



CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH

MISSION STATEMENT The Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh is a non-profit Catholic association of lay volunteers embracing members of all denominations, expressing its members' love of the Christ Child through service to God's children regardless of race, color or creed.

September, 2013

SPIRITUAL DIRECTOR

FATHER KEVIN POECKING

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MARIAN FLOWERS

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KATHLEEN FITZGIBBON

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" My God I desire only to be a tool in your hands; use me to do your work; and if, thus using me, You hurt me, let me say Thy will be done so long as I do your work." Mary Virginia Merrick

Dear Members and Friends of the Christ Child,

Now that our summer is behind us, we are returning "full speed ahead" as we continue our projects!

The Board has met and the budget for this current fiscal year is set. Our budget for 2013-2014 is just over \$48,000.00. This seems like an enormous amount of money for funding our programs; but be assured that it ALL goes to the children we serve! Our major expenditures annually are Angels' Closet, Layettes, and preparation costs for the Red Wagon Fare. This past summer we have begun a new project, "My Stuff Bags" for children who with their mothers, must flee abusive situations, often with only the clothes on their backs. It is sad that these situations continue in our society. Diane George has graciously agreed to chair this committee and we thank her for her time and efforts.

Audrey Friel and Pat Schimmel have been working with Diane George and Joanne Herrmann to keep the layette packing complete and ready for delivery. Volunteers are always needed for layette packing, packing of the "My Stuff Bags" and Angels' Closet.

Other newsworthy items include:

Our tax information has been prepared by our CPA, Ed Dougherty, and submitted to the Internal Revenue Service.

It is almost time for new officers for our Chapter! Our term expires in May, 2014 and a nominating committee will be formed. Please consider "throwing" your hat into the ring for the officer positions; they are only a 2 year commitment.

We are pleased to announce that Father Kevin will be serving as our emcee at this years' Red Wagon Fare.

Due to personal obligations, Joyce Orr has put a hold on the "Henry the Hand" program for the time being. We look forward to the time when Joyce will be able to commit her time and talents to our Chapter. Thank you Joyce for all you have done for us!

We have begun our new format for donations to the Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh. As you will see, there is now a donation form included in the newsletter. Please feel free to copy it or call us if you need additional forms. We are having the Capuchin's say a mass monthly for all the members of the Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh, as well as the private intentions of our members.

Ellen O'Brien will be in attendance at the Christ Child Society's conference. Unfortunately, we were not able to send 2 delegates this year, due to members and their prior obligations. Thank you Ellen for you service to the National Christ Child Society and all the energy and effort you put into our Chapter! Ellen will certainly fill us in on any pertinent changes or information when she returns from Bethesda.

Our next general membership meeting is September 26th. This is our last meeting before the Red Wagon and always an important one for tying up loose ends! Also, Molly will be collecting donations for the "basket of cheer" raffle.

Please know that we appreciate all our members and pray for continued blessings and good health for all!

In the Name of the Christ Child,

Marian & Laura

RED WAGON FARE—2013

Our 16th annual **Red Wagon Fare** is scheduled for **Saturday, October 12, 2013 at the Pittsburgh Field Club** in Fox Chapel from 10 AM to 2:30 PM. We all know what a beautiful venue the Field Club is, particularly in the fall, so be sure and bring family and friends to enjoy a day out. By now you should have received your invitation to this, our only fundraiser of the year. Please get your reservations in as soon as possible. Pat Schimmel (412.795.1298) is taking reservations this year. The ticket price is the same, \$35 per person.

We will feature our legendary Basket Auction, Bucket of Cheer, Gourmet Delites, a 50/50 raffle, a Purse Raffle, and our Grand Prize raffle that awards two \$500 prizes. Some important guidelines for your donations are noted below:

BASKET AUCTION DONATIONS *

We are still in need of basket donations. We ask that a basket or a gift item have a minimum value of \$100. If you are able to donate a basket or item, please contact Judy Kern, Marie Lowry, or Pat Maida as soon as possible. The following members have committed to a basket/s:

Audrey Friel;	Mary McCormick;	Laura Merzlak; <i>Wendell August Forge & Jewelry Basket</i>
Molly Kelley;	Suzette Venturini	Pat Maida, <i>Lottery Wreath</i> ;
Judy Kern;	Cheryl George, <i>Spa Package</i> ;	Ellen O'Brien, <i>Irish Basket</i> ;
Mary Ellen Ploeger	Marie Lowry, <i>Soup Basket</i> ;	
Connie Kunz, Kathleen Lee, Angie Slocum, <i>Toys R Us Gift Certificate</i> ;		
Mary Jane Diamantopulos, Barbara Fredette, Mary Jo Kelly, Dolly Kelly, Jane Leavy;		



If you are able to donate to the Basket Auction, Judy Kern needs to know what you are donating, and the contents of the basket. Please let her know as soon as possible by email judithk14@comcast.net. Also, please have your donation at the Field Club between 2 PM and 4 PM, Friday October 11, 2013. Please call Judy if you are unable to get your item to the Field Club during those hours.

PURSE RAFFLE DONATIONS *

Cheryl George would like to thank the ladies who have already pledged purses, jewelry, tickets to events, and gift cards for the Purse Raffle. However, **she is still in need of 1 purse and 2 items** (preferably gift cards worth at least \$50) to complete the raffle. Please call Cheryl at 412.367.7238 to donate. Cheryl will need a volunteer at the Red Wagon to help her with the Purse Raffle. Please consider this if you haven't a job for the Red Wagon, and call Cheryl to let her know.

GOURMET DELITE DONATIONS *

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT THAT ALL MEMBERS BRING AN ITEM/S FOR THE BAKE SALE! Goodies of all types are welcome. Cookies will be needed for the Cookie Walk, and homemade jams and jellies are always in demand. Pies also sell, but whole cakes DO NOT. If you donate a cake please cut it in half, since this offers a better appeal to buyers. Please have your donations to the Field Club by 10 AM the day of the event.

GRAND PRIZE RAFFLE DONATIONS *

If you haven't already donated funds towards our Grand Prize Raffle, please take the time to do so now. Checks (in any amount) made out to Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh (with a notation that it is a donation for the Grand Prize) should be sent to our Treasurer, Mary Ann Gonot, 1028 Tropical Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216.

As of this writing, we do not know if we can set up on Friday, October 11, 2013, so watch your email for notification. The Field Club is making every effort to keep the afternoon open for us. As ever, the more hands we have to help set up the faster the work goes, so be sure to block Friday October 11 for Red Wagon set up. Also, we always need help cleaning up, so please be sure to stay around for a short time to help collect red wagons, and other items that are used from year to year. Do you have questions regarding **RED WAGON 2013**? Please contact Ellen O'Brien at ehob3@comcast.net

GENERAL MEETING LUNCH VOLUNTEERS

The following members have volunteered to be general meeting lunch hostesses:

SEPTEMBER 26 Kathy Fitzgibbon and Cheryl George
OCTOBER 17 Mary McCormick and Pat Schimmel
NOVEMBER 21 Suzette Venturini (one more volunteer is needed)
JANUARY 16 Volunteers needed



We have not currently scheduled any general membership meeting dates after January 16, 2014.

Please remember, hostesses can submit all expenses to the Treasurer for reimbursement.

Angels' ClosetFrom Molly Kelley

Just around the corner we will once again serve the angels in our area by providing new coats, hats and gloves. Our hours are a bit different this year to hopefully provide service to those families who can't get to the center during the week. We will open Thursday, October 3rd at noon for clients, but I would ask for help that day starting at 10 AM to sort, tag and hang. The two Saturdays we will be there are October 19th and November 23rd. Our hours those two days will be 10AM to 2PM. I hope and pray that the help will be there those Saturdays as I have a feeling we might be really busy. I know our members will come through as always on this mission to serve God's children.

Hip! Hip! Camp AIM 2013From Molly Kelley

The Christ Child Society was very active this summer providing both financial and physical help at both Art day and the Prom. In addition, the members gave so much in the form of donations collected throughout the year. THE STUFF was so greatly appreciated in the form of jewelry, ties, tee shirts, prom dresses, and much more! Those of us that helped at the camp had a blast!! Especially dancing at the prom! Our financial donation was used to buy a portable toileting seat that gave the wheel chair campers a sense of dignity and privacy that was lacking before our donation. More info on this donation will follow in the next newsletter. CAMP AIM thanks you all from the bottom of their hearts for all you do for the children!!



*Thank you.... Volunteers...
for
all of your help during
Camp A.I.M.'s 2013 PROM!
In the words of a camper,
"IT WAS EPIC!"*



My Stuff BagsFrom Diane George

The “**My Stuff Bags**” project is a very big success and very much appreciated. Kathi Welsh, who I contact at the shelter when making a delivery, said the children are so excited to get their very own drawstring-type bag. Each bag for the children includes a pair of pajamas, 2 pair of underwear, 2 pairs of socks, shorts/tee shirt or sweatsuit, depending on season. The personal bag contains toothbrush, toothpaste, comb/brush, soap, shampoo, Kleenex— and for the older children, deodorant. A book is also included according to age. Our last delivery was in July. I have been busy doing inventory and putting all items in containers according to size and gender. Inventory is in good shape right now. We should have enough items for at least 50 bags in a size from 12 months to 16 years. I was able to put the children's personal items in zip lock bags to make it easier for packing.

Kathi also indicated that the children could use school supplies. Items were donated and 10 children going to kindergarten received school supplies. Ten boys and 10 girls going to either elementary, middle or high school were given supplies. Each child received a hard cover notebook, ledger divider, ream of lined paper, school calendar, composition book, ruler, a pencil pouch with two pencils, one pen, eraser, pencil sharpener, and a box of colored pencils. When I delivered these items, Kathi was so excited and she related how much the children could use the supplies. This project will not be done on a regular basis. If enough items are donated I will do another packing, but this is not a priority. The **My Stuff Bags** will always be our number one project. One thing has changed—the items for the bags will be stored and packed at the St. Edward Social Hall in Blawnox. Father Joe Keenan was kind to give us permission to use the hall and a storage area. This will make storing and packing so much easier. I will send out an email when a packing will take place. The Women's Shelter, in 2012, served 230 women and 198 children in the residential program. The average stay is 45 days, serving children 12 months to 17 years.

I truly enjoy doing this project and hope I can live up to the amazing work the Christ Child Society continues to do.

Layette Report ...From Audrey Friel and Pat Schimmel

We want to send a special thanks to Doris Delserone and Phyllis Dombrowski for the splendid work they have done organizing the Layette program in the past. They left everything in good order for Audrey and I to just pick up where they left off. Also, special thanks to Joanne Hermann for continuing to get the diapers and wipes for us, to Dianne George for continuing to order the rest of the items in bulk and to Marian Flowers and Mary Ann Gonot for delivering the packages. We pack 50 layettes at a time with bottles, bibs, wipes, diapers, body suits, sleepers, gowns, receiving blankets, and beautiful crocheted or knitted blankets provided by friends of Diane Reich and Kathy Fitzgibbon. We also enclose a “Shaken Baby Syndrome” pamphlet, information about the Christ Child Society and a baby book, if we have them. Donations of baby books are greatly appreciated.

There will be a packing in September as soon as the latest order comes in. If you have already signed up wanting to be notified of the date, we will contact you by email or phone. If you would like to sign up for this program, please email me (Pat Schimmel) at kpschim2@aol.com or call at 412-795-1298 and leave a message.

NEWS FROM NATIONAL

From Ellen O'Brien, National Board, Program Chair

The National Christ Child Society will hold its biennial Conference in Bethesda, MD at the Doubletree hotel, Friday, September 20, 2013 and Saturday, September 21, 2013. The topic for the Conference is “**Facing Challenges Together**”. Leadership issues will be an important part of the discussion. Ellen O'Brien will be attending as an NCCS Board Member. Planning is in full gear for the biennial NCCS Convention, which is to be held in Phoenix AZ, September 2014. Pittsburgh has sent representatives to the prior two Conventions (2012 in Detroit MI, and 2010 in Cleveland OH). We are a relatively small chapter (not the smallest!), and it is to our advantage to continue to be connected to National, and have our voice heard. Smaller chapters have challenges that are different from the larger chapters, but we are all part of this wonderful charitable work that has been done for more than 125 years. Please think carefully and prayerfully about volunteering to attend the Phoenix Convention next year, and represent CCS Pittsburgh. You will be glad you did. Keep in mind that our chapter has made the commitment to fund the travel, lodging and registration expenses for two (2) representatives.

Early in 2014, the NCCS Nominating Committee will begin its work to identify and nominate a slate of officers for the 2014 – 2016 term. Again, it is important that the Board have representation from chapters that are of varied sizes, and locations. If you, think you might be interested in ‘throwing your hat in the ring’, please let Ellen O'Brien know.

CC MASS AND MEMORIALS Program Revised

The Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh will no longer offer individual Masses for special intentions. We are now requesting that you use the following form for any tribute gift **or** general donation to our CCS. In place of individual Masses, one Mass will be said for **all** Christ Child intentions each month. We will acknowledge your donation and send a card of recognition to the special person you wish to honor, and their name or your intention will be included with the Mass for that month. All donations will now go directly to our CC Chapter to continue our mission of helping children in need— “nothing is ever too much to do for a child!” If you have any questions, please contact Laura Merzlak or Marian Flowers.

Please use the following donation form for any tribute gift or general donation to the Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh. We hope to have this form available in the near future on our website at www.christchildsocietyofpittsburgh.org

CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY OF PITTSBURGH DONATION FORM

Name _____

Address _____

Amount of donation: ___\$50.00 ___\$25.00 ___\$10.00 \$ _____ other amount

___in honor of ___in memory of ___in thanksgiving for

Name _____

Please send an acknowledgement of my gift to:

Name _____

Address _____

Please enclose this form and your check payable to the “Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh” and mail to:

Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh
Mary Ann Gonot
1028 Tropical Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15216

Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh is a 501(c)3 (non-profit) organization. Your donation qualifies as a charitable deduction.

A Note of Thanks!

We would like to extend a special **thank you** to SANDRA DaCOSTA for her recent donation to our Chapter. Her generosity is very much appreciated by our CCS and will be gratefully used to advance our mission.



The Christ Child Society is in need of help in the following areas. Please contact Laura Merzlak or Marian Flowers if you are willing to help with any of these projects:

- **NEW CHRIST CHILD SOCIETY BROCHURE**
Project involves revising current brochure with updates for LAYETTES, ANGELS' CLOSET, CAMP AIM, and MY STUFF BAGS.
- **CHAIR FOR NEW DONATIONS (Replacement of Mass and Memorials)**
Project involves keeping track of donors after Treasurer's deposit.
- **WEBSITE ADMINISTRATOR**
Project involves submitting updates for CCS. Training can be offered for this project.
- **GRANT WRITER**
Project involves grant writing for CCS. Anyone familiar with grant writing is asked to contact Laura or Marian.

Christ Child Society of Pittsburgh

P.O. Box 11324
Pittsburgh, PA 15238-1324
www.christchildsocietyofpittsburgh.org

FIRST CLASS MAIL



Dates to Remember

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| October 12 | - Red Wagon 2013—Pittsburgh Field Club |
| October 17 | - General Membership Meeting Lunch 11:30, Meeting 12:15 |
| October 3 | - Angels' Closet Opens |
| November 2 | - Mary Virginia Merrick's Birthday |
| November 21 | - General Membership Meeting Lunch 11:30, Meeting 12:15 |
| December | - Christ Child Christmas Party (Date TBA) |
| April | - Christ Child Retreat (Date TBA) |
| May | - New Officers Installation Luncheon (Date TBA) |

NOTEWORTHY:

- The Lunch Coordinators for the September 26 General Meeting are Kathy Fitzgibbon and Cheryl George.
- Many thanks to Audrey Friel and Diane George for serving as Lunch Coordinators for the August 22 General Meeting.
- *Please don't forget to bring your bottle of cheer to the September 26 General Meeting. If you are unable to attend, please contact Molly to make other arrangements.*
- RESERVATIONS FOR THE RED WAGON FARE ARE DUE TO PAT SCHIMMEL BY SEPTEMBER 30.
- FYI...The next publication of the CCS Newsletter is scheduled for December. Please submit all information for this newsletter to Judy Kern by November 20.