What’s In Those Grocery Bags?

Have you ever wondered what foods Circle Of Concern shares with the families that come to us for help? Come along on a tour of the brown paper bags and see!

On the face of it, those bags contain items that you might expect. You'll find peanut butter and jelly, canned green beans, tuna fish, chili, beef stew, macaroni and cheese, tomato products, dry and canned pasta, sauce, meal “Helpers,” dried beans and other items. These are all common items that any food pantry might provide.

What sets Circle apart is the provision of foods with more nutritional punch. In addition to the shelf-stable nonperishables, our clients’ grocery carts also include milk and eggs, (cheese - when we have room in the budget), bread, fresh fruit, potatoes, carrots, onions and frozen meat items, such as a whole chicken, ground beef and turkey and hot dogs that we purchase with the cash donations we receive. Circle is committed to offering food for a more diverse diet to support better health.

Besides these staples, we also include toilet paper (food stamps, or SNAP, doesn’t buy that daily essential), bar soap, a choice of personal care items and a baking item and condiment.

It’s one thing to fill a belly. It’s another thing to provide food that promotes healthier eating. With your financial gifts, you help us provide food to help our clients stay healthier. Thank you for your support of the food and pantry...and for helping to fill those brown paper bags with healthy foods.
Thinking Outside the Circle

Quality Waterproofing

Circle has the best neighbors! One of them – Quality Waterproofing in Valley Park – is like a big, friendly family next door, willing to help when we need them. On a cold day this winter, we were happily struggling to sort the mountain of food that our amazing donors contributed to Circle over the holidays. With 32 employees, Quality Waterproofing came over and got many thousands of items ready for our pantry shelves and our clients’ grocery bags. They let us borrow their car; well, they shared the use of their commercial truck! They are also a go-to volunteer team for upcoming events like the Letter Carrier’s ‘Stamp Out Hunger’ food drive in May.

Thank you for being a good neighbor, Quality Waterproofing, and thank you for being a corporate example of support!

Jelly Roll Bunco!

Seats are filling up! Register today for the 3rd annual Circle Bunco Fun-Raiser Nite! Join us on Friday, April 21 at St. John Church (15800 Manchester in Ellisville) for classic Bunco, a silent auction, prizes and fun! Proceeds will help buy jelly and other items for Circle’s food pantry.

We roll the dice at 7 p.m. (doors open at 6:30), with a simple cash bar, hors d’oeuvres, desserts and free soda and water available. Tickets are $20 per person.

Register online at circleofconcern.org no later than April 15. See you there!

Send Up the Bat Signal!

The Birthday Club has an urgent need for Batman toys and wrestling figures/toys from the WWE or UFC (think John Cena!). These are items that our kids have asked for, along with Legos and other favorites. Toys can be dropped off at Circle during regular client hours.

A Circle History Moment

Pages from old scrapbooks reveal the depths of flood waters in 1993. The line on the windows and the height of a volunteer tell the tale!
Simple Scalloped Potatoes

Circle’s food pantry provides vegetable staples to our clients each month, including potatoes and onions, as well as milk and cheese. Using these—plus flour and condiments from our ‘Your Choice’ shelves—produces a favorite family side dish!

6 medium potatoes, thinly sliced
1 large onion, chopped
2 tablespoons flour
2 cups milk, hot—but-not-boiling
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded

Grease a 13” x 9” baking dish and preheat oven to 350F.

Arrange 1/3 of the potatoes in the dish, sprinkle with half the onions, half the salt and pepper and half the flour. Repeat the layers, ending with the final 1/3 of potatoes. Pour the hot milk over everything and top with the cheese.

Bake, uncovered, for 1 hour or until potatoes are tender and sauce is bubbly.

Facing Hunger After 50

48 percent of the people who rely on Circle for food are 50+ years old. When it comes to food insecurity, seniors or pre-seniors (age 50-59) experience special challenges when dealing with hunger.*

77%
Buy the cheapest food available

46%
Receive help from family and friends

38%
Water down food or drink

Each year, older adult households face spending tradeoffs and have to choose between food and...

60%
Utilities

63%
Medical care

49%
Housing

58%
Transportation

*Statistics from feedingamerica.org

A Note From Cyndi

Being able to nourish a family...really nourish a family is a privilege and an honor. We strive to do just that, through the foods we share and the supplementary programs we offer.

In the food pantry, we pair donated dry goods with purchased fresh foods – both made possible by a generous and giving community.

Along with a well-rounded portion of foods, we offer monthly one-on-one coaching with trained volunteers. While this evidence-based method has been a part of our approach for decades now, what’s new and growing is our commitment to even more focused coaching. Circle offers employment mentorship, covering an array of career-oriented training, including resume development, job search strategies and mock interviews.

We also offer counseling – a much-needed service to strengthen those facing some of life’s greatest obstacles and stressors. For kids, there are few greater forms of nourishment than a week at summer camp, and yes – Circle offers that too.

I could go on about the nourishing aspects of Holiday Adoption, Back to School and Circle’s other programs, but you get the picture. Feeding families is just the beginning. Thank you for being a part of this life-sustaining work. Thank you for supporting Circle and organizations like ours.

Cyndi
Hunger After 50

We share many donations with our clients:

- Food, Canned and Packaged
- Fresh Garden Produce
- Dry Pet Food, Litter
- New School Supplies
- New Toys
- New Blankets, Hats, Gloves

Donations are accepted:

- Mon, Tue, Fri: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
- Wednesday: 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
- Saturday: 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

“LIKE US” on Facebook and visit us online at www.circleofconcern.org.

Important Dates:

- April 14, 15: Circle Closed for Spring Holiday
- April 21: Bunco Fundraiser
  St. John Lutheran Church, Ellisville
- May 8: 13th Annual Charity Golf Tournament
  Aberdeen Golf Club, Eureka
- September 16: 4th Annual Run Circles Around Hunger 5K
  Valley Park - Arnold’s Grove Trailhead Park
- November 4: 50th Anniversary Celebration Dinner
  Forest Hills Country Club, Chesterfield

STAFF DIRECTORY

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- Niki Vandable, Client Services Director: niki@circleofconcern.org, ext. 108

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