

ANNOTATED (PSJ)

The Rural Awareness Project

These materials indicate some of the response to the Rural Awareness Project in its first four months.

January 18, 1973

JAN 12 1973

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COMMITTEE ON
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January 10, 1973

Mr. Paul Jacobs
Project Director
Washington County Community Action
Organization, Inc.
330 Northeast Lincoln
Hillsboro, Oregon 97123

Dear Mr. Jacobs:

Thank you very much for sending me the copy of The Rural Tribune. I think it admirable that such an endeavor has been initiated, and I found the paper most interesting and cogent. I look forward to receiving future copies if that is possible, and I wish to again thank you for bringing this worthwhile effort to my attention.

Cordially,

Bob Packwood
BOB PACKWOOD

BP/pci

Dear Sirs:

Our whole-
hearted hurrahs
& encouragement

We wish this
could include
negotiable green
paper.

Keep it up!

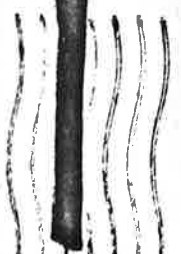
Mr & Mrs Roger Gruendyke

R & G Gruendyke
Rt. 3, Box 193, 38
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JAN 9 1973



The Rural Tribune



OSPIRG

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Christmas, 1972

JAN 2 1973

Paul Jacobs,
Editor,
Rural Tribune,
Community Action Program Office,
330 N. E. Lincoln,
Hillsboro, Oregon

Dear Mr. Jacobs:

I just read the article in today's Oregon Journal by Lance Mushaw about your new project, the Rural Tribune.

It sounds like an excellent and much needed effort to me. The first step to political and any other type of power is information. Informing the potential members of a group about problems which commonly affect them must precede group awareness and group action.

Since the reality of American politics is public decision-making resulting from the action of organized groups on public decision-makers, it is essential that more groups be formed so that all interests can be represented in the political process.

End of high school civics lecture.

Please send me your first two issues, and put me on the mailing list at the above OSPIRG office address. If I owe you any money, let me know.

Also, if OSPIRG can be helpful to you call me on the telephone.

Thanks,

Henry R. Richmond
Henry R. Richmond
Staff Attorney



WASHINGTON COUNTY

COURTHOUSE—SECOND & MAIN STREETS
HILLSBORO, OREGON 97123

The Health Department asked to
distribute copies of the paper —
they have done
this with every
issue.

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HARRY A. KEMP
Director, Public Health Services
(503) 648-8881

January 3, 1973

Mr. Mel Chrisman
Director
Community Action Office
330 N.E. Lincoln
Hillsboro, Oregon 97123

Dear Mel:

As you know, I am strongly supportive of the Rural Awareness Program.

The obvious wealth of many residents of this county has, in many ways, compounded the problems of poverty. The poverty population is not centered in a ghetto, but are spread throughout the county. The extent of poverty is thus masked and is simply unbelievable to a large segment of the population.

Many services and most businesses are slanted towards the upper and upper middle-class income. The low income person is often completely overwhelmed at his inability to handle the complexities of survival in this situation primarily because of a lack of communication and cohesiveness among the low income people.

The Rural Tribune has been one very positive step towards increasing communication and giving information the poverty families need. The complete objectivity and factual reporting has inspired trust among both the low income sector and the "establishment", an accomplishment not usually encountered.

The need for expansion of communication mechanisms for the low income people is real. Rural Awareness shows evidence of meeting this need. I wish you much success in this program.

Very truly yours,

WASHINGTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
Harry A. Kemp, Director, Health Services

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marion Keefer".

Ms. Marion Keefer, PHN
Coordinator, Health Start

MK:bj

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FOREST GROVE PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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DEC 12 1972

December 7, 1972

D. H. ARMSTRONG,
SUPERINTENDENT-CLERK
O. VERL WHITE,
ASSISTANT SUPERINTENDENT
DARREL C. BRADY,
BUSINESS MANAGER
PATRICIA GILMAN,
DEPUTY CLERK

Dear Amador Aguirre,

As a next step in developing plans and programs to assist the Mexican-American youngsters to derive maximum benefit from the public school program of this district, we are organizing a district Task Force to meet weekly through the month of January to assist in the development of specific related objectives for the 1973-74 school year.

Would you be willing to serve on this committee? Tentative meeting dates would be scheduled for the following time and dates. Meetings will be held in the Board Conference Room.

Wednesday, January 3	7:00 P.M. Board Room
Wednesday, January 10	7:00 P.M. Board Room
Wednesday, January 17	7:00 P.M. Board Room
Wednesday, January 24	7:00 P.M. Board Room

Would you please advise my office by returning the attached card. Thank you.

Sincerely,



D. Herbert Armstrong
Superintendent-Clerk

DHA/rv

We would like to ask you to serve as a consultant to this task force.

After Rural Tribune article on problems of Chicanos in Forest Grove Schools, a task force was formed. The article's author was invited to participate.

LEROY T. GAMBLE,
PRINCIPAL
MARVIN MELLBYE,
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
FOREST GROVE HIGH SCHOOL

ARLEIGH M. BERGET,
PRINCIPAL
ROBERT HOLZNAGEL,
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL
NEIL ARMSTRONG JUNIOR
HIGH SCHOOL

MARGARET GOFF,
PRINCIPAL
CENTRAL SCHOOL

MARTIN U. SCHEUFFELE,
PRINCIPAL
CORNELIUS SCHOOL

LARRY M. McMACKEN,
PRINCIPAL
DILLEY SCHOOL
FOREST DALE SCHOOL

JACK BEU,
PRINCIPAL
GALES CREEK SCHOOL

W. B. CAMMANN,
PRINCIPAL
HARVEY CLARKE SCHOOL

JACK CADD,
PRINCIPAL
JOSEPH GALE SCHOOL

MIRIAM McDOWELL,
DIRECTOR OF SPECIAL
EDUCATION

Public Housing in Washington County

At Home with the Rats and the Roaches

by Paul Jacobs

There is a housing crisis in Washington County. This should surprise no one. The shortage of housing for low-income people was documented years ago.

The Columbia Region Association of Governments (CRAG) reported in 1969 that there was then a "critical need" for 1184 dwelling units for the elderly, for low-income families and for newly settled migrants. The same year a County Health Department survey estimated that more than 1300 dwellings — the homes of over 4300 people — could be classified as "poor." The report guessed that 2400 new units were required to satisfy the needs of low-income families.

The problem is worse today. Houses are being built in Washington County, but not for the poor. Meanwhile, since poor people have to live some place, many families have had to settle for housing that is totally inadequate; they live in crowded, poorly ventilated, and barely heated homes — where rats and roaches are an inescapable part of everyday life.

In Washington County, these problems are outside of government control. The 1969 Health Department survey recommended that the County Commission approve a housing code, one based on a model prepared by the American Public Health Association. But, three years later, there is still no housing code, and no way for the county to order building improvements or condemn a house, no matter how dangerous the structure.

And after three years, there is still no way to force a landlord to eliminate rats, and no County-run program for doing so. If a renter complains about rodents, the Health Department can only send him two mimeographed pages on how he can destroy rats himself. Attached is an apology of sorts, which says that there is no publicly funded control program. To get one, the note says, the people will have to convince the County Commissioners that the program ought to be a "high priority for general tax funds." The County Commissioners still need to be convinced.

Strangely, the County Health Department does have the power, under federal and state laws, to inspect migrant camps during the picking season. This summer, camps were inspected and one was actually shut down completely because of unsanitary conditions. But when the farm work is over, the families that stay on are no longer "migrants," and the Health Department has no way to enforce regulations.

Editor's note: This article appeared in slightly different form in the October issue of the Rural Tribune. The Rural Tribune is a new paper published by the Washington County Community Action Organization, Inc., and is edited by Paul S. Jacobs.

November

Many low-income families are signing up with the Housing Authority of Washington County (HAWC). Formed two years ago, the Housing Authority was finally funded this January for a federal leasing program. Under the grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Housing Authority can lease 101 existing units and 107 new units from private owners. All 208 units are then rented to low-income families, who are charged 25 per cent of their incomes. The federal money pays for the difference between what the families pay and what the owner of the property receives from the Housing Authority.

The program offers a lot of advantages that other kinds of public housing do not. Since all units are leased from private owners, the houses are kept on the tax rolls. And the Housing Authority can scatter low-income housing throughout the county, and avoid pushing the poor into isolated pockets of poverty.

- The property owner, of course, has the advantage of an airtight contract. Once he has negotiated a lease with the Housing Authority he has a guarantee that his units will be permanently occupied and without any danger of default.

The program sounds ideal. Everyone wins—the local taxpayers, the owners, as well as the low-income families. But the Housing Authority of Washington County has had its problems anyway.

With eight months left in the eighteen month grant period, only 90 of the 208 units have been found by the Housing Authority. There have been delays in funding and a sudden change of directors in June. Authority chairman Orville Nilsen admits that they will "have to run hard" to find all 208 units by the June, 1973 deadline.

- The leasing of newly constructed units is even more discouraging. Of the 107 units that must be found by next June, only two have been leased so far. Mrs. Lucy Cable, director of the Authority, explained that they have had trouble getting builders who are willing to hold onto units and lease them to HAWC. The Authority has asked HUD to change the terms of the grant so that fewer new units have to be leased. If the change is approved, only 67 units will have to be constructed. This may mean the removal of moderate priced housing from the rental market — making it even harder for families who cannot wait for HAWC help but who need low-cost rentals.

- A bigger staff might help beat the June 1973 deadline. The federal grant from HUD took away HAWC's receptionist, leaving the office with only the director and her assistant. "HUD keeps it pretty tight," Mrs. Cable explained, "and I agree with this. But we do need a receptionist."

Our articles have reached 19
a broad audience — professional
enough to be reprinted elsewhere,
or to lead to articles in other papers,
and television news segments.

In The Oregon Times, January, 1973
(From Vol. 1, No. 3 of The Rural Tribune)

Police Information Sharing System

Criminal Records for Kids

By Paul Jacobs

Police, courts and corrections agencies in a five-county area are beginning to pool their information in an elaborate computer network called the Columbia Region Information Sharing System (CRISS). As CRISS planners begin to feed actual data into the system, they extoll its efficiency and engineering achievements. But settling ethical and legal questions about how CRISS will be used lags far behind putting it into operation.)

Funded by the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, CRISS will not be totally complete until late in 1974. But already it is devouring identification files as they come in from Washington, Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah and Clark Counties. According to CRISS director, Captain Richard Kuntz, the i.d. files will be used in common by police, courts, and corrections agencies. These include physical descriptions and fingerprint records.

The police are already beginning to feed in their incident files as well. According to Kuntz, these records include most contacts with the police — whether the individual was the victim or the suspect; and whether he was suspected or actually arrested. This kind of information is still being kept in each department's file on three- by-five cards. When CRISS is complete, access to all of the pooled files will be possible at any of the thirty-four police agencies with computer stations.

Under the old card system, local departments were not always careful about respecting the privacy of individuals in their extensive files. A Washington County police officer claimed that his files could only be used by law enforcement officers. When asked how employers could get the records of their prospective employees, he said, "Well, that's a form of security." Security people clearly have easy access to department files.

Captain Kuntz assures that the CRISS computer can be programmed to protect files. He also explained that court, corrections, and police records could be kept separate from one another. And the CRISS master plan speaks of "internal blocking techniques to restrict the distribution of confidential information." Apparently technology will dispose of the problem.

But one man who is not satisfied with technological assurances is Don Welch, director of the juvenile department for Clackamas County. He compares the efforts of people trying to comprehend CRISS to "blind men feeling an elephant."

Before he will allow juvenile records from his department fed into CRISS, he wants the question of access settled. "If there are any checks and balances (to safeguard records), I have yet to see them." Welch added, "This agency and Clackamas County will produce no juvenile records until these questions (of access) are answered."

Based on his understanding of the law, he has threatened to issue a contempt citation to any Clackamas County law enforcement officer who puts juvenile information into the computer.

Juvenile records are an especially sensitive matter. Juvenile department officials I talked to are concerned that the persistence of police records could hurt a young person throughout his life. Oregon law now provides an expungement procedure, to clear a juvenile's record completely after two years without a conviction. Whether clearing the juvenile department records and the court records will also clear the police incident file is not clear. Whether a juvenile, or an adult for that matter, who has had contact with the police but has not been arrested can clear his name from the incident file is still another unsettled question.

Like Don Welch, Washington County juvenile department director Jerry Harkins has not yet submitted data to the CRISS system and won't until several questions have been answered. But unlike Welch, Harkins has not ordered police records of juveniles held back. Harkins feels there may be no legal basis for this action. As chairman of CRISS Corrections Policy Committee and member of its executive board, he has asked Attorney General Lee Johnson for a ruling on how the juvenile data can be used and whether the police can submit their juvenile files. At this writing, Johnson has not yet delivered his opinion.

Meanwhile, the Washington County Sheriff's Office is already including juvenile information in the data that it is gradually feeding the computer. Captain Harold Kleve assured me that his office was "as much involved as anybody." The CRISS files will include "anybody we do business with."

Sargeant David Wilson of the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office told me that the county has the second largest identification file in the CRISS area, over half a million names. The Sheriff's Office has not yet begun to include juvenile records but intends to. The Portland Police Department is at the same stage. They have submitted incident and identification data on 40,000 arrested persons, but none of them juveniles, according to records supervisor Doris Rees. In both instances, case load rather than principle seems to have delayed including juveniles.

Proposed changes in the juvenile code might help clarify the question. Law enforcement agencies would have to keep juvenile records separate from adult records and would not be able to release a record "to any person or agency except a juvenile department, Children's Service Division or another law enforcement agency involved in an investigation of a pending referral." But Don Welch has emphasized the question of what constitutes "an investigation of a pending referral," and he wonders who will decide this question.

As it stands, the decisions for CRISS are being made by its executive board. Jerry Harkins, himself a member of the board, points out that it is a committee of CRISS users, representatives from courts, police and corrections agencies. And while they have allowed data collection to proceed, they have only begun to deal with questions of access and juvenile rights. □

→ Another reprint - this time on data being fed to the computers, perhaps illegally.

Gales Creek volunteer firemen await

By MURIEL MARBLE
GALES CREEK

Volunteers of the Gales Creek fire department, a branch of the Forest Grove department, will have their first chance to practice fire fighting Sunday morning, Nov. 19, when they burn the old house on the Moeller place.

The practice burn will be supervised by Forest Grove Fire Chief Justin George and some of his officers. On a controlled burn such as this, the procedure is to start a fire,

practice putting it out, start another fire, put it out, and so on until sufficient training has taken place, at which time the building is allowed to burn down.

There are 15 volunteers in the Gales Creek group. Forest Grove will soon have a truck permanently stationed in the old bus barn at Gales Cree. There is still room for more volunteers, and anyone interested can get more information by talking to the firemen, calling the Forest Grove fire de-

partment or asking at the Gales Creek store.

John Gedlich, sons Bob and Ronald and Bob's son Robbie, and Earl Smith returned home early Monday morning from an elk hunting trip near the Snake River in Eastern Oregon. They report a good trip, with enough gear to keep warm, just the right amount of snow, temperatures 18 to 22 degrees. They returned home with six elk. An exciting thing for Robbie was watching a mountain lion and her two

cubs.

Evert and Tom Marshall of Gales Creek, Alton Culver of Forest Grove, Alton's brother Alvin and son Robert, both of Klamath Falls, comprised a recent hunting party in the Ukiah area. They bagged two

Carlene Thayer and Patrick Knowles were married Friday evening at Old Scotch Presbyterian Church. Relatives and friends attended the service. Carleen's aunt, Mrs. Billie Sandeen, of Fremont, Neb.,

surprised the here the day of Mrs. Sandeen brother, Carl week. The new at home in the Hayden place.

Telore Abened to return to week, following stay at St. Vi He is making from his recent

Ed Geiger is Hospital follow his foot two w

Collecting fr been complete Creek area.

Addie Hud Forest Grove I ing a heart at son was for m dent of Hayw ing there in I goals has been She is now 97 a resident at Q home the past

Observance. niversary of zarene Church involved seven former Gales The Harland the Rev. and from Woodlak day evening. I up for the ann Ward was Vir

Surgery now rec

By MRS. W. SCHE Mrs. Arthur convalencing surgery in Vincent Hospi Marva Flue

Rural Tribune seeks to help low income, ethnic groups in county

Meet Paul S. Jacobs. He's the newest newspaper editor in Washington County these days.

At 29 years of age, Paul is the fledgling editor from the standpoint of both age and seniority among the county's editorial corps.

And the same can be said for his publication, The Rural Tribune.

Barely a month old now, the Tribune, like so many of its counterparts, was born of a necessity. In this case, the necessity was a need to communicate with the low-income and minority peoples of Washington County.

Paul Jacobs and the Rural Tribune got together primarily as the result of a \$10,000 federal grant funded through the Office of Economic Opportunity's Rural Awareness Program. The initial grant was for

newspaper variety, the Rural Tribune got off to an inauspicious start. Published for the first time in October, the initial printing was of about 3500 papers.

Three-thousand of the papers were mailed to occupants of rural areas in western Washington County (chiefly, from Beaverton west). Another 500 were placed in areas such as the Valley Migrant League office, the Washington County Public Welfare office and the Economy Center in Cornelius...all locales where low-income or minority peoples are likely to find the Tribune.

Jacobs admits the first month's printing ran into a snag when the paper encountered difficulty in clearing its non-profit standing with postal authorities. Jacobs prefers to call the mix-up as a "typical bureaucratic snafu," and pre-

aware of the problems associated with the low-income and minority peoples in the county.

Aim of the Tribune is relatively simple, Jacobs states. "We want to make the community aware of the problems that exist among low-income groups and minorities; we want to inform the community as a whole of these problems and pinpoint just what they are."

"At the same time," Jacobs added, "we are trying to bridge that communications gap that exists so much between the low-incomes and minorities in Washington County."

The initial edition of the Tribune busied itself with attempting to state some of the problems confronting the low-incomes and the minorities, as well as publishing "informative news" the kind tell-

Goals described in local press.

OEO paper informs families

By JOANN KIRBY
Argus Staff Writer

\$10,000 excess OEO funds. It currently is being considered for a 12-month extension.

October and November issues include articles on low-income housing, Chicano students at Forest Grove High School, food stamps, child care, Public Employment Program, school lunches, Valley Migrant League, legal aid and revenue sharing.

Story ideas come from Community Action personnel, who discover problems among the people they work with, and from outside persons who voice complaints to The Rural Tribune editors.

"We will follow up and see whether something merits a story," Jacobs and Aguirre note. "In writing, we try to keep an even hand. We don't report just that people feel harassed, but we question the other side, too."

"We've been lucky about timing," Jacobs says about action that has been taken after several articles were written.

Following Aguirre's study of Chicano students at Forest Grove High School, a task force was formed to learn more about students' problems. Teachers now are learning about the Chicano culture and bilingual classes are being considered, he observes.

An article about the county's lack of a legal aid office for low-income persons with law problems preceded partial

reinstatement of the county office, Jacobs explains.

"It is nice to write articles and find that something gets done," the editors comment. "It is good to see results and know we may have helped it along. We can't take credit. When we write a story, we don't have specific changes in mind, but our investigation might help."

Jacobs and Aguirre run the paper with the help of Neighborhood Youth Corps participant Alma Rosa Perez, who spends several hours each week editing, writing and translating copy. Help also is enlisted from Community Action workers, conscientious objectors, students and others, who call with story ideas.

There is constant need for translators, as The Rural Tribune attempts to present articles in both English and Spanish. Space and time limitations are barriers to complete bilingual editions, according to the editors.

Meeting notices and where to go for certain services are listed in the paper, which is prohibited from soliciting advertising. Problems obtaining newspaper postage rates have kept circulation to 4,000, the editors say. Requests to be placed on the mailing list have been received from all over Oregon and Washington and as far away as the Midwest.

Notification of the 12-month extension should come in February, when the Rural Tribune's first six months ends, Jacobs says.

If funds are not obtained, he notes, "we will leave the county with a few people who could put out papers by themselves. It's an important resource to leave and could be more solid if we had 12 more months."

6 Hillsboro (Ore.) Argus—Thursday, Jan. 11, 1973

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Goals described in local press.

A publication designed to keep Washington County's low-income residents informed of their rights is the first of its kind in the country, according to its two young editors.

Paul Jacobs is editor of the 4,000-circulation monthly newsletter, which is funded through the Office of Economic Opportunity. He and associate editor Amador Aguirre published the third edition of The Rural Tribune last week.

"We want to inform low-income people about the issues which concern them," the editors say. "A happy byproduct is that we are informing the middle class that these problems exist."

Community organizers, working at Community Action Projects in Hillsboro, felt the need for a publication which could discuss the basic problems of the county's over 1,900 low-income families, Jacobs says.

"Their concern grew out of working with people in the communities," he explains. "Poor in Washington County are scattered. It isn't like Portland, where there are low-income neighborhoods where people can get together."

The Rural Tribune was approved for six months by Community Action directors and received approximately

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Paul Jacobs Edits Unique Paper For Special Group



PAUL JACOBS

By LANCE MUSHAW

HILLSBORO — Harvard graduate Paul Jacobs is taken up with a new venture these days — newspaper editing.

The 29-year-old Jacobs is commander-in-chief of Washington County's newest publication, the Rural Tribune.

Born in October, the Rural Tribune is different from its counterparts in the county. It is designed solely for low-income and minority people.

It was a \$10,000 federal grant that bought Jacobs and the Rural Tribune together. The grant was funded through the Office of Eco-

nomics Opportunity's Rural Awareness Program. While the initial grant was for six months, Jacobs hopes the project will be re-funded once the primary grant expires next spring.

THE FIRST publication off the press in October was mailed or distributed to about 3,000 persons. Jacobs hopes to up this figure to 8,000 soon. Publication is once a month.

Target of the paper is the chiefly rural areas of western Washington County, although papers are distributed to those agencies that generally come in contact with the low-income and minority people of the county.

Jacobs also hopes the paper finds its way to public and elected officials of the cities, county and state, hoping that such officials will become more aware of the plight of the poor and minority groups.

Jacobs said his new venture has a relatively simple aim: "To make the community aware of problems existing among low income

groups and people of minority stock." He said the Rural Tribune hopes to pinpoint the problems and explore possible solutions.

THE WAY Jacobs figures it, a communications gap exists between the low-income groups and the agencies that seek to help them.

A quick glance of the first edition of the Rural Tribune shows stories about housing and health problems among the poor. It also published informative news, that is, what services are offered the poor and where they may be obtained. News of health clinics, educational sessions and the like are still another product of the Rural Tribune.

Jacobs likes to refer to himself as an investigative reporter and has pledged his exploration of the housing problem, lack of educational opportunities for Chicanos and the ins and outs of the food stamp program, to name but a few.

BEFORE hitching his star to the Rural Tribune, Jacobs was a writer with the Oregon Times, and has been an Eng-

lish instructor at Portland Community College and a journalism teacher at Portland's Adams High School.

The quest for new adventure led Jacobs out of the classroom and into his new adventure last fall.

Before coming to Washington County, he knew little about his new home. "What is surprising," he declared, "is that this county of such seemingly high wealth has so much poverty nestled in among the wealthy." Unlike large cities where poverty pockets are evident, Jacobs thinks the situation in Washington County is misleading since the poverty is so well-scattered.

THE ILLINOIS native, who went to California before landing on an Ivy League campus, is challenged by the thought that someday his Rural Tribune may not only be a paper of the poor, but by the poor. That is, the aim is to incorporate low income and minority peoples into actual producing of the paper.

Jacobs envisions training such people in reporting,

writing and editing "their newspaper." Such a move already is under way. Low-income people are joined by college students and other interested community citizens in gathering news, making layouts and proofreading.

Some of the paper's articles are printed in both English and Spanish necessitating a translator. Jacobs has one other paid staff member, Amador Aguirre, the assistant editor.

THE STAFF is supplemented by the Neighborhood Youth Corps and the Concentrated Employment Program in nearby Portland.

What makes the Rural Tribune different from other papers is that it is offered free to its readers. And, there is no advertising on any of its eight pages. The reason? It's government-financed, of course, and that precludes it from being a commercial venture.

However, being government-backed doesn't mean it can't be a success. And Jacobs is dedicated to that end. First issue of the Rural Trib-

une admittedly was slow to take, said Jacobs, but he is confident of the future.

INCREASED circulation will help, he figures, and besides, more and more people are becoming aware of the Rural Tribune each day. The road to success, says Jacobs, will be determined by how well his publication is able to involve itself with the community and the issues.

"We won't solve all the problems," he added, "but we hope we can stir up the

type of discussion that lead to solving of problems among the poor and minorities."

The Tribune is housed in modest quarters at the office of the Community Program in Hillsboro.

However humble its beginnings, the Rural Tribune is on its way. A second issue was off the press in November and Jacobs, a loner from Harvard, figures the fledgling publication is here to stay.

Property Tax Relief Numbers Could Grow

HILLSBORO — Some 7,254 homeowners in Washington County are expected to qualify for property tax relief in 1973, according to Don Mason, director of assessment and taxation.

The figure represents the number of county homeowners who qualified for tax relief this year under the Homeowners' Property Tax Relief Act passed by the 1971 Oregon Legislature.

Mason said, however, he believes the number of county homeowners eligible for relief under the act could

soar to as many as 13,000. The county official said indications were that many persons were unaware of the act.

Last year, each of the 7,254 homeowners received an average tax credit of \$152.70. The Oregon Dept. of Revenue paid Washington County \$186,706 to cover the tax credits the county had extended these homeowners.

The state revenue department has already sent the county \$93,353 in anticipation of at least 7,254 homeowners qualifying again for property tax relief.

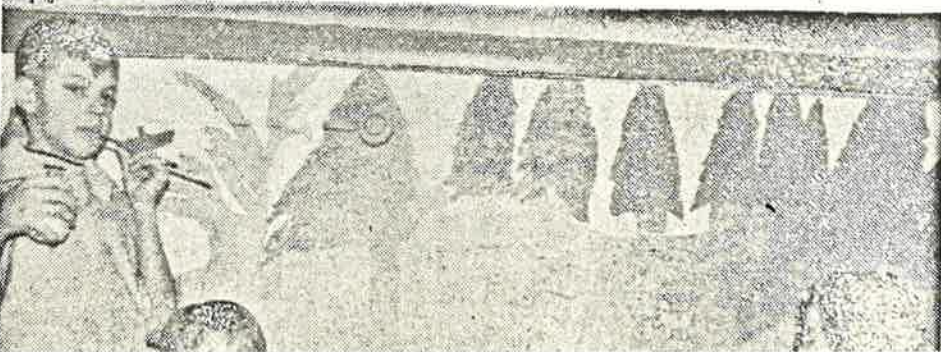
Wichita Students Deck Halls With Murals

By LOLA McCORKLE
Journal Special Writer

MILWAUKIE — Wichita Elementary School students are very busy these days decking their halls.

They chose the right season for their project, but the holiday season isn't their inspiration. Although they are using a lot of green, they are not working with the holly and mistletoe variety.

The Wichita fourth, fifth and sixth grade students are painting animal murals up and down their basement



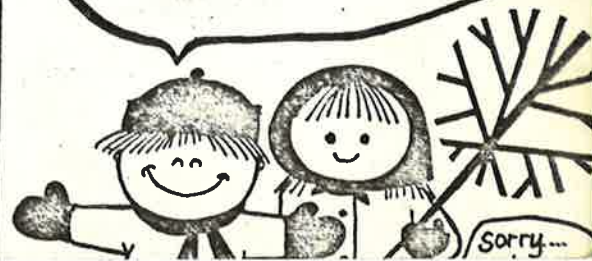
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5 families work together to build homes in low-income, self-help building project

By JAMES MAGMER

of The Oregonian staff

FOREST GROVE — Armando Maza knew he could not build the new house he needed for his wife and four children all by himself.

But he found that by working with four other families the five could build five houses and one would be his.

That's exactly what has happened.

A new three-bedroom house will be ready for Armando, his wife and four children Oct. 1.

And new houses will be ready for Antonio, who has seven children; for Alfonso, who has five; for Jose, who has seven; and for Ignacio, who has 11.

The new homes are in Forest Grove and Cornelius. The families will show them to the public at open houses Sept. 30.

But the story of how these homes came to be belongs to Cirilo Villarreal who heads a "self-help housing" program at the Valley Migrant League Center in Forest Grove.

"Self-help housing is an idea that men working together with other men can solve problems they cannot solve alone," Villarreal said.

"These five families each pledged to work together 1,500 hours as a group to build the five houses. We arranged loans for each family from the Farmers Home Adminis-



NEW PAPER — The Rural Tribune is scheduled for mid-October to show Washington County problems of low-income families. Editor Paul Jacobs, Community Action Program staffer, said 8,000 copies will be mailed each month to businessmen, county and state officials, and to low income families.

tration to buy the land and the materials," he said.

"Each house follows the same basic plan so group construction is simplified. The only difference, really, in the houses is the number of bedrooms. Ignacio with his 11 children needed five bedrooms; Alfonso with five needed only three.

Payments lower

"The government will give each family some help with the interest on their loans so that their monthly house payments will be less than the rents they are now paying. The amount of the government subsidy is based on the income of each family and the number of children it has.

"The average loan runs about \$15,300 for 31 years," Cirilo said. "With the government subsidy, monthly payments average between \$87 and \$110. Since the houses have a market value of \$18,500, each family already has a \$3,000 equity in its house."

The five families started

work on their homes last December, working evenings and weekends "It got dark so soon, we had to use floodlights," Armando said. "And the mud was as sticky as gum."

"We contracted for the wiring, plumbing, sheet rocking of the walls and the cabinets," Villarreal said. "But the families did all the painting, inside and out."

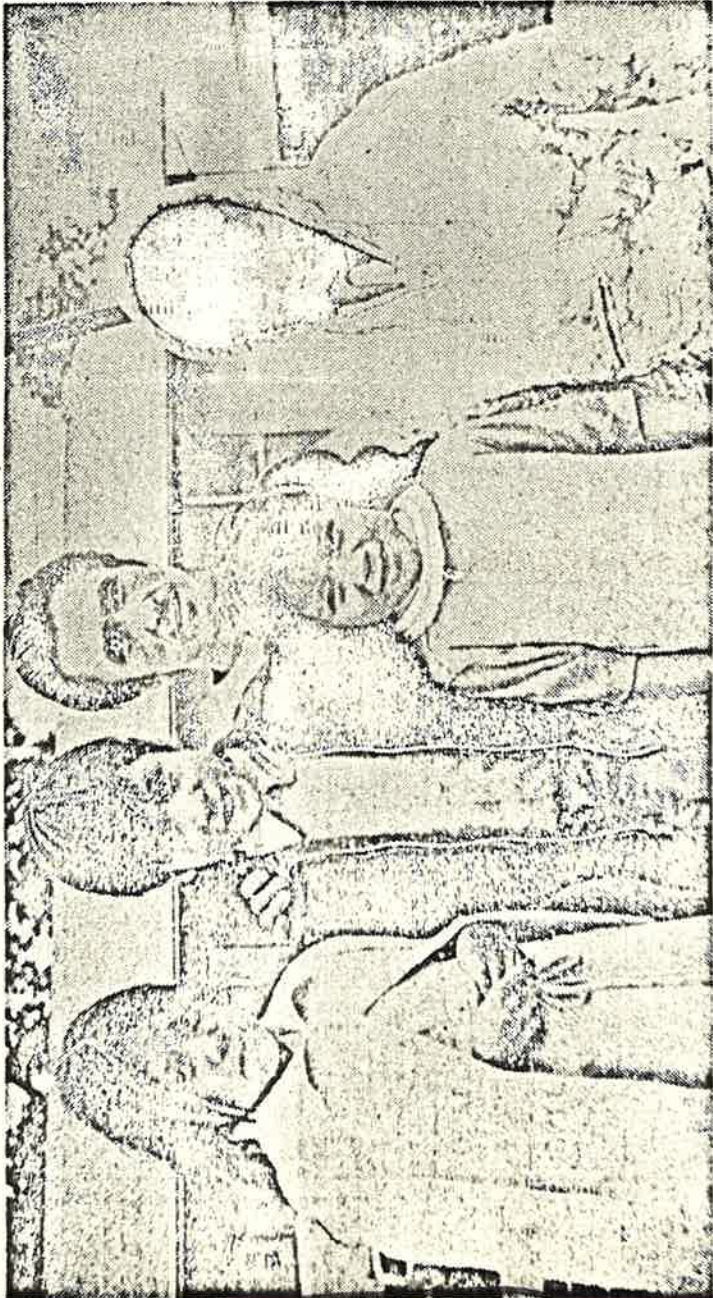
"These houses are so much better than the ones they are now living in," Villarreal said. "The children will not be ashamed to have the school bus stop in front of them and the women will be able to invite their friends in to visit."

The self-help approach to

the housing problem for migrant workers and their families was introduced by the Valley Migrant League in 1969. The program has already been successful in Eastern Oregon and Washington and in Central California.

The five houses to be opened in Forest Grove and Cornelius Sept. 30 are the first to be built by the self-help program in the Portland Metropolitan area.

Villarreal calls these first houses his "Victory Project." And next month he is starting "Lucky Project" with five more families who have agreed to work 1,500 hours together to build each of them a new home.



Children are Armando Jr., Hortencia, Belinda and Olga Lydia. Cirilo Villarreal, of the Valley Migrant League, called the houses "Victory Project."

VICTORY PROJECT — Five families in Forest Grove and Cornelius worked together to build each a new home. Armando Maza stands proudly with his children in front of their new home in Forest Grove. The chil-

We've helped V.M.L. and other groups get publicity for their projects.