportunity to purchase a certificate or even a duplicate brick.



### From the President

Our charity continues to grow at an unprecedented rate. Circle will feed about 22,000 people this year, a 20% increase over 2009. By 2012 it is projected we will feed 29,000 people a year.

Without our new center,

Circle might have been forced to turn away needy people this year. The larger center allows us to handle our increasing volume of people and of food.

It takes more than a building to help our clients: Your board of directors has

brought in two professionals to improve our computer system and our accounting system.

Ed King is our computer expert. He is working with Carl Quicksall to increase and update the scope of our computer network. The

board has also brought in Charles Daniel, a CPA, to enhance our financial processes.

We welcome Ed and Chuck to Circle and wish them good luck and good results in preparing Circle for its future. ~Jerry Casear

### The People We Help

Harriet lost her full time job early in 2008 when her employer, a financial company, "restructured." Despite a good work history, she's been unable to land a new full time job.

She's kept her second job, a part-time position at a church. She usually gets some child support from her ex-husband.

Add in unemployment (she's qualified for several extensions of her benefits) and she has an income of about \$1,250 a month. Still, with three kids at home and a house note over \$800 a month, keeping up on bills is

more than a challenge. Harriet tried different ways to save money. For a while she didn't have a phone. That didn't work. Putting off car repairs just made the eventual solution more expensive.

Life started to get a bit better. Her oldest child is attending community college and his part-time job is helping with bills. And, the

child support checks were coming most every week.

Then Harriet needed surgery. That kept her from looking for work (and technically made her ineligible for unemployment). She's better now but the bill pile

has grown pretty high.

Circle has shared food and given Harriet gift cards so she could get a graphic calculator her daughter needed.

\* \* \* \* \*  
Randi's husband passed away three years ago. Now in her ninth decade, she's well known at her favorite hospital.

An adult daughter has moved in to take care of Randi. The daughter has been out of work, so Randi's Social Security payment (\$1,300 a month) has to be stretched pretty far.

Sometimes even important bills can't be paid. For example, this winter they ran out of oil for their furnace.

That added a \$60 service call, to prime the system, to the cost of a tank of oil.

Worse, this year Randi has been getting more and more depressed. She outlived her son and now one of his children has died. A grand niece was lost not long ago. The pain of so many losses in just a few years is taking a toll.

Circle's volunteers worry too about Randi's daughter. In her 50's, she will be hard pressed to support herself when her mother's Social Security is gone.

Each month Randi gets food from Circle. We've helped with fuel oil and an electric bill. Last summer we shared a window air conditioner.

### Good News Department

- Students at Community School collected a van load of kid-friendly food for Circle.
- Workers from McGraw Hill and Bausch & Lomb spent days at Circle sorting food.
- Students from Fairway Elementary School collected a big pile of cereal for Circle's Kid Bags.
- Lydia Hagedorn celebrated her 90th Birthday in May and asked for donations of food and money for the Birthday Club.



### Kid Bags

Again this summer, Circle is sharing Kid Bags with families with school age children. The specially packed bags of 'kid friendly' items will be distributed until schools re-open in mid-August.

Each bag contains:

- Cereal
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Jelly & Peanut Butter
- Canned Pasta
- 100% Fruit Juice
- Pudding & Other
- Healthy Snacks

Circle also needs activity and coloring books, flash cards and other fun things for the bags. This summer we will share 2,000 Kid Bags.

### Computer Dependent

I got a surprise in the mail: The lien release and payment statement on our family sedan. The finance unit of a major carmaker thanked us for our business.

The thing is, we bought that car 35 months ago, paying for it with the "Zero Percent" financing for three years. By our reckoning they had two more checks coming.

Now, my wife and I could review three years of bank statements to see if we accidentally paid twice a couple of times. That's doubtful since they sent us a monthly statement with a return envelope.

We all know that computers don't make mistakes, except when they do. Complicating matters, people have a nasty tendency to create mistakes for computers to perpetuate.



**BENEFITING  
CIRCLE OF CONCERN**

**Date: Tuesday, June 29, 2010**

**Time: 11:00AM-9:00PM**

**Reservations are requested:  
314-965-RIBS (7427)**

1090 Old Des Peres Rd., Des Peres, MO 63131  
(directly across Manchester Rd from the Des Peres Movie Theater)

Phone: 636.861.2623 E-mail: Emily.Circle@att.net

Help support Circle Of Concern by enjoying some delicious food from Rib City for dine in and to-go orders.

20% of all purchases made with a flyer will be donated to Circle Of Concern.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

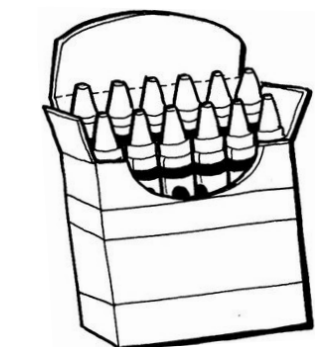
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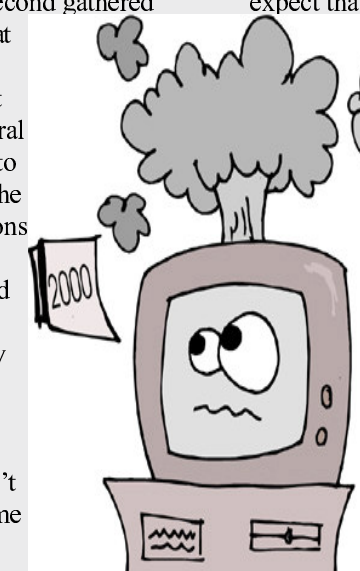
### Back To School

Help Circle provide new school supplies for over 600 area students from struggling families. We will be accepting new school supplies Monday through Friday from 9 am to 3 pm and Saturday 9 am to noon. Please bring the donations to Circle by August 4, 2010. We are in need of large, sturdy backpacks; solar scientific calculators; scissors; yellow highlighters; markers; pocket folders with brads;



color pencils; pencil pouches; wide rule filler paper; 2" three-ring binders; Post-It notes (3x3) and gift cards to discount stores.

For example, the State of Missouri used two computer systems to track Food Stamps. One connected the hundreds of workers who process applications. The second gathered data from that first system for the report sent the federal government to account for the tens of millions of dollars Missouri paid out in Food Stamps every month. It turned out that the two systems didn't count the same way.



been doing a lot of things to incorporate all our work into one modern, efficient system. That's critical. In three years I expect that we will be feeding twice as many people. That means twice as many client files, twice as many appointments, and, hopefully, about twice as many friends helping us with our work.

We know we won't have twice as much room (and we don't want twice as many file cabinets), so, we have to work smarter. We've tweaked our main client program to a higher level of efficiency and increased system security. We've installed

several new computers – cheaper yet more powerful units which make our volunteers more effective.

Coming soon are a series of other improvements, including new programs to track volunteer hours (now done with large binders and a lot of pencil pushing). As we make changes we also test and retest the system to insure that we are getting reliable information.

Of course, computers are just tools. They help us in our work, they do not define it. Our mission to help our neighbors remains the same. We just need to always stretch our limited resources.

Meanwhile, I think I'm just going to paperclip that lien release to my car title and put them in our safe deposit box.

Glenn Koenen