

## HopeSpring helps families achieve multiple goals of stability, security in "new way of life"

by Kristin Ludwig

Thanks to the HopeSpring project, Vicky Swearingen's three children will finish out the school year in one place. Before this, they attended three different schools in four months because they had no home. Vicky is also receiving the help she needs: substance abuse counseling, employment assistance, help getting her GED. The family works with a WCCAO case manager who helps them identify and reach their goals, which, she says, "gives you a good feeling of self worth." Her goal is "to get beyond my 4th grade math so I can help my son with homework." Since they've settled down, Jeremy, 7, says "I've been good at school. I've been paying more attention to my teacher and safety rules." The children's attendance is more consistent now that they're living at HopeSpring.

HopeSpring, off Kinnaman Road in Aloha, is operated by a consortium led by Lutheran Family Service of Oregon. Other agencies include WCCAO, Tualatin Valley Mental Health (TVMH) and the Domestic Violence Resource Center. Washington County Department of Housing Services provides housing assistance. To be eligible for the project, the women must have children and have been homeless. Many are survivors of domestic violence or in recovery from substance abuse addiction. They stay for six to nine months and are eligible for additional services.



Photos by Kristin Ludwig

Vicky Swearingen and children Jeremy and Robin

Vicky is confident that with her housing certificate she can make ends meet. When asked what other women in her situation should know, Vicky replied, "If I wasn't clean and sober I never would have made it this far. If you lose, you lose your kids. As a parent, I'm more responsible now setting limits."



Linda VanDerVeen and son James

For Linda VanDerVeen, HopeSpring provides an opportunity to make a transition from her old lifestyle to a new way of life.

Because of her extensive struggle with substance abuse, her children had been in foster care with various family members. Her goal is to be a better parent. She says, "It's a joy getting to know other moms; I get to see how other parents cope."

In addition, Linda is learning how to budget money and about available resources in the community. She's going to school, attends an alcohol after treatment program, is educating herself about the effects of drugs and alcohol, and nutrition and lifestyle changes.

Linda's message to others? "Look at everything as a resource. With drugs and alcohol, you hurt a lot of other people along the way and you can't take back what's done. But you can change your attitude and make something good of it."



Shirley Huffman, Chair  
WCCAO Board of Directors

*Message  
from the Board Chair  
and Executive Director*



Jerralynn Ness,  
Executive Director

Will this be  
your last  
WCCAO  
Action  
News??

This year is a significant one for WCCAO. We'll soon move into our new building in Hillsboro, and in the fall we'll be celebrating our 30th anniversary. As we plan for our next 30 years we are evaluating how to communicate most effectively with you, our supporters. So, be prepared. The next newsletter you receive will probably have a new look!

Spring brings renewal and change;  
new name to be selected, move planned

This is truly springtime at WCCAO, a time of transition, renewal and change.

As this newsletter goes to print, our new Multi-Service Center facility is in the last stages of construction and we are beginning to plan for our July relocation. Raising the funds, planning the space and overseeing construction of this 21,000 square foot building has been one of our greatest challenges and certainly a significant milestone in our 30 years of operation.

WCCAO alone, however, could not have made this dream a reality. We are so grateful to the numerous individuals and organizations who have believed in us, given their support and shared their expertise. Hank March, from the

**To strengthen our identity . . . we are now in the process of picking a new name, which is no easy task! Your continued support as we make this changes is critical to our success . . .**

Washington County Office of Community Development, and his Policy Advisory Board deserve our deepest appreciation for believing that this project was a worthy investment, stepping forward with the necessary seed money and sticking with us to assure its successful completion. Our early private supporters, the Metzlers, the Burlingames, Tuality Healthcare, the Oregonian/Newhouse Foundation and the Meyer Memorial Trust, to name a few, inspired and motivated us to tackle the lofty challenge of a major capital fund drive.

*(Continued on Page 5)*



**. . . 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:

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WCCAO Administration (Jerralynn Ness, Executive Director) .....	648-6646
Client Services Dept.—Intake, Information & Referral .....	648-0829
Cheryl Hilbert, Director .....	648-6646
Heating Assisance (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. (Carren Woods, Director) .....	648-6646
"Play it Again" Thrift Store .....	644-8956

## Strengthen families “brick-by-brick” by sponsoring a brick or tree at new Multi-Service Center!

Would you like to honor someone special or put your name to a good cause? You can sponsor a tree or have a name inscribed on a brick as a part of our community campaign for a new Multi-Service Center. This is also an opportunity to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

We will be planting 30 trees at the new facility and will have a plaque in the courtyard entrance listing all the donors. You can sponsor a tree for a \$1000 donation payable over two years.

Inscribed bricks to be placed at the entrance to our new facility are also available for \$50 each. Or, you can purchase a brick package, available for \$300 and \$500. This is a great opportunity for businesses to place their logos or names in a group of bricks.

The building, on Baseline in Hillsboro, is going up quickly and we hope to be able to move in July. If you would like more information on sponsoring a tree or buying bricks, call our office at 648-6646.

The community campaign would not be possible without our energetic and committed volunteers. Led by Chair Jack Flaig, committee members are: Mary Brown, Nel Epler, Lydia LaHaie, Marilynn Helzermann, Derene Meurisse, Adrienne Peterson, Marc Timm, Carol Clark, Joann Lumaco, Nancy Molahan, Katrina Pirkle and Russ Wilkinson.

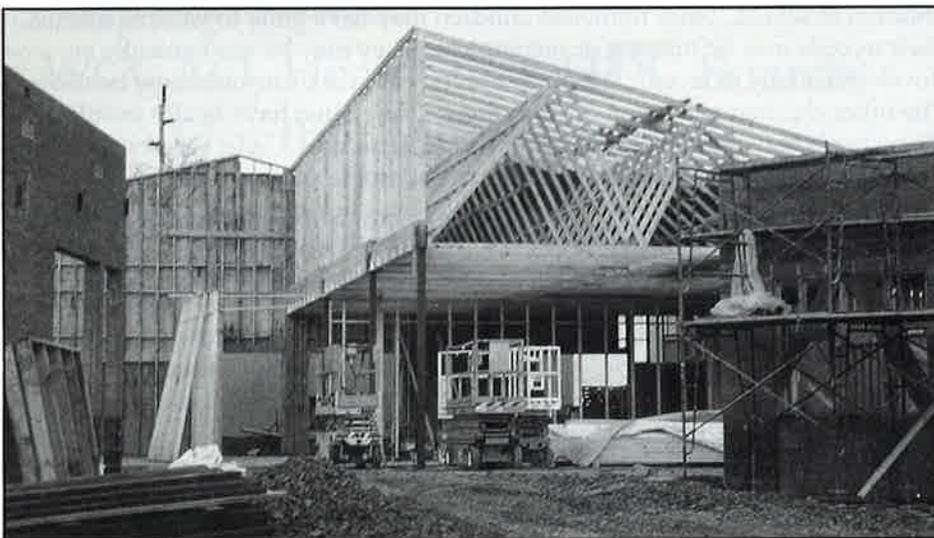


Photo by Carren Woods

One of the “finishing touches” on the new Multi-Service Center, now under construction, will be a courtyard of bricks inscribed by WCCAO donors.



### In Memoriam: Shirley Harper

Shirley Harper, who served on the WCCAO Board of Directors from 1984 to 1991 and as the Chair from 1986-89, died on March 7 of this year. She will be sorely missed.

Shirley provided leadership when WCCAO established its first strategic plan. That plan resulted in easier access to services that is helping hundreds of low-income families achieve their dreams of self-sufficiency. Through her active involvement, Shirley demonstrated how deeply she cared about low-income families and individuals. She encouraged us to set our sights high in raising resources and gaining community support. She reminded us that our work is noble, and not to be satisfied with crumbs and leftovers.

Shirley had a lifetime of service to her credit, through her work as a professional psychologist, her church and other community activities. Her family can be proud of her legacy.

Shirley requested that remembrances in her name be sent to WCCAO. many thanks to those who have donated: Robert and Virginia Armstrong, Clarence and Roma Leuthold, Viola M. Nelson, William and Janet Roach, and Berniece Woolridge.

## Loren Dixon named new HDC Director

Thanks to a generous grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust, the Housing Development Corporation (HDC) of Washington County now has the funds to hire an Executive Director for the first time. Up to now, WCCAO staff has provided administrative support to the HDC Board of Directors. Hiring a director is a major step toward independence for this community development corporation, which has developed and operates almost 100 units of affordable housing for migrant and seasonal farmworkers.

The selection committee chose Loren Dixon as its new leader. Loren comes to the position with 15 years of experience in banking with emphasis in the field of affordable housing. His knowledge of the Community Reinvestment Act, which requires banks to reinvest funds into the community, will be invaluable to the HDC. In addition, he is well acquainted with the work of the HDC, having served as a member of the Board.



Loren Dixon

*Bernadette McCartin  
(Jesuit Volunteer) and  
Erica Solis.*



## Grant focuses on needs of homeless students

A teacher notices that the new child in her class is withdrawn and listless. He seems hungry much of the time, and at lunchtime he hoards food. He also seems reluctant to tell anyone about where he went to school last or where he lives. What the teacher doesn't know is that the child is homeless. On one night last spring, 242 people stayed in shelters in Washington County. 113 of them were children. And that doesn't include the ones who were turned away, since shelter space is at a premium.

Thanks to a small startup grant received by WCCAO and the Hillsboro Union High School District, there may soon be help for children like these and their families.

Since last fall, we've been collecting information from school personnel, juvenile service providers, and families who are or have been homeless. We are asking them about the experiences of homeless families when they send their children to school. Since homeless children may have gone to various schools, their records may be missing or incomplete. They may be academically or developmentally delayed. They may exhibit difficult or troublesome behavior. The other children may tease or shun them. They often have health problems. The schools may not know how to deal with these issues, and as a result homeless children may not receive the education they are accorded by law.

The information we have collected will result in a proposal for a collaborative project operated by WCCAO and the Hillsboro Union High School District. The proposed project will include emergency funds for homeless children for supplies, school clothes and scholarships so they can participate in sports and other extra-curricular activities. For parents, we hope to provide parenting classes and child care services, building on services already available in shelter. For school personnel, there will be education about the issues and concerns of homeless children and their families.

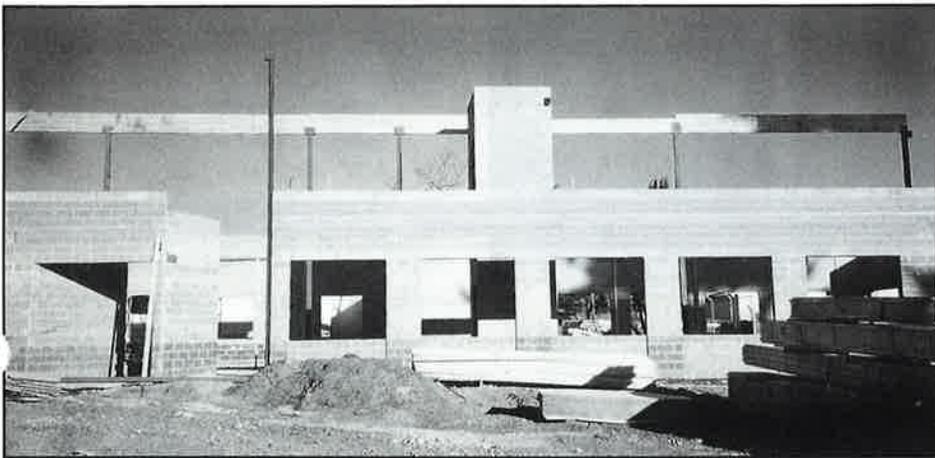
The startup grant and the project funding comes from the Federal McKinney Homeless Education Program through the Oregon Department of Education. The proposal will be finalized in July. If the proposal is approved, funding will depend on congressional funding of the McKinney Act. For more information about this project, contact Renee Bruce at 648-6646.

## Director/Chair message, continued

*(Continued from page 2)*

This time of change, coupled with the fact that in 1995 we will have completed 30 years of service to the Washington County community, has inspired us to reconsider our name. Often, particularly in our efforts to gain private support, we find that the community is surprised to learn that we are private, non-profit organization, not a government agency. To strengthen our identity as a non-profit, human serving organization, we are now in the process of picking a new name, which is no easy task! Your continued support as we make these changes is critical to our success and we will keep you informed of our new name, our new location, and our plans for celebrating these milestones.

We hope that springtime brings you much joy and a renewed sense of purpose!



*Photo by Carren Woods*

*Part of the changes planned for 1995 is a move to the new Multi-Service Center, now under construction. Also, a new name for the organization is under discussion.*

### *It's Happening*

## WCCAO, Head Start, HDC Boards Slate Monthly Meetings

**WCCAO Board of Directors** meets the third Wednesday of each month, 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. (exception: May meeting will be May 31), 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 (Sept. to June); contact Susan, 648-6646 for time and place.

**Housing Development Corporation Board of Directors** meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m., WCCAO Hillsboro conference room, 451 S. First, Suite 600. To confirm date, time and place, call Ruby, 648-6646.

## *You Can Help* Group facilitators for parents sought

### **Volunteers needed:**

**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.

**Bulk mailing volunteers** on an as-needed basis; call Pilar, 648-6646.

**Child care volunteer** at the Shelter; call Michael, 640-3263.

**Night/day supervisors** at the Shelter; call Michael, 640-3263.

**Facilitators** for self-help groups of adults who need support and guidance in their parenting role; training provided. Call Lynette at Parents Anonymous, 238-8819.

### **Donations needed:**

**Equipment and supplies:** computers, printers, color TV, VCR, cellular phones, electric staplers, adding machines. Call Pilar, 648-6646.

**For Head Start Centers:** 35 mm camera, film and film developing, portable tape/CD players, TV with VCR built in, camcorder, old uniforms for dress-up corners, commercial electric meat slicer, printers; call Cathy, 648-6646.

**Furniture:** Adopt a transitional house or a room in the house and furnish it; call Michael, 640-3263.

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