

Spring 1993

## "It hurts, but what can you do?"

*One family's experience receiving food assistance*

Being without food is probably the hardest thing for a family to face. Late in 1991, Marta and Miguel Ibarra and their



Marta Ibarra and four of her children, Miguel, 15; Ivan, 12; Yenzin, 10; and Mati, 4.

Photo by Connie Sherrard

five children came to the Hillsboro area. For the first few weeks, they stayed with friends, but when the landlord wouldn't let them stay any longer, they moved into the WCCAO Shelter Home. It was in the shelter that they received a food box for the first time.

When questioned about what it feels like to ask for food, Marta, who speaks little English, responds in Spanish by saying, "It hurts, but what can you do?" She explains that they are always treated with respect when they make the request. A box of food generally lasts the family about three days, and is filled with such staples as flour, beans, rice, cereal, and canned meat.

The Ibarra and their children, ages

four to seventeen, moved into the apartment they now occupy in December, 1991. Since then, they've had to rely on food boxes a few times in order to stretch Miguel's paycheck to cover the rent and other expenses. "It's hard, when your choice is between food and the rent. I don't know what we would have done if we couldn't get a food box," says Marta. "Probably wait for the next check to come in or borrow money."

Like most families, the Ibarra pre-

fer to buy their own food, and don't request a food box unless they really need it. Without the support of the food box programs, children go hungry or families become homeless or enter a vicious cycle of debt to family and friends in order to buy food. Thanks to TVFC's wide network of member agencies and the volunteers who keep them running, this doesn't need to happen to any family in Washington County. ♦

## Tualatin Valley Food Center to Change Hands

*WCCAO and Oregon Food Bank Planning Transition*

Beginning in July of this year, the management of WCCAO's food bank, the Tualatin Valley Food Center (TVFC), will be transferred to the Oregon Food Bank (OFB), Oregon's statewide food network. According to Tom Caruso, WCCAO's Hunger and Nutrition Department Director, the consolidation will allow the food bank network to "deal more efficiently and effectively with hunger issues in Washington County and the Portland Metro area." In addition, says Jerralynn Ness, WCCAO's Executive Director, "it will allow WCCAO to streamline and focus its finite resources on other pressing issues of poverty."

In recent years, staff from TVFC have seen duplication and confusion resulting from the two organizations operating separately, so they recommended the move to the WCCAO Board of Directors, who agreed. "Making the change depended upon finding another organization that would be qualified and willing to take on TVFC," says Tom. "WCCAO met with Oregon Food Bank to discuss the possibility, explore alternatives, and assess OFB's ability and willingness to take over."

"We're currently in the process of

negotiation and planning for the consolidation, and who'll be responsible for what," says Tom. A committee made up of WCCAO and OFB employees is meeting to iron out the details of the transition, which will happen over two years,



Larry White, WCCAO's Lead Warehouse Person, unloads boxes of donated food as Food & Nutrition Director Tom Caruso looks on.

Photo by Connie Sherrard

beginning in July. TVFC will continue to operate out of its location in Hillsboro and the staff will probably transfer over to become OFB employees. Among the issues that still need to be resolved is the probable loss of some revenue to the food bank, specifically Community Ser-

*see Food continued on page 4*



*Sherry Robinson, Chair  
WCCAO Board of Directors*

## Letter from the Board Chair ~Then and now

"If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich." So stated John F. Kennedy in 1962. From that premise, Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Economic Opportunity Act in 1964 and, in so doing, declared the War on Poverty.

The objective was to provide opportunities for all: for education and training, to work, and to live in decency and dignity. The strategy was involvement at all levels: personal, professional, organizational, and governmental. In 1965, there was a belief that this "war" could be won; it was a people's war, fought by all for the poorest in our country. It was based on the traditional beliefs and the generosity of all Americans.

The launching of the War on Poverty required quick and aggressive action. Mistakes were made. Yet, if we had waited for the perfect solution, many of the programs that were developed might never have started. Certainly, Community Action Agencies may never have been organized.

Community Action focused on one issue: to eliminate the causes and conditions of poverty in the United States by providing the economically disadvan-

taged community an immediate response to basic needs while promoting long-term self sufficiency.

While the agencies at the Federal level were cut back and, in some cases, eliminated, Community Action Agencies have survived to this day. The objectives for these programs are the same. However, the approaches may be quite different. With the recession continuing, joblessness and homelessness increasing, and the taxpayers becoming more and more disenchanted with gov-

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**Our plan to build a home for WCCAO's future will save \$85,000 to \$100,000 annually in overhead costs; a savings that will immediately be put back into services for those in need.**

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ernment and its related agencies, a new strategy is sorely needed.

The most successful strategy involves partnerships: with churches, businesses, education, social service agencies and volunteer service organizations. For more than 25 years, WCCAO has developed connections with neighbors and friends. We have developed a dialogue with businesses in the area and joint programs with the schools in the County. Now it is time to put all those contacts to work in a strong partnership for the community.

It will take the efforts of many to

serve the needs of our County over the next decade and the success of our effort will be determined by the success of our residents to become a part of this effort. No one agency can do it alone, and WCCAO invites others to become involved.

We have taken the first step in this process: the purchase and dedication of a plot of land, the future site of our Multi-Service and Child Development Centers. Our plan to build a home for WCCAO's future will save \$85,000 to \$100,000 annually in overhead costs; a savings that will immediately be put back into services for those in need. This site will house WCCAO's central activities and provide Washington County's low income residents a single location where they can receive the services necessary to assist them in becoming self sufficient.

We still do not have the perfect world. However, as this year began with a new administration, it also began with renewed hope and vigor. WCCAO needs to take advantage of this energy to develop the support of residents in the County and to create an atmosphere of cooperation and partnership.

In 1981 when many felt that the War on Poverty had disappeared (or wished that it would), the Community Action Agencies persisted. It is time once again to put forth the belief that eliminating poverty - where one is able to fashion a world in which the meaning of a person's life matched the marvels of a person's labor - is again the concern and the commitment of this nation and all its people. ♦

## WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY **ACTION** ORGANIZATION

ACTION NEWS is the quarterly newsletter of the Washington County Community Action Organization (WCCAO), published by the WCCAO Administration, 451 S. First, Suite 700, Hillsboro, OR 97123. ACTION NEWS is produced by Connie Sherrard and Pam Brown Wilkinson, WCCAO staff members, and Alisa Corstorphine, volunteer. (Please inform WCCAO of any address corrections.)

## ... People Helping People

The Washington County Community Action Organization (WCCAO) is a private, non-profit corporation providing a wide variety of services to the needy in Washington County, Oregon. Information on WCCAO programs is available from the following individuals:

WCCAO Administration (Jerralynn Ness, Executive Director) .....	648-6646
Client Services Dept. - Intake, Information & Referral .....	648-0829
Cheryl Hilbert, Director .....	648-6646
Heating Assistance (December - March) .....	640-8951
Neighborshare (Tigard, Tualatin, Sherwood) .....	639-0495
Child Development Dept. (Cathy Wise, Director) .....	648-6646
Housing & Energy Conservation Dept. (Leon Laptook, Director) .....	648-6646
Hunger & Transportation Dept. (Tom Caruso, Director) .....	640-6005
Resource Development Dept. (Pam Brown Wilkinson, Director) .....	648-6646
"Play It Again" Thrift Store .....	644-8956
Self-Sufficiency Dept. (Connie Sherrard, Manager) .....	648-6646

## "I love my job"

*Jerralynn Ness celebrates 20th anniversary with WCCAO*

After 20 years of working at almost every level of the organization and in



*Jerralynn receives a congratulatory hug from WCCAO Board Chair Sherry Robinson.*

almost every capacity, Jerralynn Ness can be congratulated and admired for her durability, commitment, and incredible energy. Starting as a VISTA volunteer in 1973, Jerralynn came to

WCCAO with a bachelor's degree in Fine Arts and a desire to give back to the community in which she was raised.

On Wednesday, March 17, Board, staff, friends and family gathered at the Washington County Public Services Building to honor Jerralynn's tenure with the agency by sharing stories from the past and present.

The evening was topped off with a few songs by the Frantchucks, a family who recently came to this country from the Ukraine. When WCCAO weatherized their home in 1992, they were so grateful they offered to come and sing for the Board and staff. It was a perfect complement to the evening's festivities: a testimonial to the organization which Jerralynn had a major part in building.

Congratulations and thanks to Jerralynn, for the years past and the years to come! ♦

## Leaders meet to discuss WCCAO's Capital Campaign

Two community meetings, held on March 30 and April 7, brought over 60 community leaders together to initiate WCCAO's campaign to raise a million dollars for a multi-service center. Meetings were held in Hillsboro and Tigard, to introduce leaders to the project and gain their input and involvement.

The Capital Campaign is being chaired by Shirley Huffman, former Mayor of Hillsboro and the upcoming WCCAO Board Chair. Other members of the committee to plan and carry out the campaign are current Board Chair, Sherry Robinson, Board members Russ Wilkinson and Sandra Miller, and Bob Colfelt of U.S. Bank. Additional committee members and chairs will be identified from those who attended the community meetings and others who have expressed their dedication to WCCAO's mission.

The multi-service center will be built in two phases - the first a 12,000 - 15,000 square foot facility that will house all of WCCAO's programs currently located in a leased site in Hillsboro, plus a kitchen to prepare hot meals for Head Start children in Centers located all over the county. The second phase will construct

a Child Development Center, that will serve 100 Head Start children currently served at two other facilities in Hillsboro, and provide child care for other low income children.

Some WCCAO sites will remain separate from the multi-service center, including the Shelter for homeless families, the Neighborshare office in Tigard and the eight Head Start centers located elsewhere throughout the county.

"The main reason for building the multi-service center", states Shirley Huffman, "is to be better able to serve low income families in Washington County. As soon as the facility is completed, WCCAO will immediately begin to save \$85,000 a year in overhead costs, mostly due to the high cost of leasing the sites they have now. Another \$15,000 a year will be saved from other efficiencies that can be achieved through the consolidation. That \$100,000 a year translates into services for a lot more families."

The total cost of the project is \$1.75 million. The first \$750,000 has been acquired through sale of property owned by the agency in Aloha and through a Community Development Block Grant

## You can help

**Volunteers needed:**

- **Clerical work**, word processing, accurate data entry, reception; call Pilar, 648-6646
- **Drivers, truck loaders** for Tualatin Valley Food Center; call Vicki, 640-6005
- **Accurate typist** for Client Services; call Judy, 648-6646
- **Client reception work**; call Judy, 648-6646
- **Reception work, information and referral** at WCCAO's Neighborshare office in Tigard; call Carla, 639-0495
- **Sales Clerk** at WCCAO's thrift store; call Thelma, 644-8956
- **Outreach Workers to Spanish and Southeast Asian** speaking families; call Diane, 642-3236
- **Human Resources Specialist**; call Jerralynn, 648-6646
- **Fundraising events helper**; call Denise, 640-6005
- **Child Care Volunteer** at the Shelter; call Michael or Colleen, 640-3263
- **Night/Day Supervisors at the Shelter**; call Michael, 640-3263
- **Child Care Assistant** for Parenting Classes; call Renee, 648-6646
- **Phone screener** to contact weatherization clients; call Joan, 642-3236

**Donations Needed:**

**Equipment and Supplies:** Computers, printers, color TV, VCR, coffee table for the waiting room, electric staplers; call Pilar, 648-6646.

**For Head Start Centers:** 35mm camera, film and film developing, portable tape/CD players, TV with VCR built in, camcorder, old uniforms for dress-up corners, electric meat slicer, computers, printers; call Cathy, 648-6646.

**Furniture:** Adopt a transitional house or a room in the house and furnish it; call Michael, 640-3263.

**Food:** Tualatin Valley Food Center needs high protein and staple food items, such as tuna, rice, pasta, canned fruits and vegetables; call Denise, 640-6005. ♦

from the Washington County Office of Community Development. The remaining \$1 million must come from individuals, businesses, community organizations and foundations. WCCAO hopes to break ground for the first phase of the project in late summer of 1993, completing it by mid-1994. The second phase should be completed a year later. ♦

**Food ...continued from page 1**

vides Block Grant Funds. TVFC and OFB are exploring private foundation grants to help fund the costs of transition as well as badly-needed equipment upgrades, such as new trucks and computers.

"This new transition is just one more step in TVFC's evolution," says Jerralynn Ness, WCCAO's Executive Director. "The food bank's roots began in 1973, when a Hillsboro housewife presented local agencies with the idea of establishing a crop gleaning project, the first in the nation." Gleaners are low income volunteers to pick produce donated by growers after the harvest. Gleaning prevents waste and the produce gleaned is a valuable food source for the volunteers as well as the elderly and handicapped residents with whom it is shared.

Until the late '70s, the Washington County agencies and organizations that fed the hungry acquired their food from the Interagency Food Bank, based in Portland. This meant long distance travel and higher costs, so the organizations requested that WCCAO develop a locally based food bank. WCCAO contracted with VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) for a volunteer to establish what became, in 1981, the Tualatin Valley Food Center.

"It was pretty shoe-string in the beginning," says Jerralynn, "but it grew to meet the growing problem of hunger in Washington County throughout the

1980s." Local support in the form of funds and food donations increased as federal support decreased, and TVFC managed to sustain its efforts, outgrowing its warehouse space by the late '80s.



*A volunteer transports food to a needy Washington County resident.*

*Photo by Pam Brown Wilkinson*

It also developed special projects such as the Brown Bag Program, which provides its low income members with a bag of surplus food once a month; the Christmas Clearing Bureau, which coordinates efforts to provide low income families with holiday baskets; and migrant food coordination, ensuring that farmworkers living in labor camps receive needed food and other necessities.

TVFC currently has over 50 member agencies who receive food on a weekly basis. The agencies consist of churches, shelters, group homes, soup kitchens, senior centers and migrant programs,

and are located all over Washington County. TVFC ensures that there is equitable distribution of food, holds quarterly meetings when member agencies can network, receive training, and do coordinated problem solving, and monitors the members agencies on an annual basis.

TVFC's relationship with the Oregon Food Bank is long-standing and strong, so the transition is expected to go smoothly. And since the program is located next door to WCCAO's new building site, WCCAO plans to be a strong partner with OFB and TVFC for years to come. ❖

**After the holidays, the hunger continues**

*Stewart Title leads the way in the fight against hunger again this year*

For the second time, Stewart Title of Oregon, Inc. took the lead with their novel approach to fighting hunger in the tri-county area. For every title and escrow order placed during the months of February, March and April, Stewart Title made a cash donation to benefit three programs—WCCAO's Tualatin Valley Food Center, St. Vincent DePaul Foodtrain, and Snow Cap—that serve the hungry in the Portland metro area.

"After the holidays, no one thinks twice about those in need," says Jeanne Perkins, a Sales Representative for Stewart Title. She and Shawna Gilliam, Vice President/Sales Manager, are coordinating this year's drive to make sure that the hungry aren't forgotten during these months.

The donations come out of the employees' profit sharing funds, but they're not complaining—they have a genuine interest in doing their part to help those in need. Last year's effort raised about \$18,000, and although the final tally for this year isn't in yet, it will probably be about the same. The check will be presented to agency staff on May 11 at the St. Francis Hall, where Stewart Title employees will don aprons and serve meals for the day.

*Thanks to Jeanne, Shawna and all the employees of Stewart Title of Oregon for your commitment to helping those in need in Washington County.* ❖

**Support WCCAO!!**

*Our goal is to put ourselves out of business, but we need your help to do that!*

**In a perfect world, there would be no need for non-profit agencies like WCCAO. But since it isn't a perfect world, we have work to do. Please use the enclosed donation envelope to make a tax-deductible contribution to WCCAO. It will be instantly used where it will do the most good.**

**HELP US TO REACH OUR ULTIMATE GOAL... TO PUT OURSELVES OUT OF BUSINESS**

## Mardi Gras 1993 huge success for WCCAO

If you weren't at the Masonic Temple in Portland the night of February 27th, you missed a wonderful night



Photo by Jim Oleachea

of Mardi Gras merriment. If you were there, you're probably telling all your friends about it and already looking forward to next year!

As far as the Portland Metro Area knew, this year was the first year for Mardi Gras. But WCCAO has put on a Mardi Gras event in Washington County for the previous six years, that was always well attended by a smaller group of corporate and community supporters, but modest in its financial achievements. In the Spring of 1992, Gwen Brake and Sandy Miller, two very determined Mardi Gras volunteers, convinced the WCCAO Board to take Mardi Gras to the next step of fame and fortune.

The event moved to Portland and expanded in size and scope. Promotions became the key to the event's success, getting the word out to the general public that had never heard about WCCAO and would attend because it sounded like a great party. Two bands - Johnny Limbo & the Lugnuts and the Woody Hite Big Band - filled two of the Masonic Temple's three ballrooms, and were the

draw for many of the people who attended. The third ballroom offered an attractive alternative to some attendees, who would rather try their hand at black jack, craps or roulette, for a chance to win some wonderful prizes. The Hometown Dixie Band accompanied their gambling frenzy.

Throughout the building, a wide variety of other activities lent a carnival atmosphere to the evening, including a wine tasting, fortune teller, photographer, face painter, caricaturist, and clowns sculpting balloon headresses. Wonderful souvenirs were available, and Cajun Cafe served food and beverages that delighted the tastebuds.

Was it a success? Yes, without a doubt! And the credit for that goes to the many volunteers that donated hundreds of hours and tons of energy, as well as to the corporations and individuals that sponsored the event costs. The WCCAO Board and staff extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone that made this event possible and the tremendous success that it was!

### Thank you to our volunteers!

Sr. Delores Adelman	• Don Arney
Leroy Bentley	• Debby Baker
Dede Baker	• Maggie Boehmer
Gwen Brake	• Gloria Bryan
Kathy Canfield	• Nancy Canning
Bob Colfelt	• Steve Dodge
Theresa Dulley	• Carolyn Drini
Lois Ebel	• Sr. Ruth Frank
Darlene Galster	• Kandace Greythorns
Colleen Harris	• Greg Harris
Linda Haymond	• Patty Hust
Lauri Jansen	• Delene Johnson
Grant Klarp	• Sr. Marilyn LeDoux
Sr. Patricia Lulay	• Tam Martin
Janise McMenamin	• Sandy Miller
Jack Rosenberg	• Jayne Scott
Paul Skaggs	• Sara Stevenson
Bob Wayt	• Gayle Welsh
Russ Wilkinson	

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ERA Lois Ebel & Associates ♦

## Tualatin Valley Food Center finds new location

At the end of a frustrating and suspenseful search, WCCAO's Tualatin Valley Food Center (TVFC) has settled into its new location in Hillsboro. Nestled behind Big O Tires on the Tualatin Valley Highway, the county-wide food bank now has 6,000 square feet of warehouse space and 2,000 square feet of office space. "It's absolutely wonderful; we've got room for offices, a work room for volunteers, plenty of warehouse space," says Tom Caruso, WCCAO's Hunger and Nutrition Director. "It's the first time the food bank has had adequate space.

WCCAO sold the building that used to house TVFC and WCCAO's Housing and Fiscal Departments in Aloha last year, forcing the programs to relocate by October first. They found the new building about one week before the deadline. "It was a desperate search," says Denise Harkness, TVFC's Resource Development Manager. "We got it through the PR we did. A relative of the owner saw that we needed space, called the owner, and let them know." The difficulties didn't end there, however. Moving the huge freezer was another enormous hurdle to be overcome. "No one knew how many regulations and restrictions there would be," states Tom. "It took more than three months to get it moved and going again. We were without it over the holidays, which is a very critical time.

According to Denise, "the new location is sort of hard to find if you don't know where it is, just look for Big O Tires. They've been great neighbors. They even donated food through the State employees' food drive." The food bank's new phone number is 640-6005, and it is located at 925 SW Baseline in Hillsboro. ♦

## Advocates to rally for affordable housing May 18th

WCCAO is working closely with the Oregon Housing NOW! Coalition to organize a statewide rally and lobby day for affordable housing **Tuesday, May 18th** at the State Capitol Building in Salem. Housing advocates from Washington County and throughout the state will have the opportunity to speak with one voice about their vision of affordable housing for all. The Affordable Housing Rally and Lobby day will begin at 10:00 am in State Capitol Room #343 with a training on how the legislative process works, an explanation of the housing bills before the legislature, and tips on how to communicate with legislators. There will then be a rally at noon on the steps of the State Capitol. The rest of the afternoon will be spent in meetings with legislators. Meeting times will be scheduled with each of the Washington County senators and representatives. Participants from Washington County will go as a group from office to office to raise the issues and engage in dialogue with legislators. Lobbying efforts will concentrate on several important housing bills before the legislature this session:

- **HB 3122:** to create a real estate transfer fee to fund the State Housing Trust Fund, which is used to develop new affordable housing-both rentals and home ownership programs-and provide funds for emergency shelters and other housing services for low-income people. In Washington County these services include a tenants' rights hotline, a mortgage foreclosure prevention program, and specialized assistance for victims of domestic violence, the developmentally disabled and the chronically mentally ill. The fee itself would be a half-percent (.05%) fee added to closing costs on real estate transactions. Residential property valued at less than \$65,000 would be exempt.

- **HB2986:** to regulate rental application fees-how much landlords can charge and under what circumstances.

- **SB443:** to extend 30 day no-cause eviction notices to 60 days for tenants who are elderly or have certain disabilities. Please consider attending this event

in Salem. It will be an opportunity to advocate for an increase in affordable housing, a continuation of housing services and legislation to protect tenants' rights. A large turn-out will show the legislators that there is wide public support for affordable housing in Oregon. Lunch and child care will be provided at the rally and lobby day free of charge. WCCAO will help organize carpools from the Washington County area to Salem. If you need child care or transportation or can help with transportation



Norma Gonzalez carried a sign that spoke for itself at the Housing NOW! rally in Salem in 1991.

Photo by Pam Brown Wilkinson

tion, contact Diane Hess at WCCAO, 648-6646. If you would like more infor-

mation on the rally and lobby day or about the housing bills before the legislature, you can contact Diane Hess at WCCAO, 648-6646, or Michael Evans from the Oregon Housing NOW! Coalition, 226-0234. ♦

## Back in North Plains

*Head Start to open a new center in North Plains in the Fall*

After 20 years, WCCAO Head Start will be operating in North Plains again beginning in September, 1993. The center will have the capacity to serve up to 20 three- and four-year-old low income children and children with disabilities. The new center will be located in the North Plains Elementary School, and transportation for the children will be made available through the school district.

Head Start will continue to operate at its county-wide capacity of 17 classrooms and 10 centers, "so this change will be made possible by reconfiguring the program in order to better serve the communities of Washington County," says Cathy Wise, Head Start Director.

Applications are now being accepted for all Washington County Head Start centers. For information or to apply for the program, call WCCAO at 648-0829. ♦

## Thanks to Sherwood Church, Head Start children get new playground

In a joint effort, WCCAO Head Start and the Sherwood United Methodist Church installed a new play area at the church, where the Head Start classroom is housed. The climbing structure and swing set were moved from another Head Start site in Hillsboro

and assembled by members of the congregation. Donations were solicited to enable the project to proceed, including rental equipment and hardware from Sherwood Tractor and Rental Center, concrete mix form from Clark Lumber of Tualatin, and cedar shavings from Woodco in Aloha. ♦



Sherwood United Methodist Church members confer about construction of the new playground.

Photo by Nancy Alderman

## Commissioner Hays officiates at property dedication

Beautiful trees, wildflowers and tall grasses graced WCCAO's new property on April 7, 1993, as it was dedicated to serve the needs of low income people in Washington County.

The future site of WCCAO's Multi-Service Center - a 1.8 acre parcel of land on S.W. Baseline in Hillsboro - was purchased with funds from sale of property in Aloha and from a Community Development Block Grant. It was no accident the dedication was scheduled to take place during National Community Development Week. As stated at the dedication ceremony by WCCAO Board Chair, Sherry Robinson, "It's because of the Community Development Block Grant program that we are standing here today. Without the sale of the Aloha site, that was originally purchased with Block Grant funds, and the recent grant of money from Office of Community Development to jump start this project, we would not be able to see our dream turn into a reality."



Staff, Board and friends gathered to dedicate the site for WCCAO's new building. Photo by Connie Sherrard

Bonnie Hays, Chair of the Washington County Board of Commissioners, was exuberant about WCCAO's future on the new site and saw it as a great

opportunity to expand the County's partnership with WCCAO. She, along with Hank March from the Office of Community Development, who explained how the project came about, were excited about the impact that a multi-service center would have on

WCCAO's ability to deliver services to low income families. They pointed out that this project is a way in which everyone in Washington County life can join hands to make a wonderful contribution to the betterment of the County.

Shirley Huffman, former Mayor of Hillsboro, who has agreed to Chair the Capital Campaign for WCCAO's Multi-Service Center, reiterated Sherry Robinson's gratitude to the Office of Community Development for their contribution, and voiced her hope that, indeed, many will become partners in this effort, that will ultimately convert \$100,000 currently spent a year on overhead costs into services to disadvantaged families, so that they can become self-sufficient.

The sun shone that afternoon during a rainy week in April, and as the band of WCCAO supporters left the property following the dedication, they took with them a vision of these beautiful trees, wildflowers and tall grasses surrounding two buildings that will help WCCAO come that much closer to achieving its mission. ♦

## WCCAO's Valentine

Executive Director receives "Valentine for Valor" award for service to the community

Jerralynn Ness, WCCAO's Executive Director, was honored recently with a "Valentine for Valor" Award presented by Concordia College. The awards are given annually by Concordia's Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) group to recognize those who have distinguished themselves in service to the community. The "Valentine" was given to Jerralynn

Quiet but forceful, dedicated, effective (she does the right things!), efficient (she does things right!). Jerralynn Ness would probably agree that "nobody ever stumbled across anything sitting down." Jerralynn doesn't seem to sit much. She runs. She runs with a mission - to help reduce or eliminate poverty in our community.

Since 1974 Jerralynn has worked as Program Manager and Executive Director of WCCAO to develop and implement programs such as housing advocacy, rent assistance, and economic and social self sufficiency educational programs. I've been privileged to serve on the WCCAO Board of Directors for the past three years and I have witnessed the dedication, persistence, patience, and commitment that have made Jerralynn Ness a true role model for youth in the '90s.

Early in her career Jerralynn held positions in retailing, design, manufacturing, education, and management. In 1973 she

joined VISTA - a national volunteer organization aimed at poverty concerns. And since 1974 she has dedicated her life to that cause.

Jerralynn Ness is truly a "local lady made good." Tigard High School and University of Oregon graduate, Jerralynn well exemplifies our SIFE motto - "Reaching Out to Serve Others."

The great Spanish novelist, Miguel de Cervantes, once declared that "Good actions ennoble us, and we are the sons of our own deeds." Jerralynn, daughter of your deeds, you have helped ennoble many others and for that we are all grateful. There is a proverb that reads: "If you want to be prosperous for a year, grow grain. If you want to be prosperous for ten years, grow trees. If you want to be prosperous for a lifetime, grow people."

Jerralynn, through your leadership of WCCAO, you've helped "grow people" for twenty years. Thank you for all you have done for Portland and our state. It is my great pleasure to present you with this token of our esteem. ♦

**She runs with a mission - to help reduce or eliminate poverty in our community.**

on February 11 at a ceremony at the World Trade Center in Portland. Other honorees were: Martin Brantley, Bill Naito, and Dr. Darryl Tukufu. WCCAO Board member Bob Brake, who is on the faculty at Concordia and acts as advisor to SIFE, presented Jerralynn with the award. The following is excerpted from his speech:

## Legislative Update: Hunger and Nutrition

There are several bills related to food and nutrition before the Oregon Legislature this session. The Hunger Relief Task Force is urging legislators to support these important pieces of legislation in order to ensure that no one in Oregon goes hungry.

• **SB77:** to allocate \$400,000 to the statewide network of private nonprofit emergency food programs for food distribution and to develop linkages between hunger relief programs and other social service agencies.

• **HB2433:** to reauthorize the Farmer's Tax Credit, which gives farmers a 10% credit for donation of crops to gleaned groups.

• **SB422:** to allocate \$1,000,000 to the statewide network of private nonprofit hunger-relief agencies to support the operating costs for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), food acquisition, and equipment expenses to improve the network's capacity to store and distribute donated and purchased foods.

• **HB2646:** to appropriate \$1,000,000 to fund the Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) so that all eligible at-risk children through 24 months may receive services.

## "What's happening"

• **WCCAO Board of Directors** meets the third Wednesday of each month, 5:30 PM, Hillsboro Conference Room, 451 S. First, Suite 600; call Pilar, 648-6646, to confirm date, time and place.

• **Head Start Policy Council** meets the second Tuesday of each month (Sept. - June); contact Susan, 648-6646, for time and place.

• **Washington County Human Services Coalition** meets the second Friday of each month from 9:00 - 11:00 AM, Washington County Administration Bldg., 155 N. 1st, room 140.

• **Housing Development Corporation**

For more information, call TVFC at 640-6005 or the Oregon Food Bank at 282-0555.

Do your part! Write or call your legislators to voice your support for these important bills! ❖

**Board of Directors** meets the third Thursday of each month at 7:00 PM, Hillsboro Conference Room, 451 S. First, Suite 600; call Diane, 648-6646 to confirm date, time and place.

• **Rally for Affordable Housing and Citizen Lobby Day;** Tuesday, May 18, beginning at noon on the capitol steps in Salem. Lobby training 10:00 AM in the Capitol Building, rm. 343. For more information call Diane Hess, WCCAO, 648-6646 or Michael Evans, Oregon Housing NOW! Coalition, 226-0234 or 224-4086. See related article on page 6 of this newsletter. ❖

## Washington County Community Action Organization

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