

Community



Spring 1998

CONNECTIONS

A Quarterly Publication of Community Action Organization

Play It Again Team Scores Win

Play It Again, Community Action's free clothing store for Washington County low-income residents, is helping more people these days, thanks to a winning team of volunteers, sponsors and donors.



Located at the corner of Hall and 3rd in Beaverton at 4825 SW Hall Blvd., the building is provided by the City of Beaverton. Heat, lights and trash pickup are paid by a private donation through June, 1998.

The store is stocked with donations of clothing, bedding, towels and small household goods which come from many sources, including a partnership with Lutheran Family Services, the Domestic Violence Resource Center, and the Hopespring transitional housing program, each of which sends shoppers to the store as well. Goods also come from individuals who hear about the store through word-of-mouth or their churches or clubs. Many businesses and organizations conduct clothing, coat or blanket drives and bring carloads of donations to the store, all of which are distributed to customers in short

order. Other businesses donate personal care items on a regular basis—items which are perfectly good but because of damaged containers can't be sold. Many shoppers donate as well, bringing in outgrown children's clothing or items they can't use any more, saying, "I'd just like to give back," or, "Somebody else might be able to use these."

Other members of the winning team are people who help to maintain the building, such as the recent Americorps group who spent an entire Saturday pruning shrubbery, weeding, and painting and scrubbing the inside walls. High school groups have had clothes-sorting parties on Saturdays as well. All items are sorted so as to provide a good selection of clean clothing in good repair for our customers.

"I can't remember when I felt like I've done so much good."

Over the past two years of its operation, more than 1,000 low-income families have registered to shop at Play It Again, where the paperwork is minimal and everything is free. At least a dozen new shoppers discover the store every week, many referred by other agencies or churches, others finding it by word-of-mouth. Some just need a few things to tide them over, perhaps a job interview outfit or some baby clothes. Others come because they arrived in Washington County with nothing but the clothes on

their backs and need everything the volunteers can find for them. All are struggling with the effects of poverty.

"Somebody else might be able to use these."

Volunteers operate the store, which is currently open three mornings a week: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, from 9 a.m. to noon. These volunteers come from several sources, most recently from a coalition of local churches. Others who give time in the store are shoppers who want to give back as well as individuals who hear about the program. These people provide friendly assistance to the customers, restock the racks and sort donations.

It's no contest: everybody wins at Play It Again, thanks to the team effort of our community. And in the words of one volunteer, "I can't remember when I felt like I've done so much good."





Margaret Eickmann
Board Chair



Jerralynn Ness
Executive Director

A Letter To Our Friends—

Dear Friends,

To many, the word “poverty” in a sentence with “Washington County” sounds like a contradiction. And no wonder: driving around the county we see multiple images of prosperity. Housing, businesses, and industrial development are sprouting everywhere, changing the landscape practically overnight. Beautiful country estates, large family homes and spanking clean apartment dwellings filled with wonderful amenities, abound. Sparkling malls bearing the names of national chains appear as the streets and highways undergo expansion to accommodate more traffic. Meanwhile, corporations employing hundreds and thousands continue to locate here.

“Help wanted” signs adorn restaurants and retail businesses, attesting to the availability of jobs in our area. High-tech companies continue to recruit actively for

entry-level employees as well as technicians and engineers. Despite the urban growth, agri-business is still a very important part of the county’s economy, employing thousands in the fields, vineyards, nurseries and food processing plants.

Once employed, workers assume they will have the money to meet their basic needs. They also hope to get ahead: put a child through college, plan for a comfortable retirement. Unfortunately, simply having a job does not move families out of poverty or provide economic security, as evidenced by the growing number of working families who become homeless. Adequate income is the ticket out of poverty. In Washington County over 47,000 people are living below 150% of the federal poverty level—about \$25,000 a year for a family of four. It takes a full-time job paying \$12 an hour for a family to earn \$25,000 and escape living in poverty.

When we look around Washington County we see tremendous opportunities for families with employable adults to obtain jobs. Jobs that provide dignity and self-worth, build self-esteem and give a sense of place and purpose. The real challenge for our community, however, is to provide opportunities for unemployed and underemployed families to obtain living wage jobs. If we succeed, we will not only strengthen families and our community, we will significantly reduce the incidence of poverty. Ultimately, we will have taken a powerful position that says every working family in Washington County deserves the opportunity to sustain itself through gainful employment. After all, that has always been the American Dream.

Sincerely,

Margaret Eickmann *Jerralynn Ness*

Margaret Eickmann Jerralynn Ness
Board Chair Executive Director

Community Connections is the quarterly newsletter of Community Action Organization, 1001 SW Baseline St., Hillsboro, OR 97123, and is published by the Development Office.

Community Action Organization is a private, non-profit corporation. In partnership with the community, Community Action assists low income people to achieve self-determination.

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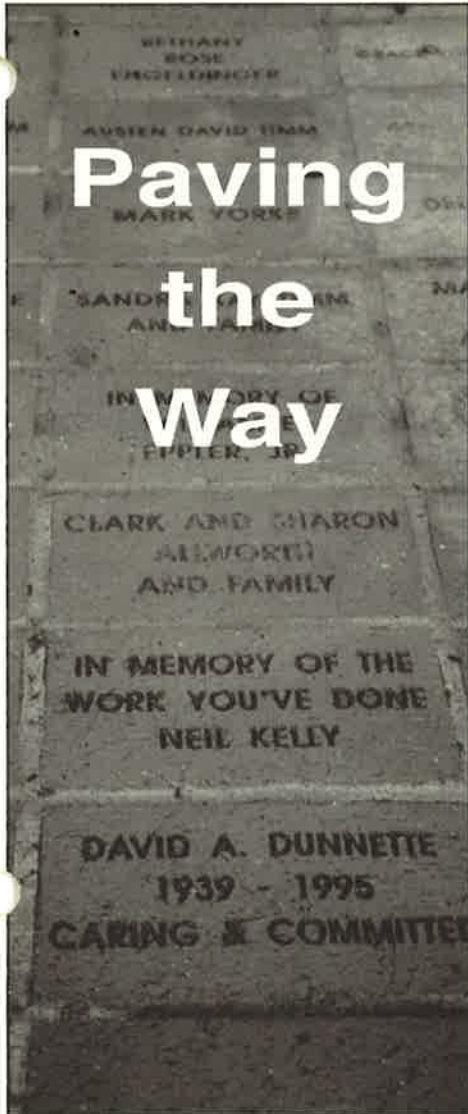
Community Action Celebrates GTE & Other Corporate Partners

In partnership with the community, Community Action’s mission is “to assist low-income people in Washington County to achieve self-determination.” In recognition of the support received from key corporate partners, we are holding our first annual “Celebration of Partnerships” dinner on Tuesday, April 7th, at the Reserve Vineyards and Golf Club. The Honorable Elizabeth Furse will be the keynote speaker and Jack McGowan will keep things lively as the Master of Ceremonies.

Seven corporations will be honored for their support for and dedication to the

work of Community Action: GTE, Tuality Healthcare, Intel, PGE, Wells Fargo, US Bank and Providence St. Vincent Medical Center. GTE will receive CAO’s Outstanding Corporate Partner award for their ongoing commitment to the agency and the community. To top things off, one person will receive a surprise award for outstanding corporate supporter.

CAO has three primary goals for this event: to publicly acknowledge and celebrate key corporate partners, to increase knowledge of the organization’s work, and to raise funds to support agency programs.



Who was that special person who “paved the way” for you? Many of us have had someone who believed in us, encouraged and supported us when it really made a difference. It may be a mother or father, a grandparent or teacher.

Once again this year, Community Action is offering a way for you to honor that person and at the same time “pave the way” for someone in need. For a \$50.00 donation we will inscribe a personal message in the brick pathway in front of our Multi-Service Center in Hillsboro. We will send a card to the person you select, indicating the message to be engraved. It may be a Mothers’ or Fathers’ Day tribute, a remembrance on Memorial Day, or just a message that you’re thinking of someone. If the person you are honoring has passed away, we will send a card to a family member informing them of this special tribute.

Walking across the pathway today, we see all sorts of messages. Loved ones are remembered, families are celebrated, community contributors are recognized. Some bricks contain messages that are meaningful only to the person who bought them and the person they were designed for. Whatever the statement, each one is a long-lasting reminder.

The bricks will literally pave the way for over 100 Head Start children who come into our center in Hillsboro everyday. The proceeds will be used to benefit the work of Community Action in Washington County.

To honor someone special in your life and help those in need, fill out the form below and return it in the enclosed envelope.

YES, I want to honor someone special and help **Pave the Way for others—**

Name _____ Phone (_____) _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Method of payment:

Check enclosed MasterCard Visa

Name as it appears on card: _____

Card # _____ Expiration date _____

I would like to purchase _____ brick(s) at \$50.00 each Total \$ _____

Inscription on brick(s) – (up to 3 lines, 17 characters per line):

Line 1-	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Line 3-	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Please send a card to:

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

In honor of: _____



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Wine Lovers' Big Chance

Tickets are now available for wine lovers to try their luck in Community Action Organization's annual wine raffle. For the third year in a row, ticket holders can win premium Washington County wine in return for buying a ticket and supporting CAO's programs. Seven Washington County wineries—Cooper Mountain, Helvetia, Tualatin, Oak Knoll, Laurel Ridge, Montinore, and Ponzi—are donating their finest wines. The Grand Prize winner will receive six cases (72 bottles) of wine, and eight additional winners will receive three cases (36 bottles) each.

The drawing will be held at the CAO Sock Hop, on May 16 at Catlin Gabel School, and winners need not be present to win. Tickets are \$2.00 and are available at the wineries or by calling CAO at 693-3252. All proceeds from the raffle will go to benefit our programs serving low-income families, including homeless and emergency services, child care, and Head Start.



After eleven successful years, Community Action's Mardi Gras is retiring, making room for a new party. Reserve a space on your calendar for the CAO Sock Hop—a new, exciting event. There'll be a DJ, dance contests, food, drink and fun. So put on your poodle skirt, slick back your hair and come to Catlin Gabel School, 8825 SW Barnes Rd. (right off Highway 26 near St. Vincent Hospital) on May 16th from 6-10 p.m. The ticket price—\$19.58—includes a barbeque dinner with all the trimmings and drink, and proceeds support CAO programs. Space is limited, so call 648-6646 now for information or tickets. See you there!



**Community Action
Organization**
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