

GOOD NEWS

Summer 2017



70th anniversary sparks many memories

This summer, Caritas Family Solutions marks 70 years of providing social services to the people of Southern Illinois, having officially incorporated as a nonprofit in the State of Illinois on July 31, 1947. At that time, the agency was established as Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Belleville. After a handful of name changes and now as an independent entity, Caritas Family Solutions carries on the same yet expanded mission to meet the needs of a diverse and widespread community.

The McGlynns are an example of the many families that have helped to shape the history of Caritas Family Solutions. Mrs. Margy McGlynn turned 90 years young this year and reminisced about her life of service, mostly as a mother of nine children, but also as a dedicated volunteer to many organizations. One volunteer experience she recalls fondly is her time as a Board and committee member for Catholic Social Services (CSS) in the 1980s. "Service on the Board opened my eyes to how many people need help and it is not just dollars [they need] - it is the personal touch and human compassion," said Margy.

Coincidentally, Margy's son, Steve McGlynn, was also a member on the CSS Board of Directors from 2004-2012, even serving as Board chair during one of the most significant periods in the agency's history. "Deciding to become an independent agency separate from the Diocese of Belleville was heart wrenching. With such a long history of serving the Catholic people in Southern Illinois, it was overwhelming to think about going it alone. But time has proven that you are not alone."

caseworkers and other staff were always mission-driven, caring, and highly competent. It was an honor to be associated with the agency and these individuals," said Dave. Today, Jill Wenzel, Dave's wife, is an integral member of the Board of Directors. "It was just a natural move for me to accept an appointment to the Board. I have always loved the mission of the agency and wish to support it any way I can," she said.

Passing on the agency's mission was recently extended to another generation as well. Jeff Brenner was adopted through CSS in 1976, and together with his wife Melissa, recently adopted an infant through Caritas Family Solutions. "When we decided adoption would be our path to becoming parents, we were thrilled to be able to use the same agency through which Jeff was adopted as an infant. We couldn't be more thankful to Caritas Family Solutions for completing our family," said Melissa.

Courtney Hagen, also adopted through CSS, is now lead foster care caseworker at our Regional Office in Belleville. "Since CSS had helped my parents adopt me, I wanted to give back," said Courtney. "When I became a mother myself, it helped me understand how much my birthmother must have loved me to want to give me a chance for a better life. That's why my job is so important to me. I want to help parents show their children how much they love them."

There are countless stories of the impact the agency has had with clients and the community over the years. Do you have a story to share? If so, please contact Laurie Lindauer, Marketing Communications Manager, 618-213-8713.



Dave Wenzel (pictured at left with his wife, Jill) served as Executive Director from 2003-2005. "My fondest memories of CSS revolve around the amazing people. The counselors,

MORE INSIDE

Caritas Day 2017	2
Blue Kids Campaign	3
CILA Home #4	4
In the Community: JSC	5
Staff Spotlight	6
SCSEP Move	6
Historical Timeline	7
70th Anniversary	8

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First Annual Caritas Day

Ca-ri-tas (kar e tas) n. “charity or love; an unlimited loving kindness toward others.”

In honor of our 70th anniversary, we are excited to launch the inaugural Caritas Day, a day of giving in celebration of the numerous successes experienced by the thousands of individuals, children and families that we’ve served over the years, and in support of those who need our services today.

Caritas Day 2017 will take place on Monday, July 31 (70 years to the day that we incorporated as a nonprofit entity in the State of Illinois).

Everyone can participate in this annual day of giving by volunteering their time and talents, making a monetary gift to benefit the services provided by the agency or donating an item from our wish list to stock our new Resource Center!

Exciting events happening on Caritas Day 2017:

9:00 a.m. Grand Opening of the Resource Center and **Ribbon Cutting** of the newly remodeled Komlos Rumpus Room at St. John Bosco Children's Center, 900 Royal Heights Road, Belleville, IL 62226
Refreshments will be served

Service Projects and scheduled volunteer groups:

Resource Center Donation Drop-offs—Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) from SAFB; Archford Angels; First United Presbyterian Church
Landscaping at Regional Office in Belleville—Ameren Illinois
Projects at the Regional Office in Carterville—Ameren Illinois
Painting, landscaping and more at the Community Integrated Living Arrangements—AmeriCorps

Ways you can help:

1. Make an **online donation** at caritasfamilysolutions.org July 31, 2017. Then follow us on Facebook for updates about giving contests and exciting news throughout the day!
2. Help stock the Resource Center by donating an item from the **wish list** (found online). Donations will be accepted Monday, July 31, 2017, at 900 Royal Heights Rd. in Belleville from 11:00 a.m. – 7:00 p.m. If you are unable to drop off an item but want to help, check out our wish list on **Amazon!**
3. Volunteer for one of our Caritas Day projects. Contact Carly Jones, Volunteer Coordinator, at Carly.Jones@caritasfamily.org or 618-213-8716 for more information.

CARITAS 
Day *of giving*





Blue Kids Campaign addresses child abuse

Each year, nearly three million reports of suspected child abuse are filed in the United States, but still more than 70% of abuse goes unreported. In fiscal year 2014 alone, nearly 110,000 counts of child abuse were reported in Illinois. As the largest foster care provider in Southern Illinois, Caritas Family Solutions serves more than 1,300 abused and neglected children annually. That is why every April we participate in National Child Abuse Prevention Month. Again this year, Caritas partnered with local leaders and businesses to distribute “Blue Kids.”

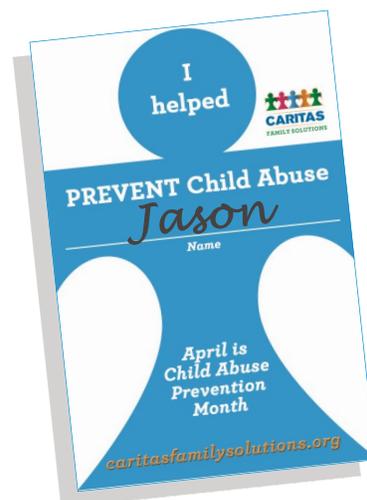
Blue Kids derived from the Blue Ribbon Campaign, which began in 1989 as one woman’s tribute to her grandson. She tied a blue ribbon to her car antenna to symbolize her grandson’s injuries after he died at the hands of his mother’s abusive partner. In addition to creating awareness, the Blue Ribbon Campaign also focuses on educating individuals and groups on how to better protect children in their community from child abuse. Similarly, the Blue Kid cutouts symbolize abused and neglected children and are used to bring attention to this growing problem that takes place in our own backyards.

The following groups participated in this year’s campaign by raising awareness through the distribution of Blue Kid cutouts to employees, members or patrons for a donation of \$1 or more. Thanks to these supporters, we raised \$2,000 to address child abuse by providing anger management and parenting classes, individual and family counseling, and other services that strengthen families and help children find the love and safety they deserve.

Advanced Title Solutions, O’Fallon
 Hideg Pharmacy, Belleville
 The Abbey, Belleville
 Blessed Sacrament Catholic School, Belleville
 Simmons Law Firm, Alton
 Fun Spot, Belleville
 Belleville West H.S. Interact Club

If you would like to contribute to the Blue Kids Campaign, please go to caritasfamilysolutions.org/bluekids or contact Judy Woodruff at 618-213-8703 to make arrangements to participate in next year’s campaign.

Call the 24-hour Child Abuse Hotline at 800-25-ABUSE (800-252-2873) if you suspect that a child has been harmed or is at risk of being harmed by abuse or neglect. If you believe a child is in immediate danger of harm, call 911 first.



CILAs provide a family environment

In the fall of 2014, Caritas Family Solutions opened its first Community Integrated Living Arrangement (CILA) for developmentally disabled adults. Today there are four homes in our CILA program, which allows the residents to live independently in the community while still receiving the support they need to do so.

Three men who live in CILA #4 have made the house more than a number but have made it a home. They each have very different backgrounds and different reasons why they live at the CILA, but one thing they all have in common is their goal to belong and feel accepted.

Tony is 45 years old and was living alone before he resided at the CILA. He is very outgoing, has a great sense of humor, and enjoys spending time in the community. Tony works in a kitchen at Scott Air Force Base, and on his days off he heads to his preferred McDonald's for coffee and to talk with his favorite employees.

Mike, age 33, has lived at the CILA home for one year. Before this, he was residing in a large facility for adults with developmental disabilities. Mike currently works at Challenge Unlimited doing piece work for contracts with local companies, such as Autozone.

The third roommate in the house is a 52 years old who has been living there for three years. Before moving into the CILA, he lived with his mother. When asked why he moved to the CILA, he indicated that his mother wanted to ensure that he was always cared for and he would gain independence.



Although she doesn't live there, another fixture in CILA #4 is Dashon, a Direct Service Professional (DSP) who provides supervision and assistance for the residents. Dashon has been working for Caritas Family Solutions for three years and treats the residents like her own family. When she cooks for them, they all gather around the table as a family to enjoy the delicious meal. Mike said that his favorite meal made by Dashon is fettuccini alfredo.

The residents' hobbies range from researching family heritage to watching Netflix and ensuring the safety of everyone in the home. But one thing evident from their shared

conversation is that these men have formed strong bonds with one another and their beloved Dashon. They do have their differences, seem to bicker like brothers, but have come together as a family.

Caritas Family Solutions builds strong foundations for individuals, children and families so they can withstand life's unexpected hardships. This CILA home has not only created three strong individual foundations but one large family foundation solid enough to tackle all of life's challenges.

"That is the goal of our CILA program: to provide a safe and secure home environment that strengthens the well-being of each resident so that they can live as independently as possible. I am always happy to see residents thriving in this environment," said Jamie Diekemper, program manager.

To learn more about our CILA program, please contact Jamie Diekemper at 618-213-8749 or Jamie.Diekemper@caritasfamily.org.

Mission Statement

"As a visible expression of God's loving community and consistent with the example of Jesus Christ, Caritas Family Solutions provides direct services to persons of all backgrounds with social and emotional needs across the continuum of life."

JSC chooses Caritas for standing service

In August 2016, the Junior Service Club of St. Clair County designated Caritas Family Solutions as a “standing service.” The club is a service organization that provides an organized resource of volunteers and financial support for various charitable organizations. Since the club named Caritas as one of their chosen organizations, Junior Service Club has provided a \$3,900 grant to support general operating expenses and 161 hours of volunteer time. Volunteers assisted with the Secret Santa program and the annual Heart & Soul Gala, and they hosted a St. Patrick’s Day party for the residents of our Community Integrated Living Arrangements. Club members also organized a summer BBQ party for the children at St. John Bosco Children’s Center. The fun-filled day included hotdogs, outdoor water games, and much more!

Jill Baudendistel, Junior Service Club of St. Clair County – Service Chair, stated, “The women of Junior Service Club are thrilled to have Caritas as a new standing service. Everyone who has volunteered at a Caritas event has expressed how grateful they are that they can be a part of such a great mission!”

We are extremely fortunate for the generosity of the Junior Service Club of St. Clair County and their partnership in building a stronger foundation for our community. *To learn more about Junior Service Club, visit juniorserviceclub.org.*



Left: Agnes Bugaj, Junior Service Club member volunteer at the 2017 Heart & Soul Gala

Below: JSC volunteers hosted a summer BBQ party at St. John Bosco Children’s Center.





STAFF SPOTLIGHT: Judy Ashby retires



From as early as she can remember, Judy Ashby wanted to do something to help other people. She wanted her job to be not only something that made sense, but something that she liked. Thus, her career path began when she attended the University of Iowa, Iowa City where she earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Occupational Therapy, and then went on to earn a Master of Science Degree in Rehabilitation Counseling from Southern Illinois University Carbondale (SIUC).

Armed with her education, she worked as a Correctional Counselor, Training Coordinator, and Clinical Supervisor at the Menard Psychiatric Center (Illinois Department of Corrections) in Chester, Ill., for 14 years. While working on her Ph.D. at SIUC, Judy provided counseling as a graduate assistant with the University's Wellness Center. In addition, for several years she was a counselor for Human Services Center in Sparta, Ill., and went on to be a trainer and then executive director for LifeSavers Training Corp. (a peer-support, suicide prevention training program for middle school, high school and college students).

In October 2001, Judy began working as a family counselor in the regional office for Caritas Family Solutions (at that time, the Carbondale location of Catholic Social Services). She states that what she loved most about her job at Caritas was, "seeing clients learn their own value and capabilities and gaining knowledge and wisdom how to live their lives more effectively; realizing I could make a positive difference." What is most rewarding to her is to run into a former client several years post-service and hearing them say, "I still remember what you told me, and I still use that learning," or when they say, "I don't hurt anymore." Seeing that light of a new understanding turn on in a client's eyes is the reason Judy has been so passionate about her work.

While Judy feels the difficult parts of her job were the administrative responsibilities, like making time to complete paperwork, she valued the times when staff would consult with each other about challenging clients. She appreciated the flexibility with her schedule and the fact that she was able to work independently.

Her respect for caseworkers is tremendous. She feels that they "are awesome and do incredibly hard and sophisticated work with their families and kids." Judy knows that she grew into a more effective counselor during her time with Caritas, and she is grateful for that. Well, Judy, Caritas appreciates your dedication, expertise, and love for your clients. You brought hope and healing to many over the years, and for YOU, we are grateful.

What will Judy Ashby do, now that her retirement from Caritas became effective March 29th? I'm off to pull more weeds from the garden, and maybe plant another row of peas before the rains start again," she said.

Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) moves to the Metro East

In January 2017, Caritas Family Solutions was awarded a grant of \$527,089 from Senior Service America, Inc. to provide temporary employment for low-income older adults who participate in the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Caritas Family Solutions has received an annual SCSEP grant since 1974. Previously the grant covered positions in the eastern counties of Southern Illinois, and the program was based out of Mt. Carmel for many years and more recently Mt. Vernon. This year's grant provides 90 positions for seniors living in Bond, Clinton, Fayette, Greene, Jersey, Macoupin, Madison, Marion, Montgomery, Scott and St. Clair Counties. As a result of this change, the program is now based out of our Regional Office in Belleville. SCSEP, a major program of the Older Americans Act, is the only federal government program mandated to assist unemployed older adults seeking to rejoin the workforce by working in their community. More than ever before, older Americans are working longer, trying new things, and engaging in their communities. They're taking charge, striving for wellness, focusing on independence, and advocating for themselves and others.



Above: Senior Aide Ruth Richards in 1983

For more than 40 years, we have been working with government and non-profit organizations to work as host agencies, with no cost and no risk to the organization, in order to help provide training, supervision and additional work experience for those 55 and older. For more information, contact Gary Woods, SCSEP Program Manager at gary.woods@caritasfamily.org or 618-688-1127.

Celebrating 70 years of services to people in Southern Illinois

On July 31, 1947, a humble organization serving needy children and families in the Catholic Diocese of Belleville was incorporated as a full-fledged nonprofit social services agency, poised for growth to meet the demands in local communities all across Southern Illinois. Seventy years later, through many name changes and now an independent, non-denominational charitable organization, that agency is known as Caritas Family Solutions, still growing to meet the ever-increasing demands of modern life.



Left: Artwork used in a 1954 appeal brochure.

- 1947** - Catholic Charities is established
- 1968** - Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Belleville becomes Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois (CSS)
- 1980** - Offices open in Marion, Mt. Carmel and Breese
- 1981** - Senior Aides (SCSEP) program moves to Mt. Carmel
- 1995** - Marion office combines with new office in Carbondale
- 1989** - Office opens in Mt. Vernon
- 1992** - St. John Bosco Children's Center opens in Belleville
- 2006** - Fox River Assisted Living Apartments opens in Olney
- 2010** - Agency assumes management of St. Johns' Daycare and Preschool in Belleville
- 2012** - Catholic Social Services of Southern Illinois becomes independent and changes name to Christian Social Services of Illinois
- 2012** - Offices open in East Alton and Effingham
- 2013** - Carbondale office moves to Carterville; Mt. Carmel office moves to Mt. Vernon
- 2014** - Name changes to Caritas Family Solutions; St. John's Daycare closes; CILA program opens; MST services added in Carterville office
- 2016** - St. John Bosco Children's Center doubles in size; Regional Office in Belleville moves to new building

For more details about the history of the agency, visit caritasfamilysolutions.org/about.



Original charter from 1947

REGIONAL OFFICES

Belleville
900 Royal Heights Rd.
Suite 2150
Belleville, IL 62226
800-997-9703

Carterville
10286 Fleming Road
Carterville, IL 62918
800-997-9381

East Alton
645 Berkshire Blvd.
East Alton, IL 62024
618-258-8750

Mt. Vernon
219 Withers Dr.
Mt. Vernon, IL 62864
877-277-3773





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St. Louis, MO

8601 West Main Street
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Belleville, IL 62223



Newsletters are also available at caritasfamilysolutions.org. If you would like to receive this newsletter electronically, please send your name, mailing address and email address to outreach@caritasfamily.org. Thank you!



Above: Cahokia family receives special recognition in 1966 for adopting two children of Asian descent.



Above: Current CEO Gary Huelsmann is hired as a caseworker in the Mt. Carmel office in 1986.



Above: Former Belleville office dedication in 1990.

Right: "Foster care is a family endeavor which requires cooperation from every member of the family. As in any typical large family, the older children, natural and foster, sometimes are recruited to babysit for their little brothers and sisters." (Photo and story by Stan Konieszczy, courtesy of The Messenger, October 1979.)

