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Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Contact:

Ron Deutsch 469-6769

Helping to Pick Up the Pieces for Flood Victims at the Saratoga Peace Fair

(Saratoga Springs, N.Y.) The Giving Circle, Inc., an all volunteer local charity based in Saratoga Springs, will be holding a donation drive at the Saratoga Peace Fair on Sunday, September 25th from 12:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M. at the New England Presbyterian Congregational Church on West Circular Street. The Donation Drive is to collect needed items to help our neighbors in Schoharie County rebuild their lives in the wake of the horrible flooding that resulted from Hurricane Irene. There will be a moving van parked at the PEACE Fair that will be clearly marked for donation drop offs.

Members of the Giving Circle, including Mark Bertrand, Chris and Bob Dunn and Ron Deutsch recently partnered with Saratoga County EOC to bring pallets of pasta, sauce and other needed items to the flood ravaged communities of Middleburgh and Schoharie. They delivered goods to the makeshift relief center set up by the Schoharie Community Action Program (SCAP). SCAP has taken over a former video store and is using it as a distribution center, providing needed items (free of charge) to flood victims.

Two other Giving Circle members, Mo and Winnie O'Connell also recently went down to volunteer their time helping homeowners in need. "The need is so great right now for both volunteers and donations. Time is working against them with winter coming," stated Winnie O'Connell. "The 90 year old gentleman we helped, who had no flood insurance, was so appreciative. He told us that the only good thing to come out of all this was all the hugs he was getting." She explained that water rose five feet high on the first floor of homes and businesses in both the villages of Schoharie and Middleburgh. She noted that all the farms were devastated by the floods and lost all of their crops. The sound of backhoes and front loaders could be heard all day long removing the debris that continues to mount. Buildings are being stripped down to the stud walls and in most cases down to the floor joists by volunteers. Over 5 inches of mud is still being shoveled out of basements by bucket brigades.

Mark Bertrand, founder of the Giving Circle said, "We thought that the Peace Fair was the perfect place to hold a donation drive for items desperately needed by flood victims in Schoharie County. The Saratoga Springs community has always come to the aid of its neighbors. Many people are looking to help and are not sure what to do. Here is a perfect opportunity to lend a helping hand."

"Our recent trip to Schoharie County was a wake-up call for many of us. You never think something like this will happen to you, until it does," stated Ron Deutsch, President of the Giving Circle. "All of Main Street looks like a disaster area. The water and mud was 4-5 feet above the sidewalks gushing into storefronts and houses. These folks really need some help and they need it now."

The Giving Circle began as a local response to Hurricane Katrina and has been helping communities in need ever since. The group has a great deal of experience in helping families that have been impacted by flooding and storms. The group has made over 20 trips to Waveland, MS to help rebuild that community after Hurricane Katrina.

The Giving Circle is also looking for volunteers to assist in “work weekends” throughout the Capital District. **On Friday, September 23rd the Giving Circle will be leading a team to Schoharie to help residents with shoveling out basements, tearing down walls and insulation and other needed tasks. If you want to volunteer for this work day or would like more information please contact Ron Deutsch at mkd67@aol.com or 469-6769.**

You can sign up to volunteer for work weekends at the Giving Circle Booth at the Peace Fair on Sunday September 25th. You can learn more about the Giving Circle and sign up on their FRIENDS OF THE GIVING CIRCLE E-LIST by going to their website at www.thegivingcircle.org.

List of Needed Items for Donation

Most needed:

Utility Knives
Disinfectant Wipes
Contractor Grade Garbage Bags
Shovels (with square ends)
Heavy Duty Work gloves
Bug Spray
Buckets
Bath Towels
Blankets (new)
Laundry Detergent
Respirators (N-95 masks)

Also needed:

Rubber Gloves
All-Purpose Cleaners
Paper Towels
Pasta Sauce
Baby Wash
Denture Adhesive
Pillow Cases
Spray Bottles
Cutlery
Batteries (all types)
Tarps
Cloths

Sponges
Bungee Cords
Swiffer refills
Hair conditioner
Kitchen Towels
Pillows
Dog Food/Cat Food
Paper Plates
Lighter Fluid
Ropes
Dish Soap
Razors
First Aid Kits
Hoses
Washcloths
Matches
Clorox Wipes
Baby Wipes
Shaving Cream
Sheets
Anti-biotic Cream
Mud Boots
Cat Litter
Flash lights
Fans
Charcoal Briquettes

Monetary Donations: Monetary donations are always needed. 100% of these donations will go to agencies providing flood relief. Please make checks payable to The Giving Circle

Food:

Infant Soy Formula, Mayonnaise, Juice, Coffee and any other non-perishable food products.

**Donated Items that should be new include: clothing, house wares and household items
Please no used clothing, sheets or housewares.**