

Around The Circle

CIRCLE OF CONCERN
OUR COMMUNITY'S CHARITY

JANUARY 2010

Toys & Gifts Shared with Hundreds

It was the busiest Holiday Season in Circle's history.

Thanks to a great response from the community, Circle was able to share a field of toys, thousands of dollars worth of gift cards and many other wonderful things with area kids and families.

In December 231 families were adopted for the season and another 48 families received packs of gift cards. Thanks to Valley Park United Methodist Church for hosting the adoption distribution.

On Saturday December 19th hundreds of families lined up to get toys and other goodies for their kids. Rows of tables were set up with toys, bikes, personal electronics, books, plus animals, board games, stocking stuffers, hats, mittens & packs of underwear at Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church. In just over four frantic hours items were shared with parents of 545 kids.

(Additional families picked-up toys at Circle after the big day.)

A very hard working crew of Circle volunteers made the Holiday Programs a great success. Special thanks to Pat Shannon who coordinates the adoptions, Barb Staniszewski who led Toy Day, Bobbie Siesennop who assists with both programs.



Circle Of Concern ~ Annual Meeting

Monday January 25, 2010 @ 7:30 p.m.

St. Mark Presbyterian Church
601 Claymont
Ballwin, MO 63011

(St. Mark's is inside Claymont subdivision)

During the meeting friends of Circle will review information on 2009 revenue & expenses, approve the 2010 budget, elect new board members and plan for upcoming events.

All friends of Circle are welcomed & encouraged to attend.

DECEMBER SERVICES

Food Pantry

2,020 People Fed
3,234 Bags of Food Shared

Financial Services

\$11,617.23 aid to
81 families

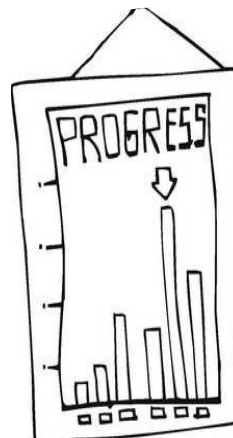
Volunteer Support

295 volunteers gave 2,436.5
hours of their time.

2009 Annual Report

It was an exciting—and extremely busy—year at Circle Of Concern.

During the year Circle fed a record 18,036 people (a 19% jump over 2008), spend \$146,411 helping families with their utilities and other



basic bills, shared school supplies with hundreds of kids and in many other ways reached out to struggling families. Last year Circle also built and moved into its new center—the biggest project in this charity's 42 year history.

We'll have more detailed information from 2009 in our Annual Report, coming next month.

From the President

As always, Circle was very busy at the end of the year. It started in November as the Thanksgiving Basket Program furnished complete Thanksgiving dinners to over 397 families. The logistics and coordination to complete this task is huge, requiring the help of over 180 volunteers. Barb Woehle and her committee handled the event beautifully again this year.

Then, Barb Staniszewski and her group hosted Toy Day on December 19th at Twin Oaks Presbyterian Church. This effort collects and distributes toys and other items to parents. Again, difficult logistic challenges were conquered as nearly 600 kids benefited from this outstanding program.

Finally, Pat Shannon, with lots of help from Bobbie Siesennop, coordinated Circle's Holiday Adoption Program. This is the program that connects Christmas donors with needy families. Each adoption requires a lot of individual detail. The result of all this hard work this year allowed 231 Circle client families to enjoy a happy holiday season.

And all of this while we fed 2,000 at our center in December! Yes, Circle sure has been a busy and productive place at the end of the year!

~ Jerry Caesar



Sad Numbers

The State of Missouri miscalculated the number of people on Food Stamps from September 2002 until September 2009: The result is that the state paid out about \$18 million too much this past September and perhaps \$300 million over the past seven years.

According to Washington-based researchers, 40% of all American households had incomes of less than \$36,000 in 2008. [NY Times 10/29/09]

Circle will be closed if inclement weather closes Parkway and/or Valley Park school districts.

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The People We Help

Steve and Bella both worked at a local auto assembly plant: Both are now unemployed. Transition benefits have begun to run out, meaning the household will soon be without medical coverage.

That's a big issue. Since he lost his job Steve had to have major back surgery. Plus Steve is the primary caretaker for his two-year-old granddaughter.

Finding employers willing to take chances on a middle-aged former factory worker has been an uphill battle. Steve has tried doing some light construction work, as his health permits. Bella has spent a lot of time looking for work without success.

Meanwhile, their worker at Circle noted that their "credit card debt is mounting with no possible way to pay it back..."

Circle is helping the family with food. The granddaughter is in the Birthday Club and Circle may be able to help with a utility bill this winter.



Alissa moved to this area to be

closer to her kids and grandchildren. She had a job when she re-located, but it evaporated last summer.

Looking for work has become a fulltime job. Unemployment pays some of her bills. Still, each month what she owes to the utilities, the landlord and on credit cards increases.

She has a promise of a job with a reliable employer starting next month. If she can hang-on for a couple of months she should be able to climb out of debt.

Meanwhile, the parents of her grandchildren have moved away from the area as they search for work.

Circle has helped Alissa with food and utility assistance.

Elegant Tea

Again this March, the good ladies with Delta Tau ESA will host their Mad Hatter's Elegant Tea Party to benefit Circle Of Concern.

Tea will be served on Saturday March 13, 2010 from 1:00—3:00 p.m. at St. Mark's Presbyterian Church. The afternoon will include a program on hats by Karen Bono, an auction & door prizes.

Tickets—\$15 each—must be purchased by March 1st. Please make checks payable to Delta Tau and mail them to:

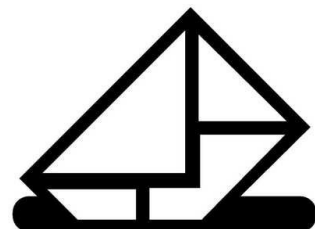
Mae Hudson
200 Greenmore Dr.
Ballwin, MO 63011

Mae can be reached at 636.227.0133. Please make reservations, break out your fancy hat & bring your favorite tea cup to this delightful afternoon.

Received in the Mail

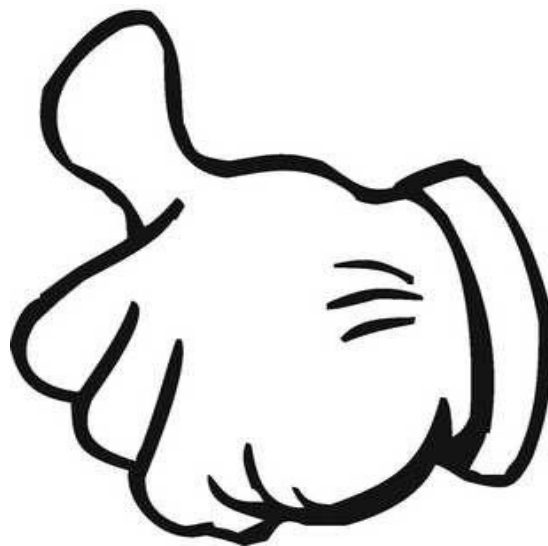
“Your organization helped our family over 30 years ago. My husband had a back operation. We had eight children. We appreciated it then as we do now and thank you so much.”

“I just wanted to tell all of you Thank you for all your help last year. We know everyone works hard to keep Circle going to help our family all year long. We are so grateful for all you do for us.”



Good News Department

- The **Saint's Fellowship** of third, fourth and fifth graders at *St. Mark's Presbyterian Church* collected soups and trail mix for Circle's pantry in November.
- The **Gateway Tigers**, Mizzou's local alumni group, raised money and collected toys for Circle's Toy Day with a “fried Jayhawk” dinner.
- Again this fall, the children at **Claymont Preschool** collected items for Circle's Holiday Baskets.
- *Junior Achievement* students at **Marquette High School** operated two businesses” **Teez n' Keys** and **Shannnags**. They donated a major part of their profits to Circle's pantry to help buy holiday food.
- **City of Wildwood** employees collected money for Circle's Holiday Program again this fall.
- **Hanley Pandolfo** of Ellisville had her friends make Birthday Bags for kids helped by Circle for her birthday.
- **Cub Scouts Luke, Ashton, Austin, Patrick, Sean, Kevin & Calvin** “*Sang For Circle*” by caroling through their Ballwin neighborhood, raising money for Circle's pantry.
- The social action committee at **Congregation B'nai Amoona** in Creve Coeur collected a large load of toys for Circle.
- Again this year, the members of the **Valley Park Business Association** decided to make a Holiday Gift to Circle instead of having a Christmas party.
- The *Outreach Ministry* at **St. John United Church of Christ** in Manchester has donated countless gift cards to local grocery stores over the entire year.



Counting to 16

One of our receptionists had a question: The Circle Of Concern Guidelines sheet which we give our volunteers show the maximum monthly incomes for families with one to six members: How much could a family of 16 make each month and still get our help?

Yes, at Circle we are now assisting a multi-generation household with 16 people. We're also helping a family of 13, a couple of families with 12 members and a score of households with 10 people.

Housing remains a great challenge to many families. "Affordable housing" just doesn't exist in most places out here beyond I-270. The consultants for the Great Streets Initiative, for example, project that apartments and other homes priced for service industry workers will not meet demand through the next couple of decades.

But people have to live somewhere. When they can't afford a place of their own they crowd in with parents, grandparents or friends.

Of course, they seldom admit to squeezing-in. Municipalities frown on 12 people in a two bedroom apartment. When you're afraid to share your reality with one level of government you probably won't be truthful with the fire department, your kids' school—or the census.

I remember spending a lot of time before the 1990 census handing out flyers which our charity had produced, putting our name and reputation behind an effort of the federal government. We **guaranteed** that the information they put on their census form wouldn't cause them to lose their kids to the state or bring the city inspectors to their door.

A few months later we surveyed a significant number of the families who had received the flyers. All believed us. Only about one-third trusted the government.

With the 200 census we put up posters and informed the families coming to Circle about how important it

was that the official count be accurate. Again, many believed us but didn't tell the whole truth on their form. Or, not being paperwork aficionados, they didn't complete and return the census form.

Remember Albert Einstein's definition? "Insanity: doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."

The bad news is that we must keep doing essentially the same thing every ten years. And, that census data (even when it's incorrect) is vital. Many levels of government use that information, and, Washington makes decisions on support for anti-poverty, housing and other basic programs assuming the numbers are right.

So, over the next few weeks Circle Of Concern will pass out flyers and explain to the families we meet how essential it is that they tell the truth on their census form—even if they fudge on what they tell their local government or their kids' school.

At the same time, I am among the many who feel that the federal government needs to make basic, structural changes in the census.

Yes, that hard count of who lives here is required by the U.S. Constitution to apportion representatives. Of course two hundred twenty years ago there were fewer people to count and statistical sampling probably wasn't very sophisticated.

I bet we could get closer to reality with sound, reasonable scientific sampling than we can mailing out tens of millions of census forms. We live in an era with so much raw data—utility account usage, postal patrons, traffic counts and such—that, given a decade, researchers could come up with an extremely accurate estimate of how many of us there are and where we live.

That may happen down the road. This year we will strongly encourage every one we meet to complete and return their census forms with honest answers.

By the way, the current government poverty level for a family of 16 is \$5,581 a month (\$66,972 a year).

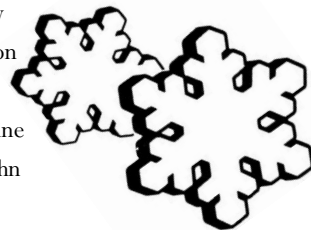
Honorariums

Nancy Akred	Jennifer Coalson Conrad Family	Keith & Angela Gosney	David & Barbara Huhn	Manchester UMC Clergy & Lay Staff	James & Marilyn Perry	Sue & Darrell Stachelski
Inis & Blake (given by Andrews)	Dominic Copeland	John Gergel	Joyce Inman	Sierra Marcum	Rev. Margaret Diz Phillip	Andrew Tasch
Jim & Linda Atkinson	Copenhaver Family	Mrs. Henry Griesedieck	Pat Irmscher	The Marshalls	The Ed Potters	Bill & Helen Totty
Bill Bailey Family	Corneliussen Family	Marianne & Steve Grove	August Jennewein	Leo McClain	Carl Quicksall	Barbara Tubbesing
Virginia Bailey	Rhonda Declue	Judy Hantak	Jane, Tom, Kevin, Sarah Jennewein	Joan McClure	Sid & Madeline Raile	Vince Tubbesing
Jeff Bainter	Paul & Norma DeLanty Family	Margaret Hasse	Jim, Allison, Jake Jennewein	Mr. & Mrs. Michael McKinzie	Mark Rasch & Family	Laura Tyrey
The Frank Baldwins	Annette Desaulniers	Harry Heitmeier	Leonard & Bernice Heminghaus	Sue McLaughlin	Jody & Walter Robbins	Ruth Ann & Randy Weismann
Mary Lee & Howard Baygents	Calvin & Judy Dierberg	Ernest & Christine Henderson	Boyd & Barbara Jones	Members Book Club	Mr. & Mrs. John Rogers	Bill (L.H.) & Lois Williams
Ms. Pat Becker	Robert R. Dierberg	Rich & Jane Hendrickson	Mr. & Mrs. William Jones Sr.	Merrick Management Team	Jo Ellen Miller	Brad Wood, St. Louis County Police Officer
Susan Bentley / Rob Woodbury	Walter & Jill Domeracki	Joyce S. Hicks	Helen Kahre	Jo Ellen Miller	Kit, Tim, Sean, Michelle Miller	Leroy & Nancy Zenk
Dr. R. Bilchik	Ann Donnelly	Rev. Edward Hilgeman	Sue Keightley	Robert & Margaret Morrison	Robert & Margaret Morrison	Anna Marie Zoghby
BRDG Park Friends	Jean & Gary Driver	Rev. Jimmy Hilgeman	The Peter Kellers	Susan Napoleon Family	SAFC Sales Team	12 Dozen Cookie Exchange Gals
Liz Bresnahan	Mr. & Mrs. W. Egan	John Hilgeman	Chris & Mary Ann Kinder	Rich & Edith Niedringhaus	Sander Scharff	
Cindy Breth	Walt & Lynn Engel	Sr. Mary Ann Hilgeman	Ed & Dawn Koenen	Fred D. Oberhaus	Mr. & Mrs. Steve Schroeder	
Jane Brookhouse	Mary Ann Enlow	Tom & Phyllis Hilgeman	Glenn M. Koenen	Jeff O'Conner	Bobbie Siesennop	
Barbara Bruns	M. Ray Evans	George & Edna Hille	Glenn & Peggy Koenen	Charlie O'Shields		
Virginia Bruns	Esther & Vernon Ficken	Gary & Jean Hively	Patricia Koenen	Charlotta Overton		
Bob & Phoebe Burbridge	Emily Fishman	Mr. & Mrs. John Hoffman	Robert Kuntz	Palazzolo Family		
Matt Burkholder Family	Kay Folsom	Earl & Mae Hudson	Theresa Laurent	Dot Pennebaker		
Tom & Dee Byrnes	F – Squad	Wilma Hudson	Bettyann Lllter	Karen & Wayne Pennington		
Rev. Kevin Cameron	The Chris Gaebes		Paul & Kathryn Lyon Family	Martha Pennington		
			Ron & Barb Main			

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.

Memorials

Wayne Abraham	Mike Castings	Roy E. Hellmann	Richard E. Kelleher	Dean Medlock	Mae Rohne	Ruth "Nana" Waterson
Nicholas Aitken	Robert Collings	Harvey Henricks, Jr.	Dr. & Mrs. John King	Henry Meyer	Albert & Ellen Rompf	Stephen Weber
Mathilda Arft	Suzanne Cooper	Mathilda Henricks	William & Frieda Klein	Rita Muessig	Ray E. Ronecker Jr.	Virginia Wilson
Jack Asher	Lillian R. Davis	Hermann Family	Larry Kline	Barbara K. Nicely	Reta Russell	Tony Yonovak
Dr. Robert Barels	Joseph Drain	Hewitt Family	Glenn E. Koenen	Betty Jo Oliver	Joan Schmieder	Deceased members of ERA- 423 Organization
Debbie Bassore	Bob Edmonds	Colonel Arthur E. Hoeg	Randy Leach	Joan (given by Oppliger)	Lois Schulz	Veterans -service to our Country
Lyle Baughman	George Eirich	Adele Hoffman	Leroy D. Lindemann	Lisa Ostrem	Rick Spencer	
Teri Leigh Beezley	Mary Eneberg	Norman Hoffmann	Kenneth R. Locke	Gladys Listrom Owens	Betty Sundhausen	
August Berndt	Marilyn Fager	Mr. & Mrs. Roy Hogen	Sharon Loftus	Peter Patton	Jennifer Terry	
Kathryn Lee Bettis	Hal Faught	Edward Holland	Larry Lyon	Earl Peil	Don Thompson	
Kristen Blaha	Marie Gasparovic	James I. Hollrah	Camille Malloy	Rhonda Perkins	Jack Tisone	
Catherin (Kay) Bloss	Albert Gleason	Lenore Horstmeyer	Carrie & Harry Martin Sr.	Claire Piesbergen	Nancy Valentine	
Roger Boughman	Molly Gleason	Eugene L. Kaiser	Clarence Martin	Ruby Preis	Virginia Vaughn	
Mary Burr	Robert Guinther	Joseph Kapsar	McMahon loved ones	Marie Roach	Katherine E. Vermillion	
Mary Ann Burr	Bobby Hampel			George Robbins	Earl Voelz	
	Harry Heineman			Rose Rohan	Viola Waelter	

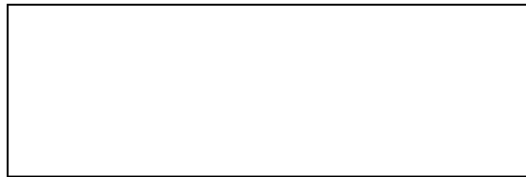


Circle Of Concern



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

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
VALLEY PARK, MO
PERMIT NO. 444



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

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.**

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

Executive Director

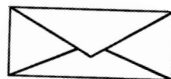
Glenn Koenen

Pantry Director

Linda Johnson

Associate Director

**of Programs &
Volunteers**
Emily Fishman



This edition of *Around the Circle* was
mailed January 13, 2010



Current Needs

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



Join Circle Of Concern for our
January fundraiser to be held
at Applebee's in Ballwin on
Manchester Rd.

On Saturday January 23, 2010
with a flyer (that can be found on our website—
www.circleofconcern.org) 10% of your purchase will be
donated to Circle Of Concern.
Restaurant hours that day are 11 a.m.—11 p.m.

We hope to see you all there!