Catholic Charities Family Connections (CC), recently moved to the Helen Hunt Campus. Along with four other organizations, open house events were hosted for the neighborhood and community at the renovated facility.

Attendees were treated to a variety of activities, tours, and door prizes as a way to introduce the co-located agencies to the community. Family Connections staff gave children new, age-appropriate books and bookmarks as a synergistic link to teach visitors about the variety of educational programming offered through CC programs. Just this month, Family Connections began Playgroup (see page 7 for details), and will soon offer Parenting on the Go, Vroom, Mothers & Babies, and Parenting the Nurturing Way to round out current programming of Kidz Klozet, Safe & Secure Kidz, Bright Beginnings, and the Early Literacy Project.

Starlite, pictured here, plays in the new Kidz Korner at Catholic Charities.
In October 1968, Denver Archbishop James Casey signed the letters of incorporation for Colorado Springs Catholic Social Services. That little outpost of charity from the Archdiocese of Denver would grow over the next 50 years to become Catholic Charities of Central Colorado – the charitable arm of the Diocese of Colorado Springs, which was formed in 1984 under Bishop Richard Hanifen. The agency’s history can be complex. Focusing initially on adoption and foster care, Catholic Charities grew over a half century to fill needs as they arose in the community. In the early 1970s, budgeting and housing support was offered for the Hispanic community. In the 1980s services for seniors and the home-bound were provided. In 1994, the agency took over the operation of the city’s only soup kitchen, the Marian House. Along the way, community agencies like Head Start and Partners in Housing have formed as Catholic Charities’ programs and spun off to become their own vibrant organizations.

As the programs have come and gone, the agency has relied on the strength of two forces. The first has been the women and men who have worked thus far on building our foundation. The second, and most important, is the power that comes from building on the foundation of Jesus Christ. “We are God’s co-workers; the foundation is Jesus Christ.” 

In his book, “The Cathedral Within,” author Bill Shore discusses the people who built the great Cathedral of Milan from 1386 until 1887. He marvels at the inspiration of those who spent their lives working on something they would never see completed. “A cathedral of this magnitude cannot be built without people believing in it so deeply and so truly that their belief becomes contagious.” Paul makes the same observation in his first letter to the Corinthians: “We are God’s co-workers; believing in it so deeply and so truly that their belief becomes contagious.”

This year, as we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we honor all of the staff and volunteers who have joined as God’s co-workers in this mission. Tens of thousands of women and men have been welcomed, served, and comforted in that time. As we celebrate the past, we look ahead with renewed enthusiasm, remembering Christ’s admonishment that our poor will always be with us, not as a source of discouragement, but as a reminder to be ever vigilant. We go forward with our faith that God is with us and our gratitude for all who have worked thus far on building our foundation.

Disabled Army Veteran, Roger Gaines, loves his country, is blessed by a great upbringing, and thankful for God. “These are just a few topics he might bring up while socializing at the Marian House Soup Kitchen during lunch. Roger served 11 1/2 years in the Army in various communication roles while working around the globe, from Little Rock, Arkansas, to Italy, to Ft. Hood, Texas, and finally to Colorado Springs, Colorado, where he says, “it’s home as far as I’m concerned.” He loves the mountains and the people, and he is forever grateful for the support systems in place at the Marian House and the Veteran Affairs (VA) office for keeping him off the streets.

As a disabled veteran living on a fixed income, Roger has found it difficult to make ends meet and to maintain employment due to medical issues. While he receives a VA Housing Voucher, lessening the budgeting burden, he also relies on the Marian House for meals, particularly when his limited food stamp allotment has been exhausted or weather inhibits his ability to get a job to change the direction of their lives. Success to us is making a difference, one life at a time.

“Resilient Veteran Overcomes Eviction”

Roger Gaines was homeless for four months and that is four months too long. His life was placed on hold because of a series of events beyond his control. Stably housed once again, Roger has aspirations of using his GI bill to enroll in school to study religion. More importantly, he has returned to making sure he stays healthy by keeping his blood pressure where it needs to be and getting over gout, something that he felt he could not do when he was homeless.

Veteran homelessness has been a hot topic over the past few years. In 2017, the U.S. saw a rise in homeless veterans for the first time in seven years, with 40,000 homeless veterans reported in the January 2017 national Point-In-Time survey. For someone like Roger, resources such as the Marian House and the VA have helped fill the gaps while he worked toward stability.

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Dust off your lucky shamrocks - it's time for the St. Patrick’s Day Gala! Join us for a fun evening of fine dining, live and silent auctions, entertainment, all hosted at the beautiful Cheyenne Mountain Resort. This year we are premiering Club St. Pat’s with live music by One More Shot and dancing in a nightclub atmosphere! The Mistress of Ceremonies will be Dianne Derby of KKTV, and for the 10th year, Kevin Patterson of the Patterson Group will conduct the live and paddle auctions. Thank you to our sponsors, committee members, volunteers, donors, and attendees for making this event, celebrating our 50th Anniversary, a success!

Support the Live or Silent Auctions by donating a tax-deductible gift such as an exclusive getaway, jewelry, spa package, or certificate for one of the auctions.

Buy Tickets or Tables: Host your friends or invite a special someone for a one-of-a-kind St. Patrick’s Day celebration. Tables of 10 cost $1,500, individual tickets are $150, or purchase a sponsorship. Tickets include champagne, and entrance into Club St. Pat’s! Go to CCharitiesCC.org/stpatsgala for tickets and more information, or contact Terri at 719-866-6427 or TGray@cCharitiesCC.org. Hope to see you there!

Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of Catholic Charities

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St. Patrick’s Day Gala
Saturday, March 17, 2018
5:30 - 9:00 pm
Cheyenne Mountain Resort
Cocktails & Dinner
Live Music & Dancing at “Club St. Pat’s” from 9:00 to 11:00 pm

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In the past 50 years, Catholic Charities (CC) has changed its name six times, from the original Colorado Springs Catholic Social Services, Inc. – a southern office of the Archdiocese of Denver, to our current name – Catholic Charities of Central Colorado, part of the Diocese of Colorado Springs, and serving 10 counties in Central Colorado.

There have been 21 leaders (seven were interim directors), with Mrs. Dolores Delgado as the first executive director and Andy Barton as the current President & CEO. During that time, three bishops have presided over the organization: Archbishop James Casey from Denver, Bishop Richard Hanifen, and Bishop Michael Sheridan from the Diocese of Colorado Springs, which was formed in 1984.

Catholic Charities has had four homes from a small office at 220 East Monument to its current home at 228 North Cascade Avenue, as well as the Marian House, an office in Castle Rock, and the Helen Hunt Campus. When the organization was formed in 1968, it provided mostly child welfare, budget counseling, and advocacy services.

Catholic Charities of Colorado Springs Catholic Charities of Central Colorado

For tickets or more information visit CCharitiesCC.org/stpatsgala or call 719.866.6422

Saturday, March 17, 2018
5:30 - 9:00 pm
Cheyenne Mountain Resort
Cocktails & Dinner
Live Music & Dancing at “Club St. Pat’s” from 9:00 to 11:00 pm

What a Difference a DAY Makes!

1/6 Sponsored by Friends of Marian House
1/8 Be Commandeered: Partnering Together To Make a Difference
1/17 Sponsored by Friends of the Marian House
1/24 In Honor of Matthew Schell
1/27 Sponsored by John & Sandra Fischer
2/1 Thank you Mortgage Solutions Financial - St. Pat’s Gala Title Sponsor
2/8 Thank you Diocese of Colorado Springs - St. Pat’s Gala Associate Sponsor
2/9 In Memory of Kerry
2/14 Sponsored by Dan & Louisa Carcadden & Family
2/16 Thank you Ent Credit Union - St. Pat’s Gala Associate Sponsor
2/17 Thank God for 50 Years of Happy Marriage - Pat & Bob Oravec
2/18 In Memory of John & Clara Donatucci
2/24 In Honor of John Daley - Happy Birthday Dad!
2/28 Thank you Penrose St. Francis - St. Pat’s Gala Associate Sponsor
3/3 Thank you Mortgage Solutions Financial - St. Pat’s Gala Title Sponsor
3/8 Thank you Mortgage Solutions Financial - St. Pat’s Gala Title Sponsor
3/10 Sponsored by The Students of St. Mary’s High School
3/14 Sponsored by St. Peter Catholic Church
3/15 Sponsored by Friends of Marian House
3/25 Sponsored by Springs Fabrication
3/29 Sponsored by the Cruise Family

For just $5,500, you can provide more than 600 meals to families and individuals.

Call 719-866-6427 to Sponsor-A-Day
**SPANISH FOR THE WORKPLACE OFFERED AT HELEN HUNT CAMPUS**

A new Spanish as a Second Language class - English for the Workplace - is being offered on Mondays & Wednesdays from 9 -11 a.m. in the conference room at the Helen Hunt Campus at 917 East Moreno Avenue in Colorado Springs. Registration will remain open until the class is filled. For more information or to register, call 719-866-6516.

**CURRENT VOLUNTEER NEEDS**

Volunteers are needed in the Soup Kitchen, Family Connections, Client Services, English as a Second Language, and in Castle Rock.

**CALL 719-866-6559 OR EMAIL VolunteerOffice@CCharitiesCC.org TO GET INVOLVED!**

**23RD ANNUAL PIKES PEAK FOOD, WINE & BEER EXPO**

**MARIAN HOUSE TO BENEFIT FROM PIKES PEAK FOOD, BEER & WINE FESTIVAL**

On April 15, the annual Pikes Peak Food, Beer & Wine Festival will take place at the Broadmoore World Arena. Marian House Soup Kitchen will not only have a booth at the competition, but will also receive a $500 donation and all the food from the Pantry that does not get used by other participants. The Pikes Peak Colorado Restaurant Association is the event sponsor.

**FAMILY CONNECTIONS BLESSED BY BISHOP SHERIDAN**

On January 19, Bishop Sheridan took time from his busy schedule to visit Family Connections at the Helen Hunt Campus and offered a blessing for the new offices.

**ALL I WANT ARE NEW SHOES FOR CHRISTMAS**

Catholic Charities Family Connections gave new shoes to children in need at Christmas. For children in poverty, a pair of new shoes is a true gift. Thank you to Larry H. Miller, King Soopers, and Applebee’s for providing funds and shoes. Your generosity provided 167 pairs of new shoes to children in need.

**VOLUNTEER INCOME TAX ASSISTANCE (VITA)**

**JANUARY 27 - APRIL 17**

VITA will be available at the Marian House in the mornings for individuals and families with household incomes of less than $54,000. Trained volunteers will prepare and electronically file state and federal tax returns assisting filers to access the credits to which they are entitled. All appointments are made through Pikes Peak United Way 2-1-1.

**CHILDREN’S LITURGY**

On January 27, the Children’s Liturgy will be sponsored by Bishop Sheridan. It will begin at 9 a.m. at the Marian House Soup Kitchen and will feature children and a variety of athletes including dancers, musicians, and more companies.

**CITIZENSHIP PREPARATION CLASSES**

Learn everything you need to know about the citizenship application process. Classes begin March 13, from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m.

**ATLAS PREPARATORY HIGH SCHOOL**

1450 Academy Park Loop, Colorado Springs

Learn about the application process and the civics, history, English, writing, and reading tests. Cost is $30. Contact Gabriel Cobos at 719-866-6516 for more information or to register.

**PARENTING CLASSES**

Life Connections offers free Childbirth Classes for expecting mothers:

- **April 12:** 1 - 4 p.m.
- **June 7:** 1 - 4 p.m.

A free 5-week Becoming a Love & Logic Parent Classes begin on February 21, from 4 - 5:15 p.m. Call 719-866-6535 to register for either class.

**LAS POSADAS**

On December 15, Las Posadas was held at the Marian House with over 200 attendees. The night included a procession celebrating Mary and Joseph’s journey followed by dinner, dancers, and musicians. Join us next year for this annual event!
In response to Jesus Christ’s call to affirm the value and dignity of each human life, to build solidarity within the community, and to advocate for justice for the poor and vulnerable, Catholic Charities of Central Colorado humbly engages in the ministry of charity for those in both economic and spiritual poverty so that all — staff, volunteers, and clients — may fully achieve their God-given potential.