



**March 2009**

Hello Bus Coordinators!

Welcome to the **March edition of the Coordinator Connection!**

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Time sure is flying at Get On The Bus! You have all been working so hard, calls have been made to families, visits are happening, and money is starting to come in to the office! It's exciting to see what happens when a dedicated team of volunteers can come together and take on a project. We started in the office in January with a gigantic pile of applications. Those applications are all out with their teams and those applications have turned into real live families that we are helping to heal. What we are doing is unique and amazing, so thank you for helping to make a difference in the lives of so many children by enabling them to touch, see and hug their parent! We promise it will be a unique and rewarding journey and are delighted to share this path with all of you!

With that said- the GOTB staff as a whole would like to let you know that we absolutely appreciate every single one of you. We know it's already been like a tornado of information and we are working together to find ways to support you without overloading you with emails and calls. So, here I am emailing you to tell you that we are going to email you less. ☺ So, please try to read your newsletters, as they will house the most current and most pertinent information. Thank you for your patience with us. We are growing together as a team and

have lots of room to improve and truly do spend a big part of each day trying to figure out how to best support you all.



## **NEWS AND UPDATES AND NEXT STEPS!**

The Crossover dates are approaching! At this time the sign ups are closed for this year. Below is a reminder of the upcoming dates and times:

CTF: Thursday , March 12th 10:30 am to 3:00 pm (this is a rescheduled date)

CMC: Wednesday, March 11th 10:30 am to 3:00 pm

CIW: Friday, March 6th 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

VSPW/CCWF: Friday, March 13th 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

If you are scheduled to attend a Crossover please remember that we will not be having a catered lunch inside the prison.

Conference calls have been very quiet this year. We would really love to see more of you on your scheduled call OR if you can't make it, please appoint a representative from your bus in your place. We have had so much information to share! See your handbook for the for the call schedule and dial-in instructions.

The next few calls are:

March 16th- CMC Bus Coordinators 12noon to 1:00pm

March 17th- CTF and San Diego Bus Coordinators 12noon to 1:00pm

March 18th-CIW Bus Coordinators 12noon to 1:00pm

March 19th-Chowchilla SoCal Bus Coordinators 12noon to 1:00pm

**DIRECTIONS:** Use a land line. Try to be near a computer. Dial 1-888-745-1469. When prompted, enter code: 818-980-7714

## **MARCH 20<sup>TH</sup> DEADLINE IS A BIGGIE!**

March 20<sup>th</sup> is quickly approaching! Many of you are already out meeting with families and compiling all of your paperwork for families, as well as bus insurance information, etc. I have heard some incredible stories about so many of you going above and beyond the call of duty doing home visits and obtaining birth certificates for families! One Bus Coordinator even needed to find a birth certificate that was in GUAM! Amazing!

Below is what is needed by March 20<sup>th</sup>. Please put all forms in one envelope separated into three sections: Bus, Prison Paperwork, and GOTB Paperwork.

### Prison Paperwork

1. Prison Security Clearance for GOTB Volunteers Form (1 set per bus)
2. Prison Security Clearance for Families Summary Form Summary (1 set per bus)
3. Family Packet (1 per family)
  - Family Master Cover Sheet
  - Original Application of Mother/Father in Prison
  - Prison Visitor 106 Forms (one completed for each adult participant, 18 years or older)

### GOTB Paperwork

1. Bus Company Reservation and Insurance Form
2. Bus Participation Summary (includes event day cell phone contact, name of counselor, participant & lunch count, and T-shirt order)
3. Bus Participant Emergency Contact information
4. Adult Participation Forms (all participants riding on the bus age 18 years or older)
5. Minor Participation Forms

As always, please ask for help if you need it! We have volunteers contacting the office all the time looking for ways to help out. We would love to be able to support you!

## **GET ON THE BUS WISH LIST AND NEEDS:**

Everyone should have a wish list so why should we be any different? Please look over our little list to see if you have any connections to these things. (this wish list is actually an idea borrowed from Margaret Sardo of Bus S, who listed ALL of the things she needed for her bus in a wish list form on her FACEBOOK page. This not only allows Margaret's friends and family to pick and choose HOW to help her bus- they also can SEE how many things it takes to put together an

amazing experience for these families on GOTB. Thanks Margaret for the great idea!)

Now, onto the Wish List! Listed in no particular order:

1. Mesh signage/banners or otherwise easily attached signage to affix to busses this year to celebrate our tenth anniversary as well as provide a visible outreach tool for the organization
2. A location near Santa Ana or Anaheim to host a breakfast/meeting place for an Orange County Father's Day bus June 19<sup>th</sup>.
3. A location or parish to host the GOTB 1<sup>st</sup> annual Kick Off party on Saturday April 18<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup> from 1-4pm. (or some other mid day time frame) This party will be a place for our bus teams to connect with each other and with their families and for the children of our families to have a few special hours of fun and community.
4. A recipe or recipes for a meal that is easily made and affordable and fun. We are compiling a Get On The Bus COOKBOOK with hopes of getting one into each travel bag for the families. We would love to see creative things like "Chowchilla Chili" or "Filet of Soledad" or whatever you can think of! Sharing nourishing recipes that come from your hearts will be just one more way that we can make an impact on our families this year at Get On The Bus! Special thanks to Clyde Beswick of Bus D-1 for helping make this cookbook a reality!
5. An artistic cover design for our cookbook.
6. What do YOU think we need?

## **MARVELOUS MARCH MONEY MAKING- TIPS AND TRICKS:**

March is upon us and it's a brand new month with brand new money making ideas for your bus team!

Here are a few ideas for FUN and FABULOUS FUNDRAISING!

1. Send out a St. Patrick's Day card or email to friends and family. Tell them that "this year you'd love them to show their "GREEN" by making a donation to Get On The Bus" and you'd like to share your bus number with them to donate or participate by volunteering with you!
2. March Madness! Many people like to participate in March Madness (basketball) pools at work or at their organization. Why not ask everyone

- involved to donate this years' winnings to your bus? What a fun way to SCORE some cash!
3. Engage everyone in your circle, neighborhood or community to consider giving you ONE item that they can part with for you to sell for Get On The Bus. List all of your items on Craigslist or EBay and donate the proceeds to your bus.
  4. March Matching Gifts! Don't forget, California has a large number of companies that will match a donation that an employee of theirs has given! Simply go to [www.matchinggifts.com](http://www.matchinggifts.com) and use the company look up tool to see if your company participates.
  5. St Patrick's Day Party! Have a Pot O' Gold at the door where you will be collecting an entrance fee! Make sure you decorate and play Irish music throughout the evening. You can also cut out little green shamrocks and sell them at the party for 5\$ each and have them on display so your guests will know who had the Irish spirit!

***Don't forget to share the fundraising goal with your team and of course, call or email if you need more ideas! Stay tuned for Awesome April Fundraising tips!***

## **THANK YOU FOR ALL THAT YOU DO:**

This year at Get On The Bus is already flying by. Volunteers are connecting with families, and one by one we are eliminating so many roadblocks that have gotten in the way for these kids that so desperately want to see their Moms and Dads. There have already been so many amazing stories coming back to us at the Get On The Bus office from all of you. Every day I am moved by all of our bus coordinators and your teams that are out there connecting with these families. Every day I am in awe at just how much WORK it takes to do what we are all doing, and even more humbled when I see how effortlessly all of you seem to glide through it. Thank you for all that you do. It is truly a joy to be a part of such an inspiring team of people making such a difference in the lives of so many families.

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