



Winter 1996

## Collect Cans and Bottles to Help the Homeless!

**H**elp the homeless with your returnable plastic bottles and cans next time you're at the grocery store. A new program has started that will benefit our local area homeless programs, and all you have to do is drop your returnables in the box marked "The Homeless Fund."

Participating stores are: Albertson, Durst's Thriftway, Food 4 Less (Powell Street), Fred Meyer, Nature's Fresh Northwest, Plaid Pantry, Safeway, Stroecher and Zupan's.



# CONNECTIONS

*A Quarterly Publication of Community Action Organization*

## Finding Hope and a Future

**I**njured on the job, isolated and depressed, divorced an abusive husband and homeless. Susan Wright and her two children found themselves in this situation in 1994. They moved in with her sister, with no hope of escaping the situation.

As you read this story it's hard to imagine how someone who has been working full time and paying rent can end up homeless, but it is an all too familiar story at Community Action. Susan was injured on the job and unable to work, her housing was condemned

and she had nowhere to go except to move in with her sister. As the days went by she became more isolated and depressed, struggling to find a way out for her family.

The first step out was the Head Start program in Aloha. Her daughter was able to enter the program last year after being placed on the waiting list. Through her contact with Community Action she found a support system that would help her take the steps necessary to change her situation. The home visits from Community

*(Continued on Page 5)*

*Martha Westfall, left, and Susan Wright in her Hopespring apartment.*



## Play it Again to Play it Again

**P**lay It Again, Community Action's resale shop, closed a few months ago and is undergoing a metamorphosis. The new store will be a free clothing shop, open to any low-income resident in Washington County. The need for clothing is great, as many families in Washington County are struggling to provide themselves with the basics: food, shelter and warmth.

The former resale shop, located on Hall Boulevard in Beaverton, is in the process of being cleaned, painted and stocked with a fresh inventory of good used clothes which come from local donations. We have the place; we have the clothes—we NEED ENTHUSIASTIC VOLUNTEERS! The shop will be open as many afternoons and mornings as we can find

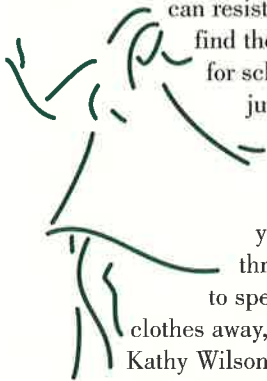
volunteers to staff it. Who can resist helping a child

find the perfect jacket for school or finding just the right outfit

for Mom or Dad's job interview? If

you have just three hours a week to spend giving

clothes away, please contact Kathy Wilson at 693-3254.



Community Connections is the quarterly newsletter of Community Action Organization, 1001 SW Baseline St., Hillsboro, OR 97123, and is published by the Development Office and Engrafix Design Group (Nancy Scott, volunteer).

Community Action Organization is a private, non-profit corporation providing a wide variety of services to the needy in Washington County, Oregon. For further information:

Administration: 648-6646  
Client Services Department:  
Hillsboro 648-0829  
Tigard 639-0495  
(Neighborshare)



Cindy Hirst  
Board Chair

## Message from the Board Chair and Executive Director



Jerralynn Ness  
Executive Director

### “The Face of Poverty in Washington County”

**T**he New Year is a time of reflection and transition. It is a time to take stock of where we have been and to re-establish our goals for the future. As 1996 rings in, there is a great deal of uncertainty about what our nation's commitment will be to those who are struggling with poverty. And yet, during this holiday season we have seen an out-

pouring of local concern and generosity as families dug deep to give whatever they could to ease the pain of others. It is these very acts of caring that reinforce our belief that together we can strengthen our community for the better of all.

This winter, we will be re-evaluating how our resources, programs and services can have a greater impact on local poverty and the families who are affected. As always, we will be looking at how we can be more efficient with our precious resources and how we

can build collaboration with all sectors. We are in the process of finishing a needs assessment report, titled “The Face of Poverty in Washington County,” authored by Marc Smiley and Lisa Allison-Kulkarni. This document will give guidance to our planning and prioritization efforts and provide us and the community with what we hope will be a compelling educational tool.

**“We will be reaching out to all of our stakeholders for input as we examine our values, our mission and our goals, and re-establish our priorities through the end of this century.”**

We will be reaching out to all of our stakeholders for input as we examine our values, our mission and our goals, and re-establish our priorities through the end of this century. We invite you to participate in our community meetings this spring and wel-

come any thoughts you may have. We wish you a prosperous and joyful new year!

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The Tenth Annual Benefit for the Anti-Poverty  
Programs of Community Action Organization  
Bonnie Hays, *Honorary Chair*

# Mardi Gras '96



February 17, 1996  
7 p.m. to Midnight  
Montgomery Park  
2701 NW Vaughn Street, Portland



Dance to "Five Guys Named Moe"  
Bayou Sounds by "Riverboat Jazz"  
First-Ever Wine Raffle Drawing  
Casino! Blackjack, Craps & Roulette  
Wine Tasting & Silent Auction  
Hors d'oeuvres & Desserts  
Costume Contest, Psychics, Magic, Juggling & Much More!  
*Costume or Party Attire*

**\$25 Per Person.**

For Tickets call  
Community Action Organization at 648-6646

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## Mardi Gras to Feature First-Ever Wine Raffle



During this year's Mardi Gras celebration three lucky tickets will be drawn for the first ever Wine Raffle in the State of Oregon. Each winner will receive a cellar of 12 cases (144 bottles) of premium wine from the Washington County Winery Association. The wine is being donated by: Cooper Mountain, Laurel Ridge, Oak Knoll, Montinore, Ponzi and Tualatin vineyards. Each cellar is valued at \$1,200.

Tickets for this great prize are only \$5.00 and all the money goes to support the work of Community Action Organization. If you would like to purchase tickets, please call Community Action at 648-6646.



## Adopt-A-Family Brightens Holidays for Many

This year for the first time, Community Action sponsored a Christmas Adopt-A-Family program which matched donors to needy families whose holidays were not very cheery-looking. All families were screened through the Christmas Clearing Bureau at the Tualatin Valley Food Bank in order to make sure they had not been adopted by another sponsor.

Client Services located the families which were matched with sponsors who called with a variety of requests. Some sponsors were individual families who wanted to provide food and gifts for a small family. Many were first-time sponsors. Companies, clubs and churches participated, requesting large or multiple families. One business adopted two families instead of having their annual Christmas party and said it was the most fun they'd ever had. Some sponsors were able to provide food; others provided gifts; and some provided both. Farm labor camps and many Head Start children were adopted as well. Some donors brought unwrapped gifts to be wrapped and used in case we had unadopted families at the last minute—and we did.

Thanks to the generosity of more than 30 sponsors, 128 children, 56 adults, the Shelter Home and Head Start classrooms had a much happier holiday sea-

## Turning Point Happens When Hopespring Begins Helping

*(Continued from Page 1)*

Action staff encouraged her as a single mom as well as a parent. The turning point came in the Spring of 1995 when she heard about the Hopespring project.

Hopespring is a collaborative effort with the Domestic Violence Resource Center, Lutheran Family Services, Tualatin Valley Mental Health and Community Action. The program provides transitional housing, counseling, on-site day care and parenting classes to help families stabilize. There is also access to other services with col-

laborating agencies. Through the program, participants develop a sense of community. Family advocates meet with each family at least once a month, or more frequently depending on the need.

Susan was accepted into the program after completing an application with an essay detailing her situation and goals for the future. She was then interviewed by staff and selected for the program. The family moved into their apartment in August of 1995. Martha Westfall, her family advocate, started meeting with her after she moved in. When asked what she

hoped to do in the future, Susan stated, "I want to give back what I've been given. I would like to go to school and be involved in some type of social service work." She added, "I have learned to enjoy the simple things in life like having my own kitchen to clean, and I don't take what I have for granted." Susan is currently working in customer service for a remodeling company and attending school through the PCC New Direction program. Both of her children are enrolled in local schools and doing well.

## Mardi Gras '96: More Fun than Ever!

**O**n February 17th at 7:00 PM the doors at Montgomery Park in Portland will open to guests for Community Action's 10th Annual Mardi Gras. This year's event promises to be a memorable one. At 11:00 PM, Bonnie Hays, Honorary Chair for the event, will draw three winning tickets in the first ever wine raffle in the State of Oregon. Each winner will receive a wine cellar of 12 cases (144 bottles) of premium Washington County Wine.



Montgomery Park will be transformed into a Louisiana bayou at the entrance and guests will feel a true New Orleans flavor to the entire event. Riverboat Jazz will set the tone for the evening by strolling throughout the facility with Dixieland music. Five Guys Named Moe will keep everyone's fingers tapping and feet dancing in the atrium.

Wild Bill's Casino is back again this year with your favorite games including blackjack, roulette and craps. There will be psychics, mimes, clowns, jugglers and even some face painting adding to your entertainment options.

The Washington County Winery Association will be on hand with wine tasting and the silent auction committee has come up with some great prizes to entice any size budget. There will be no-host bars and a complimentary buffet of hors d'oeuvres and desserts.

Adding to the festive atmosphere will be a costume contest judged



*Bonnie Hays, Honorary Chair of the Tenth Annual Mardi Gras.*

by our Honorary Chair, Bonnie Hays, and her husband Art Lewis.

Tickets to the event are \$25.00. If you would like to attend, please call Community Action at 648-6646 to get your tickets. You won't want to miss this 10th Annual celebration!



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