



For immediate release:

October 20, 2008

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**The Giving Circle, Inc to Host “Make a Difference Day”
Concert at Saratoga City Tavern to Raise Awareness about our
Sister City of Waveland, MS. and Support Our Adopt a Family
Christmas Program through Franklin Community Center**

(Saratoga Springs, N.Y.) The Giving Circle, Inc., a Saratoga Springs based non-profit organization founded by Jockey’s Shane Sellers and Aaron Gryder, and Strength/Endurance Trainer Mark Bertrand will be hosting a benefit concert for Make a Difference Day on **October 25th** to raise awareness about the plight of our Sister City of Waveland, MS and to help local families in need.

The benefit concert will take place Saturday, October 25th at the Saratoga City Tavern at 21 Caroline Street (on the third floor) and will feature Forrest Jenkins (singer-songwriter extraordinaire), Jay White (on Chapman Stick), Love My Goat (Saratoga’s most unique band with tuba, flute and guitar players) and Cecil (the iconic Broadway Banjo Man). The concert is open to the public and a \$10 donation is suggested. The concert will start at 6:30PM and will be a family friendly event with children being allowed in the Tavern till 10:00PM.

Sharon Maenza of Love My Goat and member of The Giving Circle stated that, “The evening is a reflection of the Giving Circle’s close relationship with the Saratoga Arts Community. We have the privilege of having some of Saratoga’s extremely talented performing artists helping out, with each one bringing something very different and very special to the evening. Jay White plays with amazing dexterity an instrument that not many people have heard of – the Chapman Stick. Forest Jenkins is an incredibly talented songwriter, and it has been an honor getting to know Cecil (the Broadway Banjo Man) who literally has been a Saratoga icon for decades, yet most people do not even know his name.”

Residents and visitors to the Spa City often see Cecil playing his banjo on Broadway in the summer and don’t realize the rich musical history he has in Saratoga. Cecil was the leader of Motherless and the Merry Knights, a band that was immensely popular in the region in the 1980’s. Cecil is a native of Jamaica and his thick accent is indeed a giveaway.

Forest Jenkins put it best when he said, "The gift is in the giving! As a musician, I have had my share of struggles and had been helped by other along the way, so when you can give back, and help others who are struggling, you can make a real difference and should seize that opportunity."

The concert will also feature a Silent Auction and videos and pictures from the most recent Giving Circle trips to Waveland, MS. The City Tavern will be serving complimentary appetizers and will have their full pub menu available for dinner. Silent Auction items include signed Jockey boots and photos from the "Legend Race," one of a kind hand bags from Michele LaLonde, Zebags, and gift certificates for the Children's Museum, Ben & Jerry's, Creative Sparks, Philippe Bevan International Salon, Red Dragon Karate School and more....

Members of the Giving Circle just returned home from Waveland, a Gulf Coast community that was devastated by Hurricane Katrina and whose residents, three years later, are still waiting for help.

Waveland was a town of nearly 8,000 residents before Hurricane Katrina devastated the area in August of 2005. Only 35 homes were habitable after the storm, 95% of homes were uninhabitable. Six months later, at the onset of Operation: Waveland, MS the town remained a tent city with only 40% of the population returned. Assistance with home rebuilding and long-term rehabilitation of infrastructure remain the town's greatest needs. In 2008, there are still families that are homeless or living in FEMA Campers. Many residents were also recently hit by Hurricane Gustav that dumped another 4 feet of water in Waveland.

"It was amazing to learn that over 3 ½ years later there are still 550 families living in FEMA Campers," stated Ron Deutsch, President of The Giving Circle. Deutsch and former Giving Circle President Dr. Ronald Maenza recently led a trip of 9 volunteers from Greenfield, Saratoga, NYC, and Pittsburgh to Waveland. Mark Bertrand and Mike Butterfield of Saratoga Springs also led a second team, which is in Waveland now, to continue the work for local families. Area residents Lisa Larkin, Lynn Chertok, and local Contractors Michael Gymathy and David Brown traveled with Deutsch and Maenza to the hurricane ravaged community from October 8th through the 14th.

"I just think it's incredibly sad that these people have been waiting so long for help," said Michael Gymathy, who is a local contractor from Greenfield and one of the work crew leaders on this most recent trip.

In appreciation of the work of the Giving Circle, Inc. the cities of Waveland and neighboring Bay St. Louis will honor the group with a proclamation and keys to each City at a banquet on October 23rd at the Silver Slipper Casino in Waveland. Mark Bertrand, the Giving Circle founder, will be on hand to accept the award.

The Giving Circle has also been involved in providing relief to residents in Iowa after the recent flooding there and after the floods in central New York some 2 ½ years ago. Volunteers travel to Waveland approximately once every 6 months to assist families in the rebuilding process. The group also hosts an annual Mardi Gras Parade (and Cajun

Cook Off) in Saratoga Springs to raise funds and awareness for their rebuilding efforts as well as local charities (this year they raised funds for Saratoga EOC's Latino Community Advocacy Program).

To learn more about how you can get involved with the Giving Circle, please visit their website at www.thegivingcircle.org. You can register to receive regular updates about their events by signing up for their listserv. Cash donations can be made online through the Network for Good by going to the organizations website at www.thegivingcircle.org or by mail to The Giving Circle, Inc., PO Box 3162, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866.

About The Giving Circle:

The Giving Circle, Inc. identifies and helps communities in need. We are community helping community, family helping family. Each community we reach out to becomes part of the Giving Circle, as recipients and as participants, continuing a cycle of loving kindness, respect and compassion. No Act of Kindness is too small.