



Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, my brethren....

Volume XXV, number 2

Summer 2012

Summertime living is easy—or is it?

ACTS
340 Park Avenue SW
Aiken, SC 29801
Phone: (803) 649-3800
E-mail:
info@actsofaiken.org
Web:
www.actsofaiken.org



Celebrate Freedom!!

Summer brings thoughts of backyard barbecues, trips to the beach, vacations from school or work, fun with family and friends.

But for many ACTS clients these things are out of reach. Although the economy has improved a little, many companies are reluctant to add new employees, and good jobs—full time jobs with benefits—are still hard to come by.

ACTS is open every Monday—Friday from 11-3 helping clients who need food, clothing, and help with utility or medical bills. Yet many people in our community are unaware that help is available to them. Who are these people? You may think you don't know anyone who could use help from ACTS, but you probably do.

Think about the people you meet every day—the person who mows your lawn or cleans your house, the waitress you see at your favorite restaurant, the personal care worker who looks after your parent or friend. The child in your class who came to school hungry last year or your neighbor who has been

out of a job for awhile. Lots of people need a little help now and then just to get by until things get better.

If you don't want anyone to feel embarrassed by asking if they need help, you could just mention how you and your family enjoy volunteering at ACTS, or how someone you know found help there. Then be ready with a brochure or newsletter to pass along to someone who might need it!

³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You drink? ³⁸ When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? ³⁹ Or when did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?' ⁴⁰ And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'

Matthew 25, v. 37-40. NKJV

Empty bins, empty drawers



One of the fun parts of summer (for some kids at least?) is to think ahead to the next school year. And for many—that fun includes new school clothes. But for low income families in Aiken County, shopping for new clothing isn't fun and sometimes it isn't even possible. A family that is having trouble paying rent, buying food, and keeping the power on will often have to "make do" with whatever clothing their children can still fit into.

Often these families find their way to ACTS for help. But when it comes to children's school clothing, sometimes ACTS can't help because the bins are empty.

Can you help? When you're sorting your children's back to school clothing, please consider donating their outgrown but still wearable clothes to ACTS. If you or your neighbors hold a yard sale and have leftover kids' clothes—bring them to ACTS. If you see a great sale or find a terrific resale shop consider buying a few extra things and—bring them to ACTS!

Your club or church group could hold an "Undie Sunday" for donations of children's new underwear and sox. Your child could ask for gifts for others instead of birthday party gifts. Be creative—help ACTS fill these empty bins and help kids start the school year off right!

E-Mail or regular mail?

ACTS now e-mails the newsletter and other information to 71 people instead of printing and mailing. To sign up, please send an e-mail to info@actsofaiken.org. Save \$ and trees.

Benefit Bank to open Jackson office

The Benefit Bank of South Carolina is a free service to the public, offering the help of trained counselors by filing online applications for Federal and State public benefits. In past years over \$9 million in funds allocated to the state have gone unused and were returned to the federal budget because people did not know programs were available or did not submit applications.

ACTS has been helping clients through the Benefit Bank in Aiken for two years and has now collaborated with Mayor Todd Etheredge and the City of Jackson to open a satellite Benefit Bank Office in the Jackson Municipal Complex. ACTS Administrative Assistant and trained TBB counselor **Gaile Boyd** coordinates the office. Clients are seen by appointment Tuesday mornings and Thursday afternoons by ACTS volunteers **Leslie Johnson** and **Julie Evona**, **Ethel Larke** of **St. Catherine CME Church**, and other counselors.

Counselors will help clients file for SNAP (formerly known as food stamps), Medicaid, Medicare Low Income Subsidy (pays part D premium), Student Financial Aid, Voter Registration and other benefits. If you'd like to become a trained counselor call ACTS at 642-5919 and ask for Karen Perry or Gaile Boyd. Please tell others about the Benefit Bank. Awareness is important in improving the quality of life for our needy neighbors.



Save the date!

ACTS 5th Annual Icicle Ball
January 19, 2013

In honor and in memory—

Acts thanks those who gave gifts in memory of: Ruth Kohler, Fred Christensen, Lonnie Daugherty, Kathleen Denver, Dave Honkonen, Jim Jackson, Florence Conrad, Billy Sibley, Virginia Holley, Arlene Lilywhite, Kenneth Okesen, Lynn Brown, Cindy Stuart and the DiStefano Family.

Gifts were also given in honor of: Bill Batts, Betty Christensen, Jed & Penny Alexander, Margaret Rushton, Jay and Alice Creamer, and Dr. David and Dana Cozad.

It's cool to be an ACTS fan!



Volunteers **Gwen and Ambrose Schwallie (I)** and ACTS Administrative Assistant **Gaile Boyd** welcome Lowe's customers to the ACTS Fan Drive May 11-12. 283 fans and over \$1,100 were donated during the two-day event. Fans will be given to ACTS clients to help keep them cool and comfortable during the hot summer months, and at the same time help lower their electricity bills.

ACTS volunteers were on hand to tell Lowe's customers about the Fan Drive, and encourage them to pick up a \$16 box fan at a display inside the store. After purchasing the fan, shoppers dropped it off with volunteers outside the store and received a "Be an ACTS fan" (the old fashioned hand-held variety) in return. This year's fan drive was sponsored by Lowe's of Aiken, and St. John's United Methodist Church.

THANK YOU

Thanks to all who use Bi-Lo Boosterplus cards. Because of you, ACTS has received a donation from Bi-Lo for \$546.53! It's time to re-enroll in the program if you're a current member—or join if you're not! Help earn money for ACTS just by shopping at Bi-Lo with your bonus card. Just given one of the enrollment cards to the cashier with your Bi-Lo Bonus Card. This one-time scan will enroll you until May 31, 2013, and ACTS will receive 1% of the value of your purchases each time you shop! Give the extra card to family or friends so they can raise money for ACTS too!



**Senior Food Saturday
June 16, 2012**



**ACTS will be closed for
Labor Day
September 3.**

Area Churches Together Serving (ACTS) Inc.
340 Park Avenue SW
Aiken, SC 29801

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. Postage Paid
Augusta, GA
Permit No. 640

Return Service Requested

ACTS Resale Shop

401 Hayne Avenue

is participating in the

Christmas in July Sale



Sponsored by the Aiken Downtown Development Association

July 23-28

Come in, cool off and SAVE!!

Monday—Friday 9 am—4 pm
Every 3rd Saturday 7 am—Noon

For special sales and coupons check our website
www.actsofaiken.org

ACTS Board Members

Beth Barkhau, President

Ernesto Barquet

Sara Campbell

Jay Creamer, Vice-President

Ken Kline

Michael McComb

Jack Mullin

Linda Poulson, Secretary

Kevin Price

Ann Reinhard

Darlene Rittel

Mark Sapp, Treasurer

Rev. Amy Stertz

Vicki Bukovitz, Executive Director

Call Judy Clements, Newsletter Editor, at 642-5117
for information about *inasmuch*.