



Covenant to Care for Children

Helping Connecticut's Children in Need.

Winter 2010
Vol XXII, No. 1

Sponsorship Corner

YOU!

We use this space to highlight sponsors, usually a business or corporation, who has helped us in an extra special way.

This time we want to honor YOU. Yes, YOU, our individual friend and donor.

During the economic downturn YOU stood by us and stepped up your efforts to assure we can continue serving.

During the difficult Connecticut State budget negotiations - YOU wrote emails, letters and made phone calls to your elected officials in support of Covenant to Care for Children.

YOU have been patient as we downsized and took steps to consolidate resources in order to continue to remain effective while increasing efficiency.

As part of your faith-based group or community organization, YOU have continued to volunteer your time as a mentor, collected items that our children need, or coordinated special projects while at the same time YOU managed to meet increased requests from social workers and our staff.

Without YOU, Covenant to Care for Children cannot serve. YOU have exhibited all the virtues and for this we say...

Thank YOU!

Tilt A Whirl vs. the Rollercoaster

Ask any nonprofit leader and they will tell you that the past year has been some sort of carnival ride and so far 2010 things haven't slowed down.

The economic downturn seems to be leveling off, but the impact to nonprofits continues. People are still struggling to support their families while jobs continue to diminish; these factors increase the number of children and families who need our help.

While investments have recovered to some extent, foundations, which support the nonprofit sector, continue to struggle with diminished resources.

Big community questions remain unresolved while we try to meet the needs of children who keep growing and needing so much to have healthy productive lives. They just can't wait for us to fix things.

Connecticut's Department of Social Services reports the following:

- Over 295,600 Connecticut residents received SNAP/Food Stamp benefits



in 11/09, up 32% in one year and 58% in five years.

- Over 445,700 individuals received Medicaid coverage in 11/09, up 7% in one year and 33% in five years.
- Connecticut's Temporary Family Assistance caseload has increased by more than 1,100 cases in one year.

The world has changed and we aren't going back, but we have carried with us the values that make us strong. These values will carry us forward, they are our safety line, our seat straps as we all ride this ride together.

Covenant to Care for Children (CCC) has adopted values that guide us in working our mission and achieving our vision. We are committed to being:

- Child-centered
- Responsive to needs
- Motivated by faith
- Respectful of human dignity
- Caring toward all

There have been ups and downs,



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A unique opportunity to give a gift of hope to a child in need & to give to each of your loved ones.

www.covenanttocare.org or call 860-243-1806 to request a catalog

Alternative Gift Catalog

The Discovered Spirit Project... A Creative Project to build Awareness



Artists' Reception:
Sunday, March 28, 2010
4:30 PM—6:30 PM
light hors' d'ourves and beverages
Southport Galleries
330 Pequot Ave, Southport, CT

This is a free event but donations are always welcome and the art will be for sale with 100% of the proceeds going to CCC.

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sudden turns and somewhat jarring hesitations. We expect this will continue but at least we are all on this ride together.

Highs

- Under the leadership of Nancy Crouch, we reestablished a great working relationship with *St. Agnes Home* in West Hartford, a residential group home for teen mothers and their infants. We have made 5 matches there with Nancy Crouch serving as mentoring coordinator.



- Formed a new mentor support group this September in Manchester at *Concordia Lutheran Church* for seven mentors in that area.
- Felix, age 12, started a relationship with Ron in September. Felix is mainly “at risk” of not achieving great things. He is gifted and now has a caring male friend to help guide him.
- Spring basket donations were amazing.
- The Prom dress recycle event, expanded to include the Valley Region this year, was very successful.
- A special drive for bikes held by *St. Paul's Episcopal Church*, Fairfield, resulted in over 100 bikes donated to DCF Bridgeport for children/teens
- Successful regional meetings with social workers and liaisons from faith-based organizations in covenant with CCC.
- Coat drives delivered an abundance of coats for children in all regions.
- The *Connecticut Junior Women* (CJW) participated throughout the year with school supplies, holiday stockings and toys, book bags, camp bags, and emergency placement packs.
- *CJW Junioresettes* stepping up as creative volunteers whenever the call came.
- *The Amalia and Nicola Giuliani Foundation* grant; sponsoring our Discovered Spirit Project.
- *Wachovia's* very supportive grant.
- Surpassing our ambitious grant goal for last year of \$215,000.

Five Things You Can Do to Make a Difference

1. **Send An Extra Financial Donation to CCC**
2. **Men needed as Mentors**
3. **Host a Facebook Party**
4. **Host a Chico's Party**
5. **Choose to lead as a Board member or faith group liaison**

- Working together despite all the uncertainty and commotion.
- To be able to regroup, without cutting the services CCC provides.

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The Discovered Spirit Project

Covenant to Care for Children's (CCC) newest project is for children and youth with any experience in Connecticut's Department of Children and Families, the Foster Care system or the CCC Mentoring Program. The project is intended to give them a voice by encouraging self-expression through art.

Words alone are not enough to express what children feel. This is especially true when they are faced with the complex issues of divorce, grief, violence, abuse, neglect or coping with poverty. We are giving a voice to these children to express a wide range of emotions and help them work through conflicts and traumas. We expected to see an array of outcomes with our masks from the whimsical to the evocative and we are not disappointed. While expressing themselves in this visual way, the children gained a sense of empowerment that can help them develop a positive self-image and improve their self-esteem.

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People pins are handmade,
each with a unique design
but all sporting the CCC logo.

\$18.00

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The participants created masks guided by professional Connecticut artists, who volunteered their time and talents to the project, Donna Frustere and Karen Wright of Hartford; Katrina Franzen of Southport; and Marta Cunha and Julie Nearing of Middletown.



The masks are part of a juried show displayed at Southport Galleries in Fairfield County, along with examples of the professional artists' work. Sarah Biggers, Gallery Manager, has generously allowed use of this beautiful new Southport gallery located in the renovation of the village's historic hardware store. At the Discovered Spirit Project artists' reception on Sunday, March 28, 2010, the masks will be available for sale with all proceeds supporting the programs of CCC. Celebrity judges Congressman John Larson, State Representative Gary Holder-Winfield, and Yvonne Harris, Event Coordinator for Hartford's Artist Collective will present awards for the masks showing the greatest originality, presentation, and representation.

The masks will be available for viewing at the gallery until March 31, 2010.

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- Passed the audit without any problems and having our accounting system approved and praised by auditors.
- Subscribed to an E-mail blast service resulting in a reduction in mailing costs associated with annual appeal letters and newsletters.
- Filled close to 2,500 requests for toys and



holiday gifts through numerous faith-based and community organizations in relationship with CCC.

- Completed a technology plan, which also

includes a disaster mitigation plan thanks to help from the *Hartford Foundation of Public Giving*.

- Extensive review of health insurance options, resulted in mitigation of the rising costs that threatened to make it impossible to insure our staff.
- CCC now offers a small term life insurance policy for employees.
- Building our Board in partnership with *Leadership Greater Hartford*.
- New partnership with the *Department of Corrections*.

LOWS

- Have 12 male mentees and zero male mentors in the pipeline for the Hartford area.
- Normal Fall outreach/response for mentors limited this year by CCC downsizing,
- Furloughs and layoffs (temporary wage reductions).
- So many of our small local foundations that have supported us so faithfully continue to do so, but have had to reduce the amount they can give.

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Help keep our printing &
postage costs down!

Visit www.covenanttocare.org

- We are behind where we were in total grant dollars committed for this year, as compared to last year.
- Waiting for the resolution of the State budget and CCC funding issue.

LOOP DE LOOP

- Going through the agency downsizing, in all aspects, might look like a low, but turned out to be a benefit, couldn't call it a high though.
- Losing some great staff; gaining some great new staff.
- 2009, coming after the financial meltdown of late 2008, was a difficult year for furniture donations to the Critical Goods Program. The generosity of various state charitable foundations, individuals, and Bob's Furniture allowed the Critical Goods Program to provide twin beds, bunk beds, full size beds, and one toddler bed to the children of Connecticut.
- The State budget talks continue; no matter what the final outcome, the children we serve will be affected and that will increase the demand for our services and demand greater resources.

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After this period, the masks will travel to faith-based sites throughout Connecticut as a traveling display during the following ten months.

“Our goal is to bring broader awareness of Covenant to Care for Children and the children we serve, offer an opportunity at recognition and accomplishment to the children participating, and build support of our programs.” stated Discovered Spirit Project Committee Chair and Hartford artist, Diann Cook.

This is a free invitation event. “We hope our guests will purchase the masks and or make donations but this event is more about bringing awareness of our children to a higher level.” Says Covenant to Care for Children CEO, Caryl Hallberg.

Southport Galleries is located at 330 Pequot Ave, Southport, www.southportgalleries.com. For more information, please contact Covenant to Care for Children or visit our website at www.covenanttocare.org.

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**Have an account at Facebook, MySpace, BlackPlanet, LinkedIn, Twitter or Idealist?
Find us there!**

- **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/pages/Covenant-to-Care-for-Children/41053913992
- **MySpace:** www.myspace.com/covenanttocare
- **BlackPlanet:** www.blackplanet.com/covenanttocare
- **LinkedIn:** www.linkedin.com/pub/0/625/257
- **Idealist:** www.idealists.org/en/org/176393-95
- **Twitter** @covnant2care

Covenant to Care for Children holds all the people of Haiti, but most especially the children, in our thoughts and prayers.
To learn more please visit
www.covenanttocare.org



Inspire Change, April 9-11,

Inspire Change, is a call to action for all of us to change the way we think about the prevention of child abuse and neglect and focus on actions that protect children right from the start so child abuse and neglect never occur.

April is National Child Abuse Prevention month. We are asking you to make a choice to join us in finding the spirit and strength to end the cycle of child abuse in Connecticut. We are asking all our faith-based partners to join each other and us in offering a special prayer during your services the second weekend in April.

Our appeal is that together the members of all 240 plus faith communities in covenant with Covenant to Care for Children be given the strength to end the cycle of child abuse; that we be given the wisdom to support the children and their families in ways that make them stronger and healthier; that our legislators open their hearts and minds to the plight of the most helpless of our citizens; that everyone in Connecticut open their eyes and spirits to see the vulnerability of our children. Imagine the power of more than 240 faith communities offering a single prayer to end child abuse!

Please join us in assisting to meet the needs of Connecticut's Children

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Check (payable to CCC) **Credit Card** (circle one) Visa Mastercard

_____ Please bill my Visa/Mastercard credit card for a single payment of \$ _____ OR a monthly payment of \$ _____ for a _____ month period.

Card Number _____ **Exp. Date** _____

Signature _____ **Amount** _____

General **Endowment** *Please consider making a special donation...*

In Honor/Memory of _____

I would like to volunteer

Please return to Covenant to Care for Children, Inc. 120 Mountain Avenue, Suite 212, Bloomfield, CT 06002
We respect your privacy. Your information will not be sold or traded.

Please check with your employer to see if they have a Matching Gifts program.

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