

## What's a Diaper Cost?... by Mary A. Linton, RN, MA, COORDINATOR, CATHERINE'S CLOSET

"What's in a diaper?" Ask a parent, grandparent or child care worker and you'll get a few snickers. However, if you ask us, you will hear a somewhat different tale about the economic impact of diapers on the families that we assist.

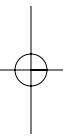
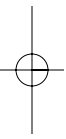
In the 1970's, when my children were small, cloth diapers were preferred by many pediatricians. Today the structure and materials in disposables have been refined so that they do not pose the problems of first generation disposable diapers. They are convenient, sanitary, relatively protective against skin rashes and messy accidents, but the cost is astronomical! If purchased in the economy size from a discount store in Rensselaer County during February, 2007, the cost of Pampers ran anywhere from \$17.11 to \$36.11 per package. Store brands ran from \$10.59 to \$22.08.



At minimal use, the monthly cost is well over \$30.00. The Women, Infants and Children program does not cover this necessity. In addition, many of our families don't have the available cash to purchase in bulk. Here's the CATCH-22. A small package of store brand diapers costs \$5.74 for 26 items or 22 cents per diaper. This is the same as the average cost of the diaper in the Pampers economy pack!

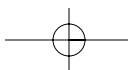
Most day care facilities require families to supply each child's diapers and wipes. This is an additional expense for parents who are paying for day care in order to enter or to remain in the workforce. At minimum wage, the diaper factor becomes a significant financial consideration.

When families turn to us for help at Circles of Mercy, often they need diapers, but people don't think to donate this essential item. Maybe diapers seem too ordinary or are just taken for granted; maybe people don't realize the burden that these throwaways impose on an already stressed budget. My hope, as a Grandma and a volunteer, is that some who read this article will begin to think differently about donating diapers, or the money to purchase them. Church groups, community organizations, or individuals, we need your help. Your generosity and caring make such a difference for those who struggle every day. •



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**Mission Statement:**

Circles of Mercy honors the dignity of each person, offers hospitality and provides services to instill hope and empower individuals to reach their full potential.

SPRING 2007

VOLUME 6

Number 1

**Director:**  
Richard Zazycki

**Hours:**  
M-F, 9 a.m.– 4 p.m.

- Programs:**
- Mentoring
  - Tutoring
  - Computer Training
  - Support Groups
  - Parenting Classes
  - Self Enhancement Groups
  - Professional Clothing
  - Advocacy
  - Catherine's Closet

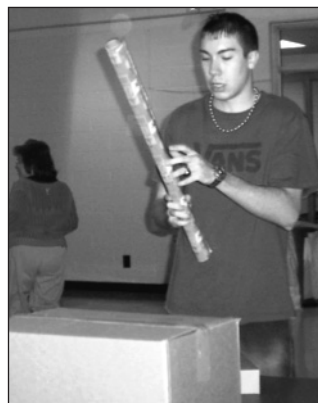
• • • Celebrating 10 years of providing hope, hospitality and empowerment • • •  
to individuals in the Rensselaer Community,  
especially women and women with children.

# Connections

## Eagle Scout Candidate Chairs Adopt-A-Family Program

Chris Gorzynski, from Boy Scout Troup 78, organized and arranged the Christmas 2006 Adopt-A-Family program for Circles of Mercy. Chris, who is a candidate for Eagle Scout, solicited potential donors by phone, following up with letters and e-mails.

Chris used his personal contacts and a list provided by Circles to ask for gifts of toys, clothing, and other items requested by members of families whom the program would serve. Because of these efforts Circles was able to help 68 families with approximately 80 adults and 155 children last Christmas. The estimated total of the donations received was \$19,000, a 450% increase over the Christmas 2005 appeal!



Chris Gorzynski

Circles of Mercy and the families who benefited from the efforts of Chris Gorzynski and Boy Scout Troup 78 are grateful for everything these young people did to make the Christmas holiday truly merry for so many. •

## In Memoriam



Gail Rieth, RSM

On February 20th, Circles of Mercy lost a good friend and staunch supporter.

**Sister Gail Rieth** died at St. Peter's Hospital after a brief illness.

A Sister of Mercy for forty-one years, she was a woman of many talents.

Gail first came to Circles of Mercy in 1998 when she was asked to teach a course on conflict resolution. Gail's involvement with Circles grew as she served for six years as a member of our Board of Directors. She also reached out to her circle of friends, bringing gifted people to join her on the Circles Board. She assisted in setting up a computer lab for clients and supported its growth and improvement. She was a "fixture" at many of our activities and fund-raisers.

Gail was a mentor to a participant of the conflict resolution class. She became deeply involved in her life and until Gail's death, she considered this woman a "wonderful gift to her from Circles of Mercy."

Gail was committed to Circles' mission of touching lives, one at a time. She offered hope and hospitality, and helped in providing services to empower individuals to reach their full potential.

Gail's bulldog determination, her love of life, her vitality, her common sense spirituality and openness to ideas will be greatly missed by all who knew her. If we measure life not by the titles we hold and the ranks we achieve, but rather by the lives we have touched, then we should thank God for having let us share in and be a part of Sister Gail's life. •

### Circles of Mercy Board Members

Catherine Owens Arduini  
Rose A. Barba  
Sister Eleanor Guerin, RSM  
Nancy LaRow  
Anthony S. Maney, Esq  
Kagthleen G. Pingelski  
Joanne Scheibly  
Sister Jane Somerville, RSM  
John Sweeney  
Sister Gail Waring, RSM

### Director's Report

This is my first opportunity to write the director's column since arriving last summer to replace Sister Kathleen Pritty, RSM. I wasn't sure I could meet the expectations of the Circles Board and the Sisters of Mercy. After all, Sister Kathleen has such a presence in the Rensselaer community, I felt somewhat inadequate in "filling her shoes". But I quickly learned that with God's help and guidance from the Spirit I could use my knowledge and skills, to continue the mission and charism of Catherine McAuley here at Circles of Mercy.



Richard Zazycki

I recently wrote an article for the Bishop Maginn Alumni Newsletter featuring Circles Board Member Sister Jane Somerville, RSM. Sister Jane said, "Every once in a while our ministry is determined by those around us. I never would have imagined that I'd be in this position today." Reflecting on those comments I discovered that they really summed up how I now feel. I had no knowledge of Circles, never heard anything about the organization, its ministry, or the services it provides. But in conversations with Sister Jane, she told me all about Circles of Mercy and said they were looking for a new director. She told me she thought I would be a good fit and suggested that I apply.

There is no doubt my ministry here is determined by those around me, especially those who support, nurture and guide me: the Sisters of Mercy, Debby Wilson our receptionist, the Board of Trustees chaired by Cathy Arduini, the volunteers, our donors and benefactors, but most importantly by our clients who come looking for dignity, hope and hospitality, and longing to be empowered to reach their full potential.

I have become aware of some specific areas on which to focus as director. One major goal is to improve Circles' image and awareness in the community. We will continue providing the services and programs which clients need: computer training, employment skills, parenting and self-improvement skills, the VITA tax preparation program. Another priority is maintaining Catherine's Closet, our clothing thrift store, which includes Cate's Kids and Baby Blessing, where children and infants can get new clothing and baby supply items like diapers. We will build on and continue to expand our collaborative relationships with the many social service and educational organizations who assist our clients, as well as the special relationship we have with Siena College's Social Work Department and the Franciscan Center for Service and Advocacy.

We are truly blessed by the sharing of so many people's time and talent. In order to sustain our mission with financial stability, we depend upon the support of our donors and benefactors. Without your financial contributions throughout the year, Circles would cease to exist. Please know that I am committed to working hard to see that Circles is able to provide the hope and hospitality that our clients need. I ask for your commitment too. ●

**"We should never falter in our confidence that God will make all things turn to the best."**

— Catherine McAuley  
Foundress of the Sisters of Mercy

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**Connections**  
A newsletter to promote the mission and values of Circles of Mercy, a program sponsored by the Sisters of Mercy.

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FAX: 518-462-2892  
circlesofmercy@nycap.rr.com

## Gifts and Memorial Donations

We gratefully acknowledge the following gifts made to support the mission and services of Circles of Mercy

### In Memory of:

- Robert P. Zazycki – by Catherine’s Closet Volunteer Staff
- Michael D. Hartnett – by Marilyn T. Hart
- Michael D. Hartnett – by Rosemary Horan
- Sister Gail Rieth, RSM – by Rosemary Horan
- Sister Gail Rieth, RSM – by Sr. Marie Matthews, RSM
- Gladys B. Jenkins – by Patricia A. Palmer
- Mr. and Mrs. Bill Mannion – by Sister Pat Mannion, RSM
- Rev. Charles Lockwood – by Mr. and Mrs. Ron McCormick
- John and Mildred Mooney – by Judy and Lou Polsinello
- Catherine and Armand Guerin – by Sister Eleanor Guerin, RSM
- Mary B. Nolan – by Nancy J. Nolan
- Mr. and Mrs. Martin Klee – by Sister Helen Klee, RSM

### In Honor of:

- Rev. R. Adam Forno – by Mr. and Mrs. Ron McCormick
- Edna Rawley and Martin Klee – by Sister Helen Klee, RSM
- Joseph A. Grimaldi – by Joseph Grimaldi

## Make a Gift to Circles of Mercy

Is there someone among loved ones whom you would like to remember in a special way for a birthday, anniversary, or even at the time of death? Why not honor him or her with a donation to Circles of Mercy? You will know the satisfaction of helping someone right in your own community who is in need of essential services. You are saying something very special about the person whom you chose to honor in this way.

If you choose, donations will be acknowledged in a future newsletter. We will also send a personal acknowledgement of your gift. Gifts to Circles of Mercy are tax deductible Please call us at 518-462-0899 for further information.

**This is a beautiful way to pay tribute to a parent on Mother’s Day or Father’s Day.**

**Please complete the form at the right and return it with your gift donation.**

## Let A Child Teach Us!

This past December, Director **Richard Zazycki** was contacted by **Mrs. Tara Decker**, mother of 8-year-old **Nicole Decker**, a student at Holy Spirit



Nicole Decker

Catholic Elementary School. She inquired as to what type of donations were needed. Richard responded that there is always a need for clothing and supplies for the baby closet.

Mrs. Decker said that she had a conversation with Nicole about how best to celebrate her up coming birthday. Their idea was to have Nicole’s friends and family bring gifts for new moms and their babies to her birthday party, instead of giving her gifts. We were astonished when Nicole and her mother came to Circles bearing a large assortment of infant and child clothing, as well as all types of baby supplies, including a new stroller!

Nicole, her mom, all of their family, friends and classmates are to be congratulated for their generosity. It serves as a wonderful example of helping others! The Circle ever widens, always in need of friends and benefactors like the Decker’s. •

## SAVE THE DATE

**June 7, 2007**

**OUR ANNUAL GALA**

*“A Taste of Mercy”*

Thursday • 5:30 – 7:30 PM

*Presentation of the Hope and Hospitality Award to*

**Most Reverend Howard J. Hubbard, D.D.**  
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**June 2, 2007**

**The Freihofer Community Walk  
In Memory of Sister Gail Rieth**

Register on line at

[www.freihofersrun.com/commwalk.cfm](http://www.freihofersrun.com/commwalk.cfm)

Our code is 202.

**October 20, 2007**

**Irish Night at Mercy Center**

I am enclosing my gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of: (living) \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of: (deceased) \_\_\_\_\_

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Please mention my loved one (name only) in your newsletter:  Yes  No

