

The Rural Tribune

Volume 3, Number 3

February, 1975

County unemployment leaps

If you lose your job . . .

If you live in the rural area of Washington County and worked as a farm worker last year, you may be eligible for Special Unemployment Assistance (SUA) from the State Employment Service. SUA is paid out of federal funds under a law effective from December, 1974. To have a valid SUA claim you must have earned \$700 and worked at least 18 weeks averaging \$20 a week during the past 52 weeks. Farm workers, domestics and salespeople who were not covered by Oregon's unemployment insurance laws are among those now eligible for SUA payments. Call 648-8911 for more information.

This is one piece of information that I gained during a two-hour conversation last week with Mr. Jim Pleasant, the Director of

the County office of Employment Services. His office runs both the job-hunting part of the employment office as well as the unemployment insurance claims office. The office put more than a quarter of a million dollars in unemployment benefits into the County's economy last year.

Within the last month the County has experienced its first major jump in unemployment. Although still among the lowest counties in the state in terms of percentage of the work force which is unemployed, Washington County has seen a leap from a 2.9% unemployment figure a year ago (or about 1,200 people) to 6.5% in the most recent figures (or about 3,700 people).

Mr. Pleasant told me that Richard Abel Co.

is the only firm to close its doors in the County in recent months. But most businesses and industries have been "belt-tightening" and laying off from one to 25 people. About one third of the County's work force is in the electronics industry which has withstood well the economic slump. The unemployment office is now seeing an upsurge in claims filed by middle management and white-collar office workers. Such a pattern emerges when plants cut back on output and the slump reduces the need for office staff to handle the smaller production.

In order to qualify for regular unemployment benefits, you must have worked at least 18 weeks and earned \$700 in the base year, which is the first 12 months of the past 15 months. If you made \$700, you can get the minimum claim, which is \$25 per week. The maximum claim is \$88 per week which is paid for earnings of \$7,200.

The fund out of which these benefits are paid is created by a tax on the companies, themselves. The fund was set up by State law and requires companies to pay on a graduated scale from 1.7% to 3.2% per dollar on the first \$5,000 for every employee.

Due to the high unemployment in the state, especially in lumbering regions, the unemployment fund will be gone by summer if present rates of joblessness continue. The legislature will probably raise new revenues by increasing the tax on companies to 2.5% to 5%. But this additional cost to business will probably be passed along to the consumer through higher prices. If the legislature does not act, benefits will continue to be paid from a special federal fund, which, in turn, must eventually be repaid.

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A new way of life from out of the past

On the Simmons Farm

On three acres of land, Glen and Kathleen Simmons raise most of the food they consume and more to give to friends.

They grow vegetables in three garden plots near their house. They keep a milk cow and raise and butcher a calf almost yearly. They have ducks for meat and chickens for eggs and meat. They keep a pair of rabbits which produce about forty fryers per year. They do

their own butchering and smoking. What they do not use they return to the ground through composting.

They also have a pond which two years ago they stocked with fifteen hundred fingerling Montana rainbow trout. "What protein shortage?" Simmons asks as he walks to the edge of the pond and calls to the fish. And they come; hundreds of sixteen to twenty-



Shelves stocked with a 3-year supply of canned and dried food

Once again it is income tax time, and Community Action is ready. The deadline for filing with both the state and federal governments is April 15. Community Action will provide a free tax assistance program.

Because of the number of people that came to us last year for tax assistance, we have set aside Tuesday and Thursday afternoon for tax work. It would be best if you called our office for an appointment before coming in. The number is 648-6646.

When you come in, bring in your W-2 forms, any other record of income, rent receipts and property tax statements.

If you need help in translating, be sure to let us know ahead of time.

This service is offered at no charge to low income and senior citizens.

Tax consultants from the Internal Revenue Service will be available to the general public to provide assistance with both federal and state income tax, Feb. 25-26, from 1:00-5:00 p.m.

four inch rainbows. "The lake supports them well enough, but I feed them just because I make pets of all the animals. We don't hunt. All the animals come in," Simmons said.

What they raise, they also preserve by canning, freezing, smoking or drying. In their basement are two large freezers and walls of long shelves, filled with canned and dried goods. In one corner is a potato bin and hanging bunches of dry onions. The Simmons estimate that they could live for three years without going to a store.

Also in the basement are several batches of soap, hardening in plastic containers, ice cube trays and small clay bowl. "Everything from soap to soup." Simmons points out jars of meat stock canned for later use in soups, sauces and gravies.

Lunch with the Simmons the day we visited was soup made with dried vegetables, saltine crackers (store bought), a homemade cracker spread, home canned peaches and

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Glen Simmons calls his trout (swirling water) and mallards photos by Don Patch

Winterize Now!

Putting plastic over windows and weather stripping doors can save you 20 to 30% on your heating bill.

If you are low-income and able to do the winterizing yourself, the C.A.P. Winterization Project will provide you with plastic, lathe, nails, weatherstripping and everything else needed, including instructions for you to save \$\$\$\$\$ during the cold weather ahead.

For the elderly or disabled, the Project has two crews who will do the work involved. Don Patch, Project Director, said the crews can do an average house in three to four hours.

Remember, there's no cost to you and no forms to fill out. Patch emphasizes that the aim is to conserve fuel and lessen the bite of inflation on low-income people. Call 648-6646 to request winterizing aid.

THE RURAL TRIBUNE
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Looking at a Center

One of Head Start's Center has moved recently to Hillsboro. This center operated in North Plains since 1971. It is now located in the First Congregational Church on the corner of 5th and Main.

According to Nancy Gann, Head Start's director, it was going to cost Head Start too much money if they were to stay in North Plains. Mrs. Gann says that there is more room now at the First Congregational Church. They can now use three classrooms and can also use the upstairs kitchen when available.

Presently Head Start has around 36 children enrolled in the program. The children attend classes twice a week, and on the other days they work with teachers and parents in their home. According to Miss Becky McCleny, the parents are very friendly and cooperate very well with the teachers aides.

Up to now, six Chicano children are enrolled in the Hillsboro Center and one Chicano child is enrolled in the Metzger center. The teachers are very proud of the children because they feel they are progressing well in the program.

Right now, the four-year-olds are learning about the five senses. They will go to the OMSI pretty soon to learn more about their senses. They are also being taught about feelings, good and bad. Basically what Head Start is about is helping the children learn to get along in group situations.

The week that I went to take pictures of the center, the children had just finished making corn tortillas and were getting prepared to have their breakfast. One thing I noticed is that many of the Anglo children were really getting into their hot corn tortillas with butter. A person from the nutrition center goes over once a week to make sure the children are getting a well balanced diet.

Along with nutrition, Head Start offers other services to the children such as a physical exam right before they enter the program. They also get dental follow-up care, if needed, along with all the immunizations.

Recently they got a Mental Health Counselor who can counsel with the kids as well as with parents. Up to now, not one child has needed any Mental Health counseling.

Claudia Johnston, who has been the Head Start Director since last July, says that she feels that "the program is excellent." She has found her staff to be enthusiastic and has worked to see that Head Start and Community Action act together to meet their mutual goals. Her only note of concern was that a recent survey has shown Head Start reaching less than 15% of potentially eligible people. Children may qualify for the program if they are from a low-income family or if they have certain handicaps.

Ms. Johnston says that there is simply no money coming from the federal level to expand. In fact, if the program gets the same money next year as it did this year, inflation may mean that Head Start will be cut back. Letters to Congress might help this program get the federal attention it deserves.

Alma Rosa Perez

Head Start Talking With the Parents

Joe Spaulding

"If he'd go to Head Start, he'd learn to do things on his own" was one reason Alexis Spaulding wanted her son, Joe, in the Head Start program. "Now he makes crosses and circles, and he wouldn't do that before. He'd want me to do it."

"Head Start aims to introduce children to the world around them." That is the beginning of one of the paragraphs in the Parent Handbook. There are one or two field trips in a month that go along with the teaching in class. In January the kids and teachers went to OMSI. They had a "five sense" program, and that month the children were discovering more about taste, feel, see, hear and smell.

Learning to share is another important goal of Head Start. "He wouldn't share, but now, since he's going to Head Start, he'll let his sister, Kim, play with some of the toys that he wouldn't before," Alexis says. "He shares other things, too like candy and cookies. Things you wouldn't think kids would share. He even likes to teach his sister things when he gets home from Head Start."

Tracy Appleby

Thala Appleby has her youngest daughter, Tracy, in Head Start at the Hillsboro Center. She enjoys Tracy going. "It has brought her out of her shell." Tracy goes on Monday and Tuesday, and teacher Becky McClenny comes to visit Thala and Tracy every other week for an hour on Thursday.

Thala feels that two days in classes is good, and long enough for a child of four. "The only problem is that Tracy wants to go every day!" Having Becky visit at home helps to keep Thala up on what is happening in class. She is meeting in a home "cluster group" made up of other Head Start parents. When autumn rolls around, Thala hopes to help other parents to learn canning.

A Program for Parents

Although Head Start is usually thought of as an educational program for four and five year old children, it is also aimed directly at making a good family atmosphere by helping the children's parents to solve some of the problems which often trouble low-income families.

Many parents feel isolated in the community. They may be new to the area and tied down while caring for preschool children. A family atmosphere can become strained as loneliness increases and the home closes in.

Parents may also have a hard time in dealing with their children. Information on child rearing is often hard to come by, the family may be splitting up, or the mother have one or more small children and also have to find and keep a full-time job. The parent-child relationship can

Shellie Braulieu

Shellie, Ron and Chris Braulieu's daughter, is in the Hillsboro Center Monday-Thursday class. Like most of the other children, she loves the times when teacher Becky McClenny comes to visit.

Not only Shellie, but her cousins also learn much from the visits. Becky brought a "feely bag" during one visit. "She had different objects in there and she told the kids to pick out a certain object (for instance, blunt scissors). They had a ball with it," said Chris. The idea of the "feely bag" is to identify the differences in objects by feel. The child tries to pick out hard and soft objects, for instance.

"I've learned a lot of things that I didn't know Shellie could do," said Chris about the home visits. Parents who can't come into the classroom have a chance to see what their child can do. "The kids get real excited. It's different with other company than with Teacher Becky, because she is coming especially to visit them," says Chris.

Stevie Sifuentes

The change in Stevie Sifuentes, son of Guadalupe and Carmen, since he has been in Head Start is great. "When someone would come over, Stevie would put his hands over his face." Not anymore. Now he moves freely around when strangers are around.

"Stevie is so different than before," Carmen says. "His mind is getting ready. He wasn't interested in anything and now he is. The days that he isn't supposed to go to Head Start he wakes up in the morning, preparing himself for class; he would go all week if he could."

"He has fun at the same time as he is learning." Anything Stevie brings home, he makes sure his parents see. Carmen says, "He is real proud of his painting. Now we hear, 'When is Daddy coming home? I want to show him my painting.'" Bonnie

County Unemployment

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If you quit your job or are fired for misconduct, you must wait eight weeks to get unemployment benefits. The Employment Office uses a series of hearings and appeals to settle disputes between companies and employees about eligibility.

If you are filing for unemployment benefits, the best time to arrive at the office is between 8:00 and 9:00 in the morning. If you come in early, you will probably be processed in less than an hour. If you arrive later in the day, you can expect to wait in line for a few hours.

Mr. Pleasant told me that his office had been able to hire staff to handle the larger work load. The office, even though crowded, gives an impression of efficiency.

When going to the office to file for benefits, you should take your social security card and the exact address of your last employer.

During the time you are collecting benefits, you must

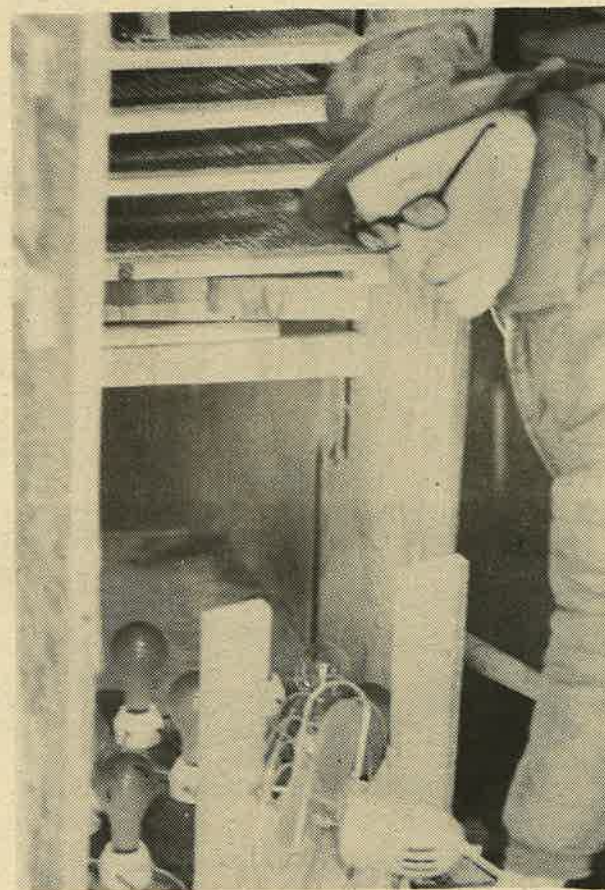
also be looking actively for work.

Mr. Pleasant also encouraged any and all Chicanos to try his office's employment services. Many companies contact the State office looking for minority employees in order to satisfy their Equal Opportunity hiring practices. Jose Lupe Bustos works out of the employment office and handles the cases of many Chicano job-seekers.

Mr. Pleasant also emphasized that much more than job-hunting and paying unemployment benefits goes on in his office. There is a job counselling and testing service, a worker concentrates exclusively on the WIN program for women on welfare, there is a Job Corps recruiter, and there is a rural manpower developer who works with the agricultural industry.

If you are out of work, the State Employment is a place which you should contact. Go to 229 S. 1st in Hillsboro or call 648-8911.

Dell Martin



Easy-to-build home food drier can preserve food indefinitely

The Simmons Farm

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homemade cake. The Simmons emphasize doing things for oneself. Their food dryer is a simple plywood box, made from two 3/4 inch sheets of plywood and some small pieces of one by two. Nine one hundred watt light bulbs provide the heat and a small house fan circulates this heat around the fruits and vegetables.

Both Kathleen and Glen Simmons teach classes for Portland Community College about what they are doing. Glen describes it as, "A new way of life from out of the past." The college catalog calls his class "Homesteading; Survival From The Past." Kathleen's is titled "Homesteading and Food." They suggested that people register early for the spring session. Glen Simmons' classes involve improving the soil through natural methods, raising vegetables and fruit and the preservation of food.

Along with the survival how-to goes a lot of Simmons' other observations. Discussing recent purchases into the food production industry by corporations such as Texaco and Greyhound, he

said, "God help the American people when those rascals get control of food processing in this country."

Glen Simmons has travelled extensively throughout his sixty-eight years. He was a visitor to Pakistan a few years ago. He described seeing acres of land that could be farmed sitting fallow while people were starving. "There's two classes of people there, the very rich and the very poor. The rich control the land."

The Simmons are understandably proud of things they have done; having built a twelve foot high, three tiered rock retaining wall or helped develop the hardy Willamette tomato are not small achievements. Their place holds a sense of sound health and respect for the land.

At a time when everything one has to buy is more and more dear in relation to one's income, the self-supplying methods of the Simmons provide a partial answer. The how-to knowledge of the Simmons coupled with Ken Thacker's cooperative ideas (page three) may begin to define a new approach to the land for America's people.

Dance! Baile!

The Chicano Student Union of Portland State University will sponsor a benefit dance on Friday, Feb. 14, at 8:00 p.m. at the Hillsboro Armory.

All funds will be used for the benefit of disadvantaged Chicanos and low-income people.

Music will be provided by "La Ganga" and admission will be \$3.00 per person and \$5.00 per couple.

The PSU Chicano Student Union is now actively seeking Chicanos who are interested in the college.

Phone Humberto Reyna at the Admissions Office: 229-2512