



# Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois Good News

MT. VERNON REGION

JULY 2010

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- View our new adoption video. See page 5 for more info.
- 'Like' our new Facebook page to receive agency updates.
- CSS now offers services at St. John's Day Care and preschool.
- It is not too early to sign up to be a Secret Santa sponsor.

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## National Child Abuse Awareness Month

In recognition of National Child Abuse Awareness Month in April, the Mt. Vernon Regional Advisory Council created special display items to be used throughout the month in the community. A special banner, reminding all of us to "Stop Abuse", along with wooden sil-



Regional Advisory Council honors National Child Abuse Awareness Month

houettes of two children who symbolize all who have lost their innocence because of abuse and neglect, were presented to the agency in April. The items were on display at the CSS office, at St. Mary Church in Mt. Vernon, and at the golf scramble.

## Second Annual Golf Scramble a Success



Attendees of the Golf Scramble gearing up for the first round.

The second annual "Tee-Off for Kids' Sake" Golf Scramble, the major fundraising event for the Mt. Vernon Regional CSS Office, was held on April 23, 2010 at Green Hills Golf Club in Mt. Vernon. An enthusiastic Golf Planning Committee met monthly to plan the event, and with their help

and support, the day was a great success. Regional Advisory Council members and CSS Staff served as hosts/hostesses on the day of the event as 100 golfers enjoyed the early spring round of golf. Proceeds from the event will benefit the children and families served by the CSS office.

## Thank You for 45 Years of Foster Care Service

After forty-five years of being foster parents, Shirley and Mike Neal have decided to retire, and were recently honored by the Mt. Vernon CSS staff for their years of dedicated service. It is estimated that they have touched the lives

of over 100 children in that span of time, having spent the past eight years with Catholic Social Services. Their compassion and love of children meant that they never turned away a child in need. "If a child needed a home,

we knew we could always count on Shirley and Mike," stated Pam Flota, Regional Director. "Their dedication and commitment to kids was just unique".



Regional Director Pam Flota and the Neal Family

*“CSS is not just a Catholic organization; it is part of the much bigger world picture,”*  
*Vickie York.*

## Volunteer Corner

Our Mt. Vernon region is blessed to have a great support system of volunteers. One of those volunteers is Mrs. Vickie York. Vickie began as a Regional Advisory Council (RAC) member for Mt. Vernon in 2005. She was asked by a member of her home parish if she would like to help Catholic Social Services by becoming a RAC member when the council was in the process of reorganizing. But for Vickie, the need to volunteer began long before her days as a Mt. Vernon RAC member. In high school Mrs. York was involved in service groups and church organizations. She encouraged her children to do the same. Mrs. York and her family continue to support the local American Red Cross board,

St. Mary’s school, and Catholic Social Services. Being a RAC member for Catholic Social Services has been a rewarding experience for Vickie. She encourages others to get involved in helping CSS by serving as a board member, “Don’t be discouraged by the sheer numbers of those that are in the system because it could feel overwhelming. Focus on the fact that you are helping many children one at a time. Saving just one is better than none at all.” Mrs. York is encouraged by her fellow RAC members as well, “I am so pleased to hear through Case Managers and others staff that the funds the RAC raises have been used to help the children in care and aid the staff in their work.” Vickie

York and her family plan to continue to support Catholic Social Services through volunteering and serving as Regional Advisory Council members. Mrs. York is so thankful she has had such a rewarding experience. “CSS is not just a Catholic organization; it is part of the much bigger world picture. It is great to know we as Catholics contribute to all people of different walks of life. In this day and age, it is great to be part of something like Catholic Social Services that can help to overcome the negativity out there.” If you would like to become a volunteer like Vickie, please contact Pam at (618) 244-0344



## Program Addition: St. John’s Day Care Center

Catholic Social Services has taken over the management of St. John’s Day Care Center and preschool. The Day Care Center’s mission is in line with our own, education is the right of all individuals, regardless of race, religion, economic status, or age. They care for children ages 2-12 years old. St. John’s provides an atmosphere that is safe and conducive to learning. St. John’s is a state-licensed facility and hires only qualified

staff. CSS will provide the administrative and financial oversight of the Center and allow the staff there to focus on their primary task, which is caring for and educating the children entrusted to them. St. John’s Day Care Center is now enrolling for the 2010-2011 school year. We are very excited and proud to welcome St. John’s Day Care Center into our CSS mission, vision, and values. We

look forward to providing our community with the unique services that St. John’s Day Care offers.



# 2010 Christian Service Award Dinner



The 2010 recipients, from left to right, Pastor Kendall Granger, Pastor Camilla Weatherall, Helen Fiedler, and Fr. Osang Idagbo.

The Belleville (Metro-East) Region of Catholic Social Services (CSS) of Southern Illinois hosted the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Christian Service Awards and Benefit Dinner on Friday, April 30th at Albert's Banquet Center in Belle-

ville. At this year's award ceremony four outstanding recipients received the 2010 Christian Service Award, they are:

**Pastor Kendall Granger** is the Pastor for New Life Community Church. The philosophy of the church is one of inclusion and practicality. His goal is to repair his community by rebuilding families, and he's starting with the men. He teaches courses designed to support men in taking responsibility for and being accountable to themselves and their families.

**Pastor Camilla Weatherall** is one of the Pastor's at Deliverance Mission Christian Church. She has provided spiritual guidance, for married, divorced, single, and abused women. As a mid-sized group leader she is dedicated to providing a safe and

sensitive environment geared for engaging discussions.

**Helen Fiedler** was a driver for Meals on Wheels for many years, served as a Red Cross volunteer and also donated blood. She was also a volunteer for the Ministry to the Sick and Aged, and has always been an active member of St. Teresa's Church in Belleville as a Eucharistic Minister and in many other parish roles.

**Fr. Osang Idagbo** arrived in Belleville from Nigeria in September 2008 and was posted to serve as the temporary Sacramental Minister of Saints Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Waterloo, Illinois, in October 2008. Since Father Idagbo's assignment to Ss. Peter and Paul Church in Waterloo there has been a definite change in the overall parish community. Children and their parents adore Fr. Osang.

# Annual Carbondale Charity Breakfast

The Southern Illinois Children's Choir, led by Alice Berry, welcomed an enthusiastic gathering of approximately three hundred fifty guests to the 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Breakfast on Saturday, April 10<sup>th</sup> at St. Andrew Knights of Columbus Hall in Murphysboro. Guests enjoyed the music, visiting, and a delicious meal prepared by the Knights of Columbus.

Mike Dahlen, Master of Ceremonies, challenged the participants to rise to the need of those less fortunate in our community, reiterating the important role of non-profit organizations and of a caring community to respond to the needs of others. Angelo Fiorino, was presented the "Community Service Award" in acknowledgment of his outreach in the com-

munity. Personal stories were shared by foster parents and adoptive parents. Participants at the breakfast were given an opportunity to



Photo taken by Liz Quirin Fr. Tom Flach inviting guests to the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Breakfast in Marion, April 30, 2011

make a donation toward the programs of the agency, obtain additional information, or vol-

unteer time and expertise to share in the mission of the organization. Business Underwriters covered the cost of the Breakfast. Donations at the breakfast exceeded \$22,000 and will be used for CSS programs throughout the southern thirteen counties in Illinois.

The event is sponsored by the Carbondale Regional Advisory Council and a Committee of volunteers serving on the "Breakfast Committee" for the current year. At the end of the program, Fr. Tom Flach gave a closing blessing and welcomed participants to come to St. Joseph's in Marion for the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Charity Breakfast scheduled for Saturday, April 30, 2011.

## Our Programs

*The stories below are a composite of the experiences of fictional clients. The stories depict how clients can benefit from the programs CSS offers. The experiences, while fictional, are similar to those of our actual clients.*

It all began with an unplanned pregnancy. **Caroline** was scared and had no idea where to turn. She saw a glimmer of hope when she found a brochure for the adoption services at Catholic Social Services. Caroline spoke with counselors from CSS to help ease the uncertainty she felt about choosing her baby's new family. When Brayden was born, Caroline knew the moment she placed the infant in the Morgan's arms, she had made the right decision. Caroline contin-

ues to keep in contact with the Morgan family.

**Justin** grew up in a single parent household. His mother worked full-time while trying to care for Justin and his brother. The constant struggle he felt everyday often depressed him. He began seeing the CSS school counselor once a week. When Justin's father returned to the home and became violent, Justin was sent to a foster care family until his parents found the help they needed. It was Justin's experience in foster care that inspired him to become an employee at CSS's St. John Bosco Children's Center, a safe-haven for abused and neglected children.

**Dorothy** was feeling helpless when she could not pay her rent. She was 67 years old and she no longer had a source of income due to her husband's illness. Dorothy applied to be a Senior Aide at CSS. With the help of a CSS employee, Dorothy was able to receive job training and skills while assisting a host agency. Dorothy has now been employed at a local business for over three years. When Dorothy's husband required daily assistance, she turned to CSS once again. Fox River Assisted Living Center offered Dorothy's husband an affordable assisted living center when he needed additional care.



*"It was Justin's experience in foster care that inspired him to become an employee at CSS's St. John Bosco Children's Center."*

## Welcome, Assistant Executive Director

After a thorough interview search, Catholic Social Services is pleased to announce the position of Assistant Executive Director has been filled. Current Metro East Regional Director, Brad Beck, will be performing the duties. Brad Beck has served as the Metro East Regional

Director for five years. He has a wealth of experience and history with the agency. Brad has managed the largest region within Catholic Social Services. He has handled his responsibilities successfully and is committed to our mission at CSS. We are confident he will con-

tinue to help the agency grow. Brad's skills and experience made him an ideal candidate for the position. We congratulate Brad on his new role and we are pleased to have him serve as Assistant Executive Director.



*A sample of the toys donated for the children.*

## Secret Santa 2010

Hundreds of foster children will experience the joyous surprise of receiving meaningful gifts for Christmas. They have come from troubled homes where disappointment is far more common in their lives. In 2009

over 800 children learned the true meaning of Christmas through the generosity of people just like you! You can help create an unforgettable memory for these children. If you are not already on our mailing list for

Secret Santa go to [www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org) to fill out the Secret Santa Sponsor form electronically or print the form and send it in by mail.



# Upcoming Events



CSS Staff getting ready for the "Tee Off for Kid's Sake" Golf Scramble

**The Belleville (Metro-East) Regional Office will host the 21st Annual Christian Service Awards and Benefit Dinner** on Friday, April 29, 2011. Mark your calendar today to reserve this date and be sure to contact your friends to do the same. We want you to be a part of our program, so please join us on April 29, 2011. Your participation helps us to support our many programs. If you know someone who has served others through: faith-related service; community service; youth mentoring; advocacy; direct service to those in need; volunteerism; and/or fundraising, and wish to nominate them for the Christian Service Award, please call: (618) 394-5900 or check out our website at

[www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org).

**The Carbondale Regional Office will host their 7th Annual Charity Breakfast** on Saturday April 30, 2011 in Marion. Reservations needed. For more info call (618) 351-0743 or email [Marylou@cssil.org](mailto:Marylou@cssil.org).

**The Mt. Vernon Regional Office will host their 3rd Annual Golf Scramble** on April 29, 2011. For more information visit our website or call 618-244-0344.

**Secret Santa 2010** information can be found on our website [www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org). Sponsor a child's Christmas today!

*If you would like to receive our future newsletters by email or in electronic format please send your email address to [Pamflota@cssil.org](mailto:Pamflota@cssil.org)*

## Catholic Charities Sunday

September 26, 2010 will mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Catholic Charities USA. When an organization such as Catholic Charities reaches 100 years, everyone can be proud of this achievement. As an agency that is part of the Catholic Charities Network, we would like to honor the mission and vision that Catholic Charities

has taken on. There are many ways you can contribute to this celebration. See your parish representative for events that your Church may be holding. You may also pray for Catholic Charities Sunday and the future success of the agency's mission to help the most vulnerable in our society. Finally, you can contact your state

Senators and Representatives and urge them to help put an end to poverty in our world. Examples of poverty prevention letters and other materials to help assist in your celebration of Catholic Charities Sunday can be found at: [www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org/ccsunday](http://www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org/ccsunday)

## Media Updates

Recently, Catholic Social Services developed a new agency wide informational and an adoption specific DVD. The agency DVD highlights four of our major programs and helps to explain our mission here at CSS. The adoption DVD features the many aspects of our adoption program. You can view the video on our Facebook page or by going to our website at [www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org).

CSS also has a new Facebook page where we include frequent agency updates. To receive this information, simply log on to Facebook and search for "Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois." At the upper right hand corner you will see a "thumbs up" icon with the word "like" next to it. Click on the "like" icon and you will begin receiving updates that CSS publishes via your

news feed. If you are new to Facebook, just register for an account and follow the previous steps. You can also access the Mt. Vernon region's Facebook page from the links section. We hope to have you in our Facebook network.



Visit our website to see our new video.



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## Want to help support our mission?

Catholic Social Services is always in need of pregnancy care items such as diapers, baby clothing, and other necessary items for baby and mother.

The Secret Santa program is always in need of toys and clothing to brighten a foster child's Christmas. Monetary donations are also accepted and will be used to purchase the toys and clothing for the children. You can learn more about our Secret Santa program by viewing our website at [www.cssil.org](http://www.cssil.org).

St. John Bosco Children's Center also accepts cash donations to help ensure the children's specific needs are met.

You can also help out by attending any special events that the agency holds. For instance, attending the Christian Service Award Dinner honors a recipient as well as contributes to the overall mission of the agency, to help the most vulnerable in our society.



Volunteers are always welcome at CSS. All volunteers are required to complete a volunteer application, provide three references, and interview with the

Director of Quality Assurance or the Regional Director. Because of the potential contact with children, some volunteers are required to be screened through a criminal background check. Volunteers can serve as committee or regional advisory council members, administrative volunteers, or volunteers within the St John Bosco Children's Center.

Monetary donations are always graciously accepted. You can mail your donation to the CSS regional office of your choice or you can go to our website to donate online.

