Planning Ahead

There is a time and a place for spontaneity. Sometimes you just have to take the trip, buy the shoes, make the date.

Other things, though, turn out best when there’s been time to make a plan and put that plan into action. One of those things is a major third-party event to benefit Circle of Concern. Throughout the year, friends at schools, civic organizations, businesses and civil services hold food drives, special events and more to support our food pantry and programs, and each achieves success by kicking off the year with a plan. Here are just a few of our organizers’ boosters:

Before one year ends, our friends at the Ballwin Post Office are already plotting a timeline for the Letter Carrier’s Food Drive—Stamp Out Hunger—in May that will produce many tens of thousands of pounds of food, thanks to the area’s postal customers. Letter carriers place plastic bags at local homes and then pick up the food the next week. That food is critical to stock the shelves as our full warehouse has largely been emptied of our New Year surplus.

The Elk’s Lodge #9 on Ladue Road spends six months of the year collecting Circle’s Most-Needed items, a month at a time. After a month of canned meats, another of mac & cheese and four more targeted drives among its membership, they drive up to Circle with thousands of items we rely on every day.

The Genesis Jazz Project has spent years composing a new West County tradition on behalf of Circle. After months spent rehearsing and scheduling and publicizing a musical collaboration with the Lafayette High School Jazz Band, Genesis now presents a holiday kick-off concert two days before Thanksgiving – a perfect start to the holiday season.

As months count down, the ladies of Delta Tau—a chapter of service sorority Epsilon Sigma Alpha—prepares outreach and gathers supplies for their “virtual tea party” fundraiser for Circle. An envelope is mailed out with an appeal, a tea bag and delicious cookies with a request that recipients enjoy a nice cup of tea as they write a check to Circle. The planning pays off to the tune of thousands of dollars over just a few years.

There are lots of ways to support Circle, and now is the time to make a plan for 2019. If you’d like to explore ideas for a food or fund drive to our families, contact Juliet@circleofconcern.org today!

Current Needs:
- Cereal – CRITICAL
- Pasta Sauce
- Canned Pasta
- Canned Chicken – CRITICAL
- Jelly
- Baby Wipes
- Size 5 & 6 Diapers – CRITICAL
- Laundry Detergent

OUR MISSION:
Circle of Concern feeds the hungry and provides assistance to low-income families living in west St. Louis County.

OUR VISION:
Improving every life in our community by reducing hunger and poverty.

Feeding Families is Just the Beginning
IN HONOR OF:  
Please note that these are Memorial/Honor gifts received from October 1 to November 30, 2018

M/M Rob Akred for Christmas  
Nancy Akred for Christmas  
M Ray Evans  
The Greendale Foyes  
The LaCrosse Foyes  
The Muskego Foyes  
Carol & John Gruen  
Juliet Holden  
Amy Kohr  
Cass/Vince Nguyen  
& Rich Lages  
Nelda Lyday’s 90th Birthday  
Jo Ellen Miller’s Birthday  
M/M Ed Neuman for Hanukkah  
New Outlook Pioneers  
Liam Nixon  
M/R Ross Osiek for Christmas  
M/M Tim Osiek for Christmas  
M/Todd Osiek for Christmas  
M/M Matt Pennington for Christmas  
Fran Curran keeps up a frenetic pace when it comes to the fiber arts. For at least 20 years, she has challenged herself annually to make 50 quilts – fifty, the big five-0 – that she then shares with families who come to Circle. Each triple-layer quilt is guaranteed to keep a lap, a child, a chilled soul warm.

When the quilts are ready, they all are placed on the altar of Fran’s beloved Antioch Baptist Church. The entire congregation gathers round them and, says Fran, “We get together and pray over [the quilts] for the people who will get them.”

On behalf of Circle families, thank you for your warm heart and your skill with a needle, Fran. Your work warms the hearts of us all.

A Stitch in Time

The Early Bird...

...gets the tax code worm!

From the year they turn 70 ½, everyone must take a Required Minimum Distribution, or RMD, from their Individual Retirement Accounts, or IRAs. Fortunately, a Qualified Charitable Distribution, or QCD, can satisfy all or part of the RMD. Further, donations made directly from an IRA to a charity such as Circle can be given without the donor having to count the distribution as taxable income.

If considering a QCD this year, it is advised to give the gift as early in the year as possible. This is because once you take a distribution for your own use, the option to give a gift without it being counted as taxable income is lost. Contact your financial planner or tax preparer today to see if a QCD to Circle using an RMD from your IRA can benefit you!

Client Story

While checking out at the discount store, a woman told the man at the cash register that she was buying items to donate to Circle in Birthday Bags. “I go to Circle!” he said. “They have helped me and my son ever since my wife died.” As he expressed his gratitude for all Circle and our donors do, he said he has been especially happy with the chance to “shop” in the new Client Choice pantry.

Baby, It’s Cold Outside

With one snowy day already under our belt, it seems a good time to revisit Circle of Concern’s inclement weather policy. Circle is closed for client services and donation drop-offs when the Parkway, Rockwood and/or Valley Park school districts are closed due to bad weather. Watch local TV stations for the list of closings or call us if weather is bad when schools are not in session, i.e. holiday breaks. (Call the main number –636.861.2623—and, when prompted, press 8.)

General Stats for September 2018

Shared food with 1,627 people in 537 families

32 families received a total of $7,682.20 in crisis financial assistance

162 volunteers shared 2,126 hours of valuable time

Thank you for remembering or honoring a loved one with a gift to Circle. We are touched by your decision and your trust in our commitment to steward these funds for the benefit of the families we serve.
Circle Clients Love to Find in the Pantry!

We get many valuable donations. Here are some that light up our clients’ eyes:

1. Traditional ethnic ingredients—for example, a recent donation of cactus leaves, or nopales, excited many Hispanic families who enjoy dishes made with this versatile vegetable.

2. Laundry Detergent – laundry soap is expensive, and when it makes an appearance on our pantry shelves, families snatch it up.

3. Olive or vegetable oil – finding a large bottle of either of these cooking staples is a delight for home cooks who need this basic, but sometimes costly, ingredient.

Tax Credit Countdown

According to Missouri Revised Statutes, Title X TAXATION AND REVENUE, Chapter 135 Tax Relief, Section 135.647, the Missouri Food Pantry Tax Credit is slated to sunset on December 31, 2019. Gifts given throughout 2019 will still be eligible for this valuable tax credit program.

We don’t know at this time if the program will be extended beyond 2019. We will, however, monitor activity in Jefferson City in hopes the value of helping our community support food pantries will encourage the continuation of the tax credit.

A Note from Stephanie

I don’t believe in resolutions. That makes writing a note about resolutions to serve our neighbors as a volunteer in the New Year a little awkward!

Rather than talk about the benefits to others when you volunteer at Circle, let’s talk, instead, about how helping Circle will benefit YOU!

According to the Mayo Clinic, volunteering does so much more than support Circle’s clients. It also:

• Decreases the risk of depression, especially in people over 65 years old. It encourages interaction and builds a support system;
• May help volunteers live longer, even when data are adjusted for age, gender and physical health. And those with chronic or serious illness experience declines in pain intensity and depression when serving others who have chronic illness;
• Facilitates meeting others and developing new relationships. Volunteering is a great way to meet new people interested in a shared activity. It’s also a way to meet people who can advance opportunities for friendships and work outside the volunteer activity.

Thank you for remembering or honoring a loved one with a gift to Circle. We are touched by your decision and your trust in our commitment to steward these funds for the benefit of the families we serve.

IN MEMORY OF:

Please note that these are Memorial/Honor gifts received from October 1 to November 30, 2018

Bill Behring
Walter Beranek
Kenneth Berkbiger
Nora & Charles Bircher
Eugene "Gene" Boeckmann
Gloria Brunner
Mike Bummeister
Julia M Burleson
Jerry Caesar
Nancy Cripps
Drusilla DeLisle
George Franck
Robert G Haddenhorst Sr
Warren Hecht
Lillian Karsh Hendin
Cheryl Houston
Jean Kinnach
Wilma Jean Kinnard
Elia J Kosednar
Elmore Krenning
Randy Leach
Fred & Agnes Loeffler
Hazel Lombardo
Albert Metzger
Dominic Mikal
David Muckerman
Don Muse
Chris Nelson
Wayne W Pennington
Donald Piekarski
Francis (Pete) Poertner
Ray Powers
Timothy M Repple
Denise Rogers
Marianne Schenck
Tom Shau Sr
Carol & John Spencer
Dick & Helen Sponsel
Mary Steins
Jerry & Marg Withers

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These are just a few benefits of volunteering. Contact me at stephanie@circleofconcern.org for information about volunteer openings we have now and more throughout the coming year!

• Save The Date •
For the 15th Annual Circle of Concern Golf Tournament
Aberdeen Golf Club • Monday, May 20, 2019
112 St. Louis Ave.
Valley Park, MO 63088
Address Service Requested

Circle of Concern
FOOD PANTRY

January 1 Circle closed
April 19-20 Circle closed
May 11 Letter Carrier’s “Stamp Out Hunger” Food Drive
May 20 15th Annual Circle Golf Tournament with St. Mark Presbyterian at Aberdeen Golf Club
September Say Cheese! Trivia Night

We share many donations with our clients:
• Food, Canned and Packaged
• Fresh Garden Produce
• Dry Pet Food, Litter
• New School Supplies
• New Blankets, Hats, Gloves

Donations are accepted:
Mon, Tue, Fri ................ 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Wednesday ................ 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Thursday .................... 9 a.m. - noon
Saturday ..................... 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Important Dates:
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September Say Cheese! Trivia Night

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

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