

WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION ORGANIZATION NEWS

Fall 1993

"All of a sudden it just hits you."

Losing your housing can happen to anyone. Just ask Nancy.

Nancy Clark understands what it means to be homeless. A bright, vivacious 37-year-old mother of three, she also understands what it feels like to be called a "welfare mom," or "one of those food stamp people." The labels are painful daily reminders of her situation. "I never thought about it before...how devastating, how hurtful it was." By and large, she says, people don't want to be homeless. "All of a sudden it just hits you. I just figured I'd get a place to live...you don't expect these things, they just happen."

Until May, 1991, Nancy and her two children, ages six and eight, had never been without a place to live. She lived in the same apartment in Yamhill County for four years until a series of events outside her control resulted in the loss of her housing. She spent the better part of the following year with no

permanent housing, living mostly in her car, parked under bridges or other places where she could hope to get a



Never again: Nancy is doing all she can to make sure Raul, 8 months, always has a home.

night's peaceful sleep. When she could arrange it, she had friends and family care for her children, but her son spent most of that summer with her.

Although she has training and work experience as a pharmaceutical technician, she had not worked recently because she had been caring for her children. This made it close to impossible to find another house or apartment to rent. "I was applying for lots of jobs, and took the first one I was offered, but with just a few weeks' working, no one wants to rent to you."

Nancy describes being homeless as being like a full-time job. Keeping the Housing Authority (where

see Nancy continued on page 4

Study to answer questions about homelessness in Washington County

Who are the homeless in Washington County? How do they become homeless? Which services are most effective in preventing people from falling back into homelessness? These and other questions will be answered by a study currently underway by WCCAO.

Often, such studies rely solely on information supplied by providers of homeless services. This time it will be different, says Leon Laptook, WCCAO's Housing Director. "There will be a structured mechanism to have homeless people participate and help determine services they believe will assist them to get back into housing as well as ways to prevent homelessness in the first place... It will be an inclusive, participatory planning process." Information will be col-

lected by means of surveys and interviews with current and former recipients of homeless services as well as focus groups of service providers.

Once finished, the study results will be "the only source of comprehensive information on the demographics, causes and potential solutions to homelessness relating specifically to Washington County," according to Leon.

In addition to painting a picture of homelessness in Washington County, the compiled information will have multiple uses, including providing the basis for key elements of WCCAO's upcoming five year strategic plan and the Washington County Housing Services Department's CHAS (a planning

document required by the federal government). It will also provide an inventory of the services currently available to assist the homeless as well as the gaps in service. Since the need will be better documented and analyzed, WCCAO and other agencies will be in a better position to apply for funds for projects to serve the homeless and prevent homelessness.

The project, which began in August and will continue through October, is supported by funds from the Oregon Emergency Housing Account. To carry out the study, WCCAO has contracted with The Planning Group, a human service consulting firm that has worked with WCCAO in the past on similar projects. ♦



Introducing our new board chair....

**Shirley Huffman, Chair
WCCAO Board of Directors**

Shirley Huffman, new Chair of the WCCAO Board of Directors, is well-known to many in Washington County as the former mayor of Hillsboro. She's also been involved with WCCAO for a number of years, and we thought we'd introduce her to you by asking her to share a little about her history with the agency and her vision for the future.

How long have you been aware that WCCAO existed, and what were your early impressions?

About fourteen years. I was on the Hillsboro City Council at the time, and was appointed to the WCCAO Board by the Mayor. I was pleased to be appointed, because I wanted to feel like a contributing part of the community. But, to be honest, I was less than impressed. I didn't have the feeling that WCCAO was meeting the needs of the people. It may well have been lack of information. Frankly, I'm sure it came from what I didn't know. I stayed on the Board for about a year and then chose not to be reappointed.

How long have you been on the Board this time, and why did you decide to come back on the Board?

I've been back on the Board now for eight years. When I became Mayor of Hillsboro, I appointed myself. By that time, I had better knowledge of the

agency and its goals and purpose. I had heard good things about the direction the agency was taking. I had gotten to know Jerralynn. And I was interested in issues that involve people. I wanted to offer what I could.

Why is WCCAO's work important to you personally and to Washington County?

To me, because of my interest in people and wanting to be of service. To the County, because what affects low income people affects all of us in the long run. The well being of all people is important. If we can help people regain control of their lives, it's an advantage to everyone.

What impact do you think WCCAO has had on the community?

A very good, positive effect, on the lives of everyone in the county. As I said before: improving the quality of life for those people who, through no fault of their own, have found themselves in circumstances that make it difficult to gain control, makes life better for all.

What is your vision for the future of WCCAO?

I wish we could work ourselves out of business. I'm not that naive, but that's what I wish. In the meantime, I wish to be of some help to low-income people in the ways that would be most beneficial to everyone. I like that expression: "a hand up, not a hand out."

What does it mean to you to be Board Chair?

I'm proud; because WCCAO responds to such a desperate need. I'm proud to be part of the resolution of those issues, to be working with an organization with such a fine reputa-

tion and to be working with the highest quality staff and management. I'm sincere about that. I have very high regard for all the staff.

What do you hope to accomplish or contribute as Board Chair?

To find solutions. I want us to continue and even expand upon ways in which WCCAO can assist people who are in difficult stages in their lives, by helping with housing, short term help with some of the essentials of living, offering stability and confidence to families through the Head Start program. I'm particularly interested in the issues of housing and homelessness, and I hope that this Board can contribute toward an adequate supply of decent housing for all people in Washington County. ❖

WCCAO opposes discrimination

On May 19, 1993, former Board Chair Sherry Robinson signed an anti-discrimination resolution that reads, in part, as follows:

Whereas, the very people who need services from WCCAO are often victims of discrimination and humiliating treatment, resulting in a loss of self-esteem.

Whereas, the achievement of family self-sufficiency is WCCAO's highest priority and requires that self-esteem be regained.

Whereas, healthy communities are those which are tolerant of differences, honor diversity, are inclusive in their community culture and free of discrimination and hate crimes.

Therefore, let it be resolved that the WCCAO Board of Directors publicly

see Opposes continued on page 3

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
Tualatin Valley Food Center (Denise Harkness, Manager)	640-6005
Resource Development Dept. (Pam Brown Wilkinson, Director)	648-6646
"Play It Again" Thrift Store	644-8956



Jerralynn Ness
Executive Director

Executive director's message...Summer reflection

Summertime at WCCAO is a time for reflection, farewells, and change. It can be a bittersweet experience as we let go of those who have been dear to us and prepare for changes ahead. This summer has been no exception. Summer also marks the end of the fiscal year and the beginning of a new year, a time when staff experience many changes in programs, services and job responsibilities.

Head Start: We are proud to see another 300-plus young children complete a year at Head Start and either go on to public school or return for a second year with us. Their families have every reason to be optimistic: over the past year their children's chances for success in school and beyond increased significantly through their Head Start experience at WCCAO. We look forward to reopening this fall with a new center in North Plains and the resources to serve 310 children county wide.

Farmworker Outreach: Last spring, we saw the annual arrival of farmworkers who gamble on Oregon's fickle weather and come to harvest our crops and, in exchange, support their families. WCCAO provided temporary space for Food Stamp Outreach Workers to serve many of these families, and together we responded to the needs of over 2,400 people. Because our unseasonable weather failed to deliver the full bounty of crops expected, this service was particularly valuable this year. We made new friends in the hard working, dedicated staff sent by Oregon Adult and Family Services, but soon said goodbye as the program ended in July.

New Board Members and Officers: In June, WCCAO welcomed new members and officers to the Board of Directors while saying good-bye to those leaving. Sherry Robinson passed the gavel to Shirley Huffman as she completed her two-year term as Board Chair. Cindy Hirst stepped into the vice chair position. Dick Stenson, Darlene Greene, Greg

Zuffrea, Laurie Birchill, Rob Drake, and Charlotte Karvia joined the roster of new Board members as WCCAO said goodbye to Robert Brake, Margaret Eickmann, and Dan Martin.

Student Interns: Portland State's Graduate School of Social Work placed two student interns with us for the academic year '92-'93. Their combined efforts helped us to develop a cancer prevention program for low income families as well as strengthen our personnel policies and practices.

Jesuit Volunteers: Each August we say good bye to 3 or 4 volunteers placed with us through the Jesuit Volunteer Corps and at the same time greet new ones who will be with us for the coming year. Jesuit Volunteers give their heart and soul as they work on WCCAO's front lines, helping hundreds of destitute families get back on their feet. These jewels quickly become an integral part of the WCCAO family, which makes it tough to see them leave. This year, Chris Shank, a '92-'93 Jesuit Volunteer, will remain with us as a Services Specialist at our Tigard Neighborshare office.

There is much that remains constant at WCCAO: the longevity of our Board and Staff, the consistency of our program services such as Head Start, Weatherization, Emergency Services and Shelter, as well as our core mission and values.

However, change is also a constant in our lives at WCCAO. Change means growth, it helps us to build on our strengths; change makes it possible to regularly improve what we do, how we do it, and continue to have an impact in reducing poverty.

Our staff and volunteers are our most valuable resources. It is their vision, their creativity, and their willingness to make changes and work hard that allows WCCAO to be successful. And when WCCAO succeeds at its mission, family by family we reduce poverty, and the whole community benefits.

I am proud of the WCCAO staff and volunteers' accomplishments over the past year, including:

- We responded to 14,418 requests for information and made appropriate referrals through our 24-hour Information and Referral system.
- We helped ensure that 6,301 people

stayed warm through the winter by providing 2,656 families with energy assistance payments.

- We assisted 208 families to stay in or move into their home by providing rent assistance payments.

- We provided 9380 bed nights of emergency shelter so that 227 families would not be without a place to sleep.

- We provided 8,289 bed nights of transitional housing to ten families so they could have the chance to stabilize themselves and move on to permanent housing.

- We provided case management services to promote the self reliance of 412 families in our shelters, transitional housing, Head Start and Oregon Partners in Energy programs.

- We weatherized 106 housing units occupied by low-income people so that they could stay warmer and pay less to heat their homes.

- We provided Head Start services, including health and nutrition screening, social services, and mental health services to 347 children and their families so that they could stand a better chance of success in school in the years to come.

- We provided parenting education to over 500 parents so that they could learn new ways of guiding and disciplining their children. ♦

Opposes...continued from pg. 2

denounces discrimination in all forms including age, gender, disability, economic status, marital status, religion, sexual orientation, family status, race, language and country of origin. Furthermore, the Board strongly denounces all crimes against persons and property, including hate crimes.

WCCAO took this step in response to the alarming increase in bias crimes in Oregon as well as WCCAO staff's request that the organization take a stand against recent attempts by the Oregon Citizen's Alliance to pass local and statewide anti-gay rights initiatives. "WCCAO's statement of values says that we will uphold the dignity of all people and honor diversity in all forms," says Jerralynn Ness. "This resolution only serves to reinforce that." ♦

Nancy... continued from page 1

she was on a years-long waiting list for subsidized housing) and Adult and Family Services up to date on her current address occupied much of her time. Add to that making sure she and her son had their next meal, figuring out where to stay the night and how to keep their clothes and bodies clean and there wasn't much time left in the day to devote to her job search.

She finally found work in a college cafeteria, and temporarily moved in with a friend and sent her children to stay with family so that she could save enough money for the move-in costs to a new place in order to bring her family back together again.

By this time, Nancy had met the man who would be the father of her third child. Unfortunately, he was jealous and suspicious and bothered her at work, forcing her to quit her job. They moved to Portland. After staying with family, they moved to a church shelter. Nancy says the shelter "wasn't great, but it was clean, safe...better than the way I had been living." Her boyfriend's disruptive behavior continued until he was asked to leave the shelter. Nancy chose to stay, and the case manager continued to work with her to help her to stabilize her life. However, the man continued to harass her, and Nancy made the decision to move to a shelter operated by the Washington County Domestic Violence Resource Center.

Nancy discovered she was pregnant at about the same time she got a restraining order against the man so that he wouldn't harass her any longer. Then, the opportunity arose for her to apply for Transitional Housing through WCCAO. Although she didn't think there was much chance of getting into the program, she had been in the shelter for seven weeks, and could not receive any more extensions. "I just couldn't go to another shelter," she says. "There was no hope left, I was numb." Upon hearing that she'd been accepted into Transitional Housing, Nancy says she "screamed and jumped up and down. I just couldn't believe it."

Being in Transitional Housing gave Nancy the chance to bring her family back together and get used to the feeling of stability again. Her children

were enrolled in school, and Nancy prepared for the birth of her baby. "Her first task was to adjust to not being homeless," says Martha Plaza, the WCCAO case manager who worked with Nancy during her stay in the transitional house in Aloha. Although there was no danger of being put back on the street, Nancy still feared being homeless and having her children taken away and talked about it most of the time. Martha convinced Nancy to enter counseling so that she could work through her fears and get on with the business of ensuring her future stability.

After some months in the house in Aloha, Nancy received her Section 8 certificate, a government subsidy which ensures that she won't pay more than one-third of her income in rent. It took her four months to find an apartment and a landlord who would rent to her.

She moved into the apartment she now occupies in April, in stable housing after two years of homelessness and having her children attend seven schools in one year. "I'm still afraid of being homeless," she says, and it is clear that

the two years had an impact. For her son, Scotty, the changes and uncertainty left their mark, and he suffered an emotional breakdown. "It's hard, it's just too much for him." Now eight, he is living with his father in Hawaii, in counseling and improving daily. Her daughter, RaeAnn, now ten years old, fared better through the ordeal, although she expresses some frustration. She made good friends in Aloha, and misses them as she starts the year in a new school. At eight months, baby Raul is a happy, sociable child and Nancy hopes never to see him experience what her older children did.

Nancy is in stable housing now and is taking steps to ensure her future self-reliance. She can reflect back on what the experience meant to her, what made a difference, and what didn't. "I hate being in the system," she says, "but what else is there? You have to get back on your feet." She says that short-term answers like a couple of weeks in a shelter were a welcome relief from sleeping in her car, but that she needed access

see Nancy continued on page 7



Governor Barbara Roberts joins Chuck Armstrong, Chairman and CEO of Bank of America and Hillsboro Mayor Gordon Faber in presenting a "bigger-than-life" \$1,000 check to WCCAO's Executive Director, Jerralynn Ness, as part of Grand Opening ceremonies at the Bank's new loan processing center in Washington County on June 25th.

There are solutions to Washington County's lack of affordable housing

"The need for affordable housing development in the county is clear: at least 7,000 households, representing about 17,400 people, are paying more than 30% of their income for housing," says Leon Laptook, WCCAO's Housing Director. As the County has grown, the number of units available to low income renters and homeowners has not kept pace with the number of families who need them.

Of specific concern is "the plight of working poor families," says Laptook, "like the typical Head Start family: entry level wages, probably in the service industry, maybe a single parent household." The primary issues identified include: The high cost of land and development in Washington County; the need for stronger public-private partnerships; the lack of resources to support programs to assist low income renters and homeowners; the need to link housing to transportation, economic development and employment and training opportunities.

The need for affordable housing prompted WCCAO to conduct a com-

prehensive study into the causes of and potential solutions to the problem. The Affordable Housing Task Force, chaired



The other side of Washington County: An example of the type of housing occupied by some of Washington County's less fortunate.

by Gary Conkling and facilitated by Topaz Faulkner of the Faulkner/Conrad Group, was convened. The results of their work is a report which outlines both the issues of affordable housing as well as a variety of strategies to overcome them.

The Task Force made specific recom-

mendations, including: Develop programs specifically designed to assist low income renter and first time home buyers; implement aggressive land banking to lower the cost of land to be used for housing development; institute property tax abatements for low income housing development; bring together a community-wide group of concerned individuals to advocate for affordable housing development and provide technical assistance and support to projects; form community development corporations to work in association with existing housing providers to create more affordable units.

The Task Force members have agreed to continue into the coming year. Activities include exploring the formation of a community development corporation and continuing to advocate for the development of affordable housing. For more information or to receive a copy of the study results, call Leon Laptook at 648-6646. ♦

You can help

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
- **Sales Clerk** at WCCAO's thrift store; call Thelma, 644-8956
- **Human Resources Specialist**; call Connie, 648-6646
- **Fundraising Events Helper**; call Mary Louise, 640-6005
- **Child Care Volunteer** at the Shelter; call Michael, 640-3263
- **Night/Day Supervisors at the Shelter**; call Michael, 640-3263
- **Child Care Assistant** for Parenting

Classes; call Renee or Susan, 648-6646

- **Phone screener** to contact weatherization clients; call Joan, 642-3236

- **Committee Members** for annual fundraising event, the Mardi Gras Ball; call Pam or Yolanda, 648-6646

- **Organize WCCAO photos into albums**; call Connie or Pam, 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 the New Neighborshare Office in Tigard: General office furniture and supplies; call Carla, 639-0495.

For Head Start Centers: 35mm camera, film and film developing, por-

table 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 is in need of high protein and staple food items, such as tuna, rice, pasta, canned fruits and vegetables; call Denise, 640-6005. ♦

Multi-service center takes shape

The Building Committee for the new Multi-Service Center has been working hard to design a building that will make the best use of the property and provide the working space most beneficial to WCCAO's programs. Since the Spring 1993 edition of the "Action NEWS", the Center has changed its look, incorporating information from the programs, information from the architect and advice from members of the Committee. "We believe that we have come up with a design", says committee chair Russ Wilkinson, "that will work well for WCCAO for many years to come, building in flexibility and efficiency in every possible way."

The Multi-Service Center will be built all in one phase and will house the following:

- *Client Services Center*, including information and referral, intake and needs assessment, basic emergency services and family development work on the

first floor. Highlights include a safe and comfortable waiting area, confidential space for interviewing and counseling clients, a Resource Room for families and individuals, adequate work space for volunteers, flexible meeting room space and a children's play area.

The second floor of this part of the building will house the agency's support staff, managers and department directors and will provide additional space for volunteers

- *Child Development Center* with five Head Start classrooms designed for the special needs of young children, a safe and developmentally appropriate playground, a Health Center to provide medical and dental screenings, space for full-day child care in conjunction with Head Start, space for before and after school child care

- *Nutrition Center*, preparing and distributing up to 2,000 meals daily to Head Start children at the 5 classrooms

located on-site and to 8 other Head Start Centers located around the County. For many children, this meal is the only nutritional meal they will receive all day.

The entire Center, which consolidates five sites into one, will be modestly but adequately furnished, handicapped accessible and energy efficient. Consolidation of the five sites, lease cost savings and more energy-efficient construction will save \$100,000 each year for WCCAO - funds that will then be available for direct client services.

Timeline for construction has changed by doing it all in one phase, but should decrease costs and increase our capability to raise the money needed in the Campaign. Ground breaking is scheduled for March 1994 and we hope that the Center can be completed by January 1995. ♦

Leadership on board as capital campaign gets off to a great start

An impressive group of community leaders has agreed to serve on WCCAO's Capital Campaign committees, helping ensure its success. The Steering Committee, comprised of the Campaign Chair, Shirley Huffman, chairs of the sub-committees and others, has been meeting since last Spring, helping to fill in the volunteer slots necessary to meet the \$1.3 million goal.

Shirley Huffman, besides being the past Mayor of Hillsboro, WCCAO's current Board Chair and Chair of the Campaign, has recently begun a new position with the Greater Hillsboro Chamber of Commerce as their coordinator for Economic Development. Steering Committee members, besides Huffman, include:

Carol Clark

Executive Director, Washington County Visitors Association

Bob Colfelt

President, Health Air International Corp

Gary Conkling

Partner, Conkling Fiskum & McCormick

Linda Davis

Sales Associate and Partner, Preferred Corp

Dick Porn

President, Western Realty Advisors

Sandra Miller

Human Resources Director, City of Beaverton

Sherry Robinson

Dean of Students, Portland Community College - Rock Creek

Senator Bob Shoemaker

Oregon State Legislature

Dick Stenson

Chief Executive Officer, Tuality Healthcare

Bob Wayt

Public Affairs Manager, GTE Northwest

Russell Wilkinson

CPA, P.C.

Besides their duties as Steering Committee members, all have taken on other assignments, either serving on sub-committees or heading up other efforts. Colfelt and Conkling have teamed up to co-chair the Corporate and Foundations Sub-Committee, while Davis and Porn are sharing the duties as chairs of the Individual Gifts Sub-Committee. Wilkinson chairs the Building Committee for the new Multi-Service Center and Wayt serves on the Campaign's Public Relations Committee.

The first major gift of the Campaign - \$25,000 - was made early in September

by long-time residents of Washington County and past supporters of the agency, Robert and Violet Metzler. The second gift - \$10,000 - was made on September 22 by Ruth G. and George W. Burlingham of Forest Grove. Major gifts are being considered by other potential donors - individuals, corporations and foundations - and the Campaign committees are gearing up for an eventful Fall. ♦

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

Rotary golf tournament raises over \$8,000 to benefit WCCAO's shelter

Forest Hills Golf Course was the site of the 3rd Annual Sunrise Invitational Benefit golf tournament, sponsored by J.B. Insulation, Tuality Healthcare and U.S. Bank. Over 150 players and celebrities participated in the scrambler tournament, competing for great prizes and a first place trophy.

"The idea behind this tournament," says tournament organizer, Scott Aldrich, "is to have fun, have a chance to meet and play golf with a celebrity and benefit families in Washington County that are homeless."

Everyone seemed to have a great time, enjoying both a lunch and dinner buffet, a raffle and an auction, in addition to the 18 holes of golf. Other sponsors for the tournament were Jim Harp Realty, Jones & Roth, Sierra Glass, Beaverton Honda, Reedville Cafe, Hillsboro Garbage, Frost & Kohl/Jim Dutro and Robert Evans



Company. Many others donated prizes for winners in the tournament, raffle drawings and for the auction.

Without the proceeds from this tournament, the W C C A O Emergency Family Shelter would most likely have to close for two months this year, denying shelter to at least 20 families. As it is, the Shelter has to turn away 11 out of every 12 people that need emergency shelter. To all the sponsors, contributors, players and especially to the Hillsboro Sunrise Rotary Foundation, WCCAO extends a heartfelt thanks for a great effort to benefit the Emergency Family Shelter. ❖

Media celebrities to serve as Mardi Gras honorary chairs

Eric Schmidt, from KOIN Channel 6, and Francine Raften-Schmidt, well-known radio personality, have enthusiastically agreed to serve as Honorary Chairs of the 8th Annual Mardi Gras Ball, slated for February 12, 1994. If you attended last year, you were entertained by the Schmidts as Masters of Ceremonies in the Sunken Ballroom. This year they will preside over the event planning, helping to promote it in the community.

Steering Committee Co-Chairs for the event, Debby Baker and Sandy Miller, are excited about the Schmidts joining the team. Baker is the business manager for St. Matthew Catholic Church in Hillsboro, and Miller is the Human Resources Director for the City of Beaverton, serving also on WCCAO's Board of Directors. They report that plans for the 1994 event are well underway. "Last year's event went so well," states Miller, "that we've decided to

change little about it except for fine tuning."

The 1994 Mardi Gras Ball is scheduled for Saturday, February 12, 1994, at



Nancy continued from pg. 4

to a wider range of services. The services that made the biggest difference in breaking the cycle of homelessness and hopelessness were those she received at the Domestic Violence Resource Center and WCCAO Transitional Housing, because they were longer-term and addressed all of the concerns she faced.

Nancy says that it was important that she show initiative, but she also credits her case manager at WCCAO with a big part of her success. "Martha was always there, motivating, directing, supporting me. There were times when she's been almost my best friend. She goes out of her way to help; she cares. She has an open mind, isn't biased—many people are critical, negative. Martha made suggestions, and even though I didn't want to, I'd do it anyway, and she was right." Martha demurs and says that no one but Nancy deserves the credit, since she did all the hard work.

Nancy is in permanent housing now, but she recognizes that it is only the beginning. While her baby is still small she will take some classes at Portland Community College, and as he grows she will go back to work and do all she can to ensure that she never finds herself in a similar situation again. ❖

the Portland Art Museum North Wing (formerly the Portland Masonic Temple) on S.W. Park Avenue. Tickets to the event will be \$25 per person again this year and will include a \$5 voucher toward purchase of food at one of the booths located around the facility. Highlights of the event will be **two bands for listening/dancing, a casino, wine tasting, costume contest, raffle, door prizes, fortune telling, face painting, clowns, jugglers** and much, much more. The bands are Portland based *Panama*, offering a lively collection of top 40s, and *The Swing Machine*, featuring the '40s big band sound for dance aficionados. Dance lessons will be offered early in the evening for those who want to get into the action.

For a great evening of fun and entertainment and a way to support WCCAO, don't miss the 8th Annual Mardi Gras Ball and *spread the word!* ❖

What's happening

• **WCCAO Board of Directors** meets the third Wednesday of each month, 6:00 - 8:00 PM, Hillsboro Conference Room, 451 S. First, Suite 600; call Pilar, 648-6646, to confirm.

• **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 Board of Directors** meets the third Thursday of alternating months at 7:00 PM, Hillsboro Conference Room, 451 S. First, Suite 600. **HDC's Annual Meeting** will be held Thursday, December 2 at 7:00 PM, at Centro Cultural, 1110 N. Adair, Cornelius. Keynote speaker will be **Dr. Erasmo Gamboa**, of the University of Washington, who will speak on the history of farmworker housing in

Oregon. For information, call Diane or Leon at 648-6646.

• **Fifth Annual Housing and Human Development Conference, Rebuilding Hope: Developing Community Part-**

nerships to End Poverty will be held October 18-20, at the Lloyd Center Red Lion in Portland. For more information, call Tom Ochiner, Conference Coordinator, 248-5464. ♦



Volunteers make the difference - over 600 volunteers gave more than 10,000 hours to WCCAO last year. Pictured are: Regina Smith, Chris Schlag and Julie Bakun, 1993-94 Jesuit volunteers.

Washington County Community Action Organization

451 S. First, Suite 700
Hillsboro, OR 97123
(503) 648-6646

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
HILLSBORO, OR
PERMIT NO. 129

Inside Action News

Study to answer homelessness questions.....1
Introducing our new board chair.....2
Solutions to lack of housing.....5
You can help.....5
Multi-service center.....6
Mardi Gras.....7
What's happening.....8

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Please return this section of ACTION NEWS (including label) if you:

- have moved (please indicate new address on label)
- are receiving more copies than you need (indicate preferred name and mailing address on label)
- would like to have your name removed from mailing list