



**May 2009**

Dear Bus Coordinators:

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

*IN THIS ISSUE:*

- [Thank you! What an incredible few weeks!](#)
- [Top Fundraisers](#)
- [Save the Date for Evaluation time!](#)
- [Family Spotlight!](#)
- [Get On The Bus The Movie now on YouTube!](#)
- [The Mission of Get On The Bus in your community](#)
- [Magical My Fundraising Tips](#)
- [Thank YOU!](#)

**THANK YOU TO EVERYONE FOR NOT LETTING THE**



**SWINE FLU PUT A DAMPER ON THINGS!**

Well, it sure has been an interesting few weeks! By now, many of us were expecting to be resting up after a rewarding and successful Mother's Day visit. Instead, this year we will have Father's day first and Mother's Day a week later! Leave it to Get On The Bus and all of our many incredible teams to make lemonade out of lemons! When news of the prisons closing due to swine flu first hit our office and the Get On The Bus community, we were all unsure if there would be a chance for postponement. There were many tears, many hugs and countless emails and calls of support to the Get On The Bus office. One common theme that struck all of us during those first few days of uncertainty was that we

were ALL in this TOGETHER. Together, we formed a plan, we connected with one another on how best to support our families and we got through it. On behalf of the staff at Get On The Bus, I want to say thank you to everyone for your patience, support, willingness and your passion to make Get On The Bus happen no matter what. We are humbled by the dedication and the loving spirits of each and every one of you. This year's Mother's Day event may be happening a little later than planned, but the fact that it is happening at all is proof of the magic of what we can do when we work as a team. Thanks again to all of you that were able to give up so much time and effort in order for your families to Get On The Bus!

### **TOP FUNDRAISERS FOR GET ON THE BUS AS OF 5/8/09:**

**Here is a list of some of the SoCal superstar busses as of May 8<sup>th</sup>!**

**Bus H OC \$ 10,179.32**

**Bus P SFV/AV \$6,115.00**

**Bus CMC-02 Long Beach \$5,985.00**

**Bus B-2 Long Beach \$5,769.00**

**Bus CMC-07 Antelope Valley \$5,133.30**

**Bus CMC-09 OC \$5,930.00**

*Congratulations to you and your teams for bringing much needed funds for your families to Get On The Bus!! Special thanks to Peggy Huber-who has TWO of the OC busses in the top fundraisers list this month!*

**SAVE THE DATE! JUNE 28<sup>TH</sup> IS OUR BUS COORDINATOR EVALUATION AND THANK YOU WRAP UP!**

**This year we will be doing our wrap up and evaluation for Southern California Mother's Day and Father's Day together!**

The event will take place Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup> from 11am-2pm

We are pleased to announce that the evaluation will be held at The Villa, The Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Retreat Center!  
The address is 1119 Westchester Place, Los Angeles, California  
90019

For a map and directions, click [HERE](#)

Lunch will be provided.

No 106 forms necessary for admittance! Everyone is approved!  
Guests may wear denim, open toed shoes, underwire bras and any other thing that feels comfortable!



## **FAMILY SPOTLIGHT ON CMC-05**

Get On the Bus Connects People With Incredible Stories

Here at Get on the Bus, we often get calls from all types of people. We hear many compelling stories and are fortunate to have a daily reminder of how important the work we are doing is.

A few weeks ago, a call came in from Zelda. Zelda is a family friend of an inmate at CMC named Nathaniel. Nathaniel has been incarcerated for several years. He had left behind his two sons now aged 11 and 9 with their mother in the San Bernardino area. "The two sons have not seen their father in over two years", Zelda explained. "We must find a way for them to see their father, they need him" she insisted. Zelda even offered to accompany the children. I will admit, that sometimes, we have stories at the Get On The Bus office of children not seeing their parent for 4,5,6 and even 9 years. It is really sad to realize that when you hear it has been "just" two years- two years no longer seems that long. Zelda was really able to put everything in perspective. When asked if the mother of the kids would sign over a notary for Zelda to take these two boys to the prison, she sighed heavily. "They live with their Auntie now. Their mother passed away from breast cancer three months ago. These boys have needed to connect with their father through their grief of losing their mother and this is why they NEED to get on that bus, " she said. "They need a hug from their daddy."

I know that I will always keep the story of Zelda and Nathaniel's kids close to my heart daily and will reflect often on how each family we serve has such a unique story. I am counting the days until June 19<sup>th</sup> for those boys to get the hug they so desperately need.

## **GET ON THE BUS MOVIE IS ON YOUTUBE : SHARE US**



## **WITH YOUR COMMUNITY!**

**Here is the YOUTUBE video address**

**<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PVKofbBxsX8>**

The latest video from Get On The Bus is now on YouTube. What a simple way to share Get On The Bus with your friends and family! As much as we would love to be everywhere at once, unfortunately we can only reach so many people and so many places. Fortunately, though, this is where you all come in! You are our eyes, ears, and voices in your community, and we greatly rely on you to help us branch out and spread the word in new areas. Anything you can do to help us in this endeavor would be wonderful, whether it's leaving extra brochures in your office break room, putting together a display for an event or gathering in your community, or letting us know about an event in your area that you think we should be attending or give a presentation at. We are always working to increase awareness of Get On The Bus and our mission and would love to spread awareness as much as possible!

## **MAGICAL MAY FUNDRAISING:**

May is here! We are actually halfway through already! With Mother's Day moved until June, we now have a whole extra month to keep those funds coming in!

Here are a few ideas for FUN and AWESOME FUNDRAISING!

1. Send out a Father's Day letter or email to those that are close to you. Tell them that "this year your heart is dedicated to the families of Get On The Bus" and you'd like to invite them to donate or participate by volunteering with you!
2. "Wear Jeans to Work Day" — See if your management will approve a specific day of the week in which employees can wear jeans or other casual attire for a 10\$ donation

3. With Mother's Day being postponed, I want to bring back the "Don't Come Event." Do you ever feel at times that you would rather not go to another function? Wouldn't you love to have an excuse to stay HOME and to take a whole evening off? Well, the "Don't Come Event" is perfect! Just create a clever and humorous event invitation while also explaining the event will never actually take place. You can even include a speech in the invitation from the key not speaker that also will not be attending the "Don't Come" event. This is a great way to give your families and friends a night off from attending yet another function but still being able to donate and support Get On The Bus!
4. Invite your family and friends to a benefit concert June 7<sup>th</sup> at the Cobalt Café in Canoga Park. Concert is at 6pm. This is an alcohol free event. (meaning there will be no alcohol, as opposed to free alcohol!!)

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

This is a very exciting time for all of us. I've had the pleasure of having close contact with several of the families that we serve, and getting to know them has been such an incredible gift. These kids have just the ONE wish, which is to see their parent. I had one mom tell me that her 4 year old daughter would "pay us a million dollars if she could." It's so awe inspiring to be a part of a group of people that is enabling this basic need to be met for so many of these families. This one day- this one visit -will be forever etched into the memories of these children who have waited all year and sometimes longer to see their mom or dad. Thank you to all of you for your dedication and hard work to make Get On The Bus happen. We are just weeks away from reuniting and healing these families. We are weeks away from granting the wishes of these children and it feels outstanding! Thank you all so much for all that you do. You have all inspired me and I look forward to Mother's Day and Father's Day with all of you!

Karen Plante  
Regional Coordinator Southern California  
Get On The Bus  
310-903-3345

Karen@getonthebus.us