

A WCCAO Success Story

Moral and physical support help chart course toward self-sufficiency

Toby Padgett doesn't fit the stereotypes. She's articulate and well-educated, and has an excellent work history, including time spent in military service, working in telecommunications and teaching speech communications at the university level. She has also been homeless and without hope.

Toby's experience with homelessness began over seven years ago, when she was laid off from a job in Phoenix, where she had been transferred from the Portland area as a result of a promotion with a telecommunications company. The shock of being stranded in a strange city with no job, family or friends resulted in Toby developing agoraphobia and related anxiety disorders. "I was literally room-bound for six months. I had my groceries delivered and never left my apartment for anything." It took six months for her to gather her courage to make the trip back to Portland, where she was able to get counseling through the Veterans Administration.

She was able to stay with family for a short while, but eventually found herself at the WCCAO shelter in 1986. "I had nowhere to go. The shelter gave me a bed, food, and the initiative to look for work. They gave me my incentive, my confidence back. They gave me back my self-worth." She stayed in the shelter for three weeks and then moved in with an old friend. She found one job that she consequently lost because she didn't have a permanent address, and eventually found work again with a major telecommunications company. She held that job for three

years until budget cutbacks resulted in another layoff and the resumption of her illness.

Since she has lived in Tigard, Toby has turned to Neighborshare, WCCAO's satellite office. At that time, Neighborshare was a tiny office in the local St. Vincent dePaul store, staffed

only by Carla Tungwenuk and a Jesuit volunteer. Toby is full of praise for Neighborshare. "Carla and her whole staff are great. They helped me with LIEAP grants, helped get my monthly phone bill lowered, showed me where

see Toby continued on page 4

February 12 to be night of merrymaking -- for a terrific cause!



Lift those winter spirits with a blaze of color, costumes, music and merriment on Saturday, February 12, as WCCAO presents its Eighth Annual Mardi Gras Ball at the Portland Art Museum North Wing (formerly the Masonic Temple). The Swing Machine will join Panama to provide musical energy, while a delicious complimentary buffet of hors d'oeuvres and desserts catered by Reedville Cafe will delight the tastebuds.

Take in the wine tasting sponsored by the Washington County Wine Growers Association and try your hand at blackjack, craps, or roulette in the Casino. And don't miss out on the dance lessons,

see Mardi Gras continued on page 4

~Message from the Board Chair and Executive Director~



Shirley Huffman, Chair
WCCAO Board of Directors



Jerralynn Ness
Executive Director

**WCCAO Multi-Service Center
becomes a reality as funds come in
and building plans are finalized**

This year is ending with an exciting bang along the capital campaign trail. Nothing could be sweeter than hearing we just received a \$150,000 matching grant from Meyer Memorial Trust, \$50,000 from the Collins Foundation, \$15,000 from Standard Trust, and \$15,000 from NEC to fund the new WCCAO Multi-Service Center! These truly exciting gifts, along with several others, bring our grand total to \$1,262,200. Congratulations, everyone!

The Multi-Service Center will be located on SW Baseline in Hillsboro and will consolidate the programs and services from five other sites. The new

Center. Our Building Committee, Chaired by Russ Wilkinson, has been working to obtain donations of materials to keep our costs down. Scott Aldrich provided us with a pro-bono value engineering report which confirmed that we are on target with our budget projections. And last but not least, volunteer project manager Miller Duris is rolling up his sleeves in preparation for construction. A construction contract will be awarded in February or March of 1994. Groundbreaking for this \$2.5 million project will take place in April, 1994, with completion scheduled for December 1994.

Additional campaign volunteers include Wayne Attebury, Ralph Bolliger, Rob Drake, Carl Dyess, Lois Ebel, Amy Hansen, Babette Hornstein, Darlene Greene, Walt Hitchcock, John Meek, Homer Speer, Lynda Tatum, Mary Tobias, Tom Walsh, and Loren Waltz. Without their many precious hours of hard work and exceptional talents, none of this could have been possible.

Wishing you peace and prosperity in 1994. ♦

Recent gifts bring the grand total of the Capital Campaign to \$1,262,200. Groundbreaking is scheduled for April.

facilities, which include a multi-service building and child development center, will provide for effective and cost-efficient delivery of services, saving \$100,000 in overhead costs annually.

Architects Van Lom/Edwards have been wonderful to work with and have created a functional, energy-efficient building design to adequately house our program services. The city of Hillsboro has approved a conditional use permit for our Child Development

Nothing of this magnitude happens without the many loyal volunteers and board members who serve on our dynamic steering committee. They include Carol Clark, Bob Colfelt, Gary Conkling, Linda Davis, Sandra Miller, Richard Porn, Sherry Robinson, Senator Bob Shoemaker, Dick Stenson, Bob Wayt, and Russell Wilkinson.

During the holidays, we are especially grateful for the many committed volunteers helping on this campaign.

**Welcome to our
student intern!**

Tricia Brubaker, a first-year student at Portland State University Graduate School of Social Work, has been placed at WCCAO this year. Tricia was raised in the Hillsboro area and recently graduated from the University of Oregon with a major in psychology. She is spending two days a week at the East Hillsboro Head Start center, where she has made herself indispensable by helping out in the classroom, providing social services, translating and interpreting for the Spanish-speaking families and helping out with parent activities. We're lucky to have her!

**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 Nancy Scott Desktop Publishing (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 (South and East County) 639-0495
- Child Development Dept. (Cathy Wise, Director) 648-6646
- Housing & Energy Conservation Dept. (Leon Laptook, Director) 648-6646
- Resource Development Dept. (Pam Brown Wilkinson, Director) 648-6646
- "Play It Again" Thrift Store 644-8956

One classroom at a time

Local dentist pledges to do her part — for Head Start kids

In Oregon... five-year-old children of low-income families have a higher rate of dental decay than the average American child... 26% (of Head Start children in Oregon) need non-urgent dental care.

The Oregonian, December 9, 1993

Dr. Laura Matin, D.D.S., has always shown commitment to the community through her volunteer work with Dental Aid for Children, of which she is currently the vice-president. This year, she decided to take that commitment even further when she pledged to serve every child in WCCAO's North

Beaverton Head Start Center by the end of the school year. Each child and their siblings will receive an exam and have "either sealants, fillings, or other necessary work done," regardless of their ability to pay, says Dr. Matin.

Her intent is to avoid problems the children might face in adulthood because of neglect now. "It's devastating to see 23- or 24-year-old adults who will be in dentures within a year. It breaks my heart." To that end, Dr. Matin will be addressing parent meetings and providing information on issues of proper dental hygiene such as "how to brush" and "baby bottle mouth syndrome."



Photo by Connie Sherrard

Dr. Laura Matin, D.D.S., attends to a patient. Dr. Matin has pledged to attend to the dental needs of all children served by the North Beaverton Head Start Center by the end of the school year.

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Sponsored by and benefiting Washington County Community Action Organization (WCCAO). Volunteers needed, call for information.

Faced with the personal challenge to ensure that the Center's children will be decay-free, Dr. Matin decided to broaden the scope and challenge other dentists to do the same. "One dentist can't do it alone," she says.

Joani VanDomelen, Coordinator of the North Beaverton Center, agrees, and says if individual dentists "just take one class, we can serve a lot of children."

The children she has seen so far, says Dr. Matin, are "the best patients I have in my practice. Ninety percent are better than most adults." Never having been to the dentist, "they don't have a fear. Adults have had unpleasant experiences. I can't believe there are dentists who won't see children."

Thanks to Dr. Matin for her dedication to the children in our community. ♦

*Toby . . . Continued from Page One***Former recipient arranges for food donation to help others in need**

to get food baskets when I needed them, told me who to contact for rental assistance, and always offered moral support."

Because her agoraphobia and anxiety disorders have lasted more than two years and make it impossible to

way she can help out from her home. "It's the least I can do. WCCAO and Neighborshare are always there when I need them. We're all on this earth to help one another, so I try to do my part as best I can." She has also listed WCCAO in her will as a beneficiary of

known, so people know they have a resource."

With the support she's gotten at Neighborshare, the therapy she receives at the VA, and her own resolution, she's made progress, says Toby. "It's 30% therapy, 30% Neighborshare, and 40% me. If you don't want to get better, you won't." Carla agrees, saying that Toby is the perfect example of the small, arduous steps families and individuals make toward self-sufficiency. Toby goes on to say, "I'm more optimistic than I was six months ago, even six weeks ago. I will be a productive citizen of Washington County." Her plans now are to go back to school, and says she wants to get into the medical field, either in nursing or medical assisting.

When asked where she'd be now without the assistance she's received from neighborshare, Toby answers without hesitation. "I would be pushing a grocery cart. I'd be without hope, homeless; without a feeling of self worth, completely empty. Neighborshare is here if I need it, a part of my family. Carla is like the big sister I never had." ♦

"WCCAO and Neighborshare are always there when I need them . . . I try to do my part as best I can."

work, Toby receives Social Security disability payments. "It's not much, but it's all I have, and I'm grateful not only for that, but for Carla and Neighborshare. I'm blessed."

In order to repay what she can, Toby has arranged for large amounts of food to be donated to the Tigard and Hillsboro shelters from Wholesome and Hearty, a local natural foods company, has had her vegetarian group prepare and serve a week's worth of meals at the Tigard shelter, and keeps in touch with the shelter in case there's any other

her estate.

Toby says she doesn't have a solution to the problems of homelessness and those at-risk of homelessness, especially since it's so tied to the economy. But, she says, there is a need to "establish more transitional housing; decent housing." She also believes that the religious community should be more involved, opening their doors to those who need help. Finally, she says that everything should be done to make sure people know that services exist. "Make Neighborshare and WCCAO better

*Mardi Gras . . . continued from Page One***Sponsors help make event successful**

face painting, caricaturist and a visit to the souvenir booth. A Fortune Teller will predict your future and clowns will entertain you with their antics. It's a New Orleans-style bash, complete with whimsical costumes and fantasy scenes to tantalize your imagination.

Most importantly, though, this event is the agency's annual fundraiser. The volunteer team that puts on the event has projected \$68,000 in revenue this year to benefit families in Washington County. Several corporations have helped make sure we reach that goal by underwriting event costs or donating their services and supplies. They are K103fm, GTE Northwest, ERA Lois Ebel and Associates, Legacy Health

System, Tuality Healthcare, St. Vincent's Hospital and Medical Center, Times Publications, NEC America, Rose City Moving and Storage, Washington County Wine Growers Association and West One Bank.

Tickets to the event are only \$25 per person. If you want to also attend the exclusive pre-event black tie dinner, the price is \$100 per person. Tickets may be purchased through TicketMaster, 224-4400, or by calling WCCAO at 648-6646.

Thank you to all our wonderful volunteers and our sponsors! Mardi Gras and the benefits it provides to the community could not happen without you! ♦



A fortune teller predicts the future at the 1993 Mardi Gras. The 1994 event will again be a New Orleans-style bash, to be held on Saturday, February 12.



Photo by Connie Sherrard

Albina Head Start Director Ron Herndon gave an inspiring keynote address at the November staff in-service meeting.

Over 100 attend all-day workshop

Herndon keynote speaker at in-service day; staff wellness, unity, trust promoted

In November, WCCAO's staff - over 100 people - congregated at Tuality Health Education Center for an all-staff in-service day. The purpose of the day was to give everyone a chance to re-acquaint themselves with each other and the mission and values of the organization, identify ways to ensure a supportive work environment, and promote staff wellness.

The morning session was facilitated by Kay Sohl of Technical Assistance to Community Services, and an inspiring key-

note address was delivered by Ron Herndon, Director of Albina Head Start and President of the National Head Start Association. The afternoon was spent in breakout sessions as diverse as "Movement and Dance" and "How to Build Trust in the Workplace," among others, and was capped off by a session on humor, led by Bob Czimbab.

During the lunch hour, staff honored Administrative Assistant Pilar Kleier on her 20th anniversary of service to WCCAO with a surprise commemoration.❖



Photo by Pam Brown Wilkinson

A familiar face looks surprised! Pilar Kleier was honored for her 20 years of service to WCCAO at the in-service meeting.



Photo by Connie Sherrard

Betty-Lu Sanders, Bookkeeper, and Carla Tungwenuk, Neighborshare Services Manager, enjoy a session at the in-service meeting in November. The last session of the day was on humor - something these two must know about!

Support WCCAO!

"A hand up, not a hand out," is our *philosophy*.

Our goal is to assure, in a manner that promotes self-sufficiency, that all low-income residents of Washington County have access to services to meet human needs.

Support for WCCAO is an investment in your community.

Use the enclosed envelope to make a tax-deductible contribution. It will be used instantly where it will do the most good.

You Can Help

Materials sought for Multi-Service Center

Volunteers Needed:

- **Clerical work**, word processing, accurate data entry and typing, reception; call Pilar, 648-6646.
- **Drivers, truck loaders** for the Tualatin Valley Food Center; call Vicki, 640-6005.
- **Reception work, information and referral** at WCCAO's Neighborshare office in Tigard; call Carla, 639-0495.
- **Data entry, information and referral** at WCCAO's Hillsboro office, call Judy, 648-6646.
- **Sales clerk** at WCCAO's thrift store; call Thelma, 644-8956.
- **Human Resources Specialist**; call Connie, 648-6646.
- **Child Care Volunteer** at the Shelter; call Michael, 640-3263.
- **Night/Day Supervisors** at the Shelter; call Michael, 640-3623.
- **Child Care Assistant** for parenting classes; call Renee or Susan, 648-6646.
- **Phone screener** to contact weatherization clients; call Joan, 648-6646.

Donations Needed:

- **Equipment and supplies:** Computers, printers, color TV, VCR, cellular phones, coffee table for the waiting room, electric staplers; call Pilar, 648-6646.
- **For Neighborshare office in Tigard:** General office furniture and supplies; call Carla, 639-0495.
- **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.
- **Building Materials:** At-cost or no-cost building materials needed for WCCAO's new Multi-Service Center. Contact Leon at 648-6646 for a complete list.

What's Happening

Parenting classes offered

● **WCCAO Board of Directors** meets on the third Wednesday of each month, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m., 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 (September - 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 a.m., Washington County Administration Building, 155 N. First, Room 140.

● **Housing Development Corporation Board of Directors** meets the third Thursday of alternating months at 7:00 p.m., Hillsboro Conference Room, 451 South First, Suite 600. For information, call Diane at 648-6646.

● **Annual Mardi Gras Ball** February 12, 7:00 p.m. to midnight, Portland Art Museum North Wing (Masonic Temple). See article on Page 1 for more information.

● **"Taking Charge" parenting classes** offered by WCCAO at sites throughout Washington County beginning in January. Classes are seven weeks, preceded by a mandatory one-hour orientation. Classes will be held Tuesday mornings in Hillsboro, Wednesday evenings in North Beaverton, and Thursday evenings in Tigard. Tuition is \$60.00, scholarships are available. For more information on dates, times, and locations, or to register, call 648-0829.

New study points the way toward solving homelessness

"I don't think the problem's overwhelming. If people county-wide have the will, something can happen. It's a do-able, attackable problem." So says Linda Golaszewski of the Planning Group, the consulting firm that recently completed a study, "The Homeless in Washington County: Invisible and Isolated in the Midst of Plenty."

Not that solving the problem of homelessness is an easy task: according to the study, Washington County service providers sheltered 477 households, representing 1163 individuals, over the past year. Over half of those sheltered were children. Worse, two of three homeless people were denied shelter because of a lack of space. Almost half relied on employment as their main source of income, but wages were generally \$6.00 per hour or less, inadequate to support a



"The lack of affordable housing in Washington County is pretty glaring," says Golaszewski, who indicates this is a major contributor to homelessness. "My impressions of the roots of

not just internally focused" in coordinating service delivery and advocacy efforts.

Funding for the study was provided by the State Emergency Housing Account. To request a copy of the report, contact Leon Laptok at 648-6646. ♦

"The lack of affordable housing in Washington County is pretty glaring . . . government needs to provide incentives to develop affordable housing."

household in this county.

In general, homeless people don't differ from the population as a whole, says Golaszewski. What they don't have are the "cushions" of social support, adequate employment and affordable housing that keep most people in their homes when a crisis occurs.

Additional shelter space might alleviate the problem in the short term, but would have little effect in the long run. The study indicates that what is needed instead is 1) a continuum of services from emergency shelter to permanent housing, so those who fall out of housing are able to receive comprehensive services that will support and lead them back to stable housing; 2) additional resources, for existing service providers; 3) better communication and coordination between service providers; and 4) expanded advocacy efforts to increase the development of affordable housing.

homelessness are that government needs to provide incentives to develop affordable housing. Washington County is an example of the decrease of incentives in the 1970's and 1980's." **The solution will take commitment county-wide**, she says, and will include education for and input and representation from all sectors of the community, including service providers, businesses, churches, government, and private citizens.

When asked what's going right in Washington County, Golaszewski points to the level of collaboration on the part of private, non-profit agencies like WCCAO. She has praise for Washington County officials, whom she describes as "invested and involved . . . cognizant and proactive." In addition, "the church-based movement is very strong in Washington County and could be nurtured even more." Especially important, she says, is "the strong leadership role WCCAO has taken, which is



Photo by Connie Sherrard

Dr. Erasmo Gamboa, of the University of Washington American Ethnic Studies Department, gave an inspiring talk on the history of farmworker housing in Oregon at Centro Cultural in Cornelius in December. The well-attended event was part of the Housing Development Corporation of Washington County's Annual Board Meeting.

Volunteer needs go beyond "holidays"

"Christmas in April" to offer building repair

The holiday season brings out the best in many of us, and we are grateful to all who donated food, toys or other gifts, volunteered to deliver food baskets, or served food in a soup kitchen. At this time of year, however, we would like to remind our supporters that the need continues beyond the holiday season.

One way to help is to get involved with Christmas in April Washington County. Christmas in April began in Texas in 1973, with a group of volunteers devoting one day in April to repairing the delapidated homes of their low-income, disabled, and elderly neighbors. It has since spread nationwide, with over 115 chapters in 39 states. In 1993, a coalition of Washington County community organizations, churches, businesses, and concerned individuals joined forces to form the local chapter,

which will have its first "Christmas" in April of this year. They are now in the process of soliciting money to fund the repair work and donations of building materials, and recruiting both skilled and unskilled volunteers. If you are interested in helping out in any way, you can call 693-4760.

The "You can help" section of this newsletter contains many other ideas for ways you can support WCCAO, or you can call us at 648-6646 and let us know you're willing to help. Thanks! ❖



Photo by Kristin Ludwig
 Lisa Winchester, 4, and her mother, Sandra, of Aloha, wanted to pay back some assistance they'd received in the past -- so they donated Christmas gifts to be given to a Washington County family in need.

**Washington County
 Community Action Organization**

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