

Home Sweet Home 2009 to feature 3 Leg Torso

Please join Northwest Housing Alternatives for chocolate, fun and a good cause! Home Sweet Home helps NHA take a bite out of the high cost of housing and will feature decadent amounts of chocolate to taste, plus a mini-concert by 3 Leg Torso. Chocolate samples will be provided by Fleur de Lis, Sweet Masterpieces, Wingnut Confections, Stirs the Soul, Desserts of Distinction, and many other local chocolatiers, bakeries and sweet makers. Zbeanz Roasters will supply rich coffee. News reporter and meteorologist Stephanie Kravich will MC the event.

The top corporate sponsors and fellow chocoholics include presenting sponsor Walsh Construction and top tier sponsor Cascade Management. Our other generous sponsors include Guardian Management, Alder Geo-

technical Services, Kantor Taylor Nelson and Boyd PC, MKE and Associates, Network for Oregon Affordable Housing, Walsh Investment Co, Wells Fargo and Winkler Development.

Home Sweet Home celebrates Northwest Housing Alternatives' 27 years of success in creating housing options for Oregonians with low incomes. The event also raises funds for future affordable housing development and special programs like resident services and Annie Ross House.

The event will be held Thursday, October 1st at the Melody Ballroom in SE Portland and will run from 7-9:30 pm. Tickets are \$30 for adults and



Modern chamber music by popular Portland-based 3 Leg Torso will add to the fun and festivities at Home Sweet Home 2009

\$15 for children, and are available at www.nwhousing.org or by calling Tim Collier at 503 654 1007 X113. We hope to see you there!

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Telling Our Stories: Juanita



As a new feature of Under One Roof, we will be sharing stories about families and individuals in our communities.

“Juanita” lives in one of Northwest Housing Alternatives’ affordable rental communities. She was left alone to care for her two young boys after surviving domestic violence at the hands of her abusive husband. She had no income of her own and her youngest son needed surgery soon. She feared she would have no money to provide for her family.

That was on Wednesday.

By Monday, Ashley Blake, a member of NHA’s Resident Services Team, had met with Juanita and helped her secure short-term rent and utility assistance through the Clackamas County Community Relief Fund. This support made it possible for the family to stay in their home. Ashley gave Juanita the opportunity to discuss her feelings about her husband’s actions and the effect it had on her and her children. Resident Services provided her with a translated domestic violence resource guide, a referral to Los Niños Cuentan – an extension of Clackamas Women’s Services – and guidance to help her as she started to look for a job.

When she found out about all the services available to her – and learned that she would not have to worry about losing her home; that she would have time to rebuild her family; that she could keep her utilities on and take the time to look for a job – Juanita cried and thanked Ashley: “I don’t know what I would do without your help!”

It has now been almost three months since Ashley first met with Juanita. Her family is stable in their housing, both her sons are healthy, and she has begun working at a part-time job. What felt like an impossible situation



for Juanita has become a time of change and growth – with her hard work and the caring help of Ashley, local service partners and and the Resident Services Team.

Community Relief Fund Kicks Off HomeBase

by Angela C. Trimble, MSW

The Community Relief Fund (CRF), a fundraising effort initiated by the United Way of the Columbia-Willamette, the Oregon Food Bank and community action programs, enabled social service agencies to provide assistance to families struggling to make ends meet during the economic downturn. Through June, the CRF helped more than 18,000 people in the four-county Portland metro area with rent or mortgage payments, utility assistance and food supplies.



Annie Ross House was one of five social service agencies in Clackamas County to distribute much-needed relief to households hardest hit by the recession. HomeBase, NHA’s expanded effort to reach more families who are currently homeless or at risk of homelessness, was given an opportunity for a “dry run” before the program becomes fully operational in October. Annie Ross staff members went out to the community and into people’s homes to meet parents and children and hear stories of layoffs, businesses shutting down, and medical emergencies that placed households on the brink of homelessness.

The combined efforts of Annie Ross staff and funding through the Community Relief Fund allowed us to assist 43 households so far this year. To put that number in perspective, Annie Ross House served 37 families with shelter services in all of 2008.

This great work is only possible because of the generosity of our community. I am proud of the work we have done this year and excited about the expansion in services and the work that lies before us. To all our friends of Annie Ross House – thank you for your continued support!

✓ Mark your calendar!

Thursday, October 1st 7:00 until 9:30pm

Home Sweet Home 2009

Mmm, chocolate! Join us for the 5th annual chocolate tasting event to benefit NHA. Sample decadent amounts of chocolate and enjoy music by 3 Leg Torso. Buy tickets at www.nwhousing.org.

Melody Ballroom, 615 SE Alder Street, Portland

Clackamas County Homeless Count 2009

The Clackamas County Homeless Count is a point-in-time count and survey of homeless persons in the County. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires a count every two years for agencies that receive federal funding for programs that serve homeless people.

Not every homeless person was included in the actual count, but the findings can be used to enhance our understanding of the extent of homelessness in the County. The Count is also used to support implementation of the Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness. Findings from the 2009 Count were released to the community on May 21st of this year.

The Count illustrated something Annie Ross House staff has been seeing for some time. 70% of all homeless persons counted were in families with

children. That percentage is up almost 20% since the 2007 Count when only 51% were persons in families with children.

2009 Homeless Count Data

- 3,614 homeless persons were identified
- 1,530 children (42%) were counted and 2,084 adults (58%)
- There were 662 families with children including 2,534 people
- There were 948 persons in 624 adult-only households
- 132 unaccompanied youth were identified
- 10% of people surveyed were veterans

HomeBase helps unemployed families

Annie Ross House has expanded its reach with Home Based Stabilization Services – HomeBase – and a little help from the Community Relief Fund (see cover story). The new program has allowed Annie Ross House staff to get out into the community and talk to people about the factors putting them at risk for homelessness. When asked why families are struggling, the number one reason given is a lack of employment opportunities. According to recent reports, Oregon ranks number two in joblessness in the nation with an unemployment rate of 12.2% in June.

Since May, staff of Annie Ross House and NHA's Resident Services department linked nineteen households with the financial help they needed to avoid becoming homeless. Most of these households are receiving unemployment benefits but cannot secure employment. One program participant said, "I've put in 50 applications and no one is calling me back." People are out of work and bills are piling up with no relief in sight.

In the first half of 2009 Annie Ross House surpassed the number of households assisted with shelter and transitional housing in all of 2008. The objective of HomeBase is to increase the numbers served and implement a more effective way of providing service. With continued slow job growth, HomeBase looks like the right program at the right time!

Telling Our Stories: Bob

Bob, a 54 year-old single father, had an unexpected medical emergency that landed him in the hospital for two weeks. He wasn't eligible for medical benefits or sick pay from his job so while he was in the hospital had no money coming in and rent was due. The doctors told Bob he had 22 stitches in his stomach and he couldn't go back to work for over a month. He was at his wits end not knowing where to turn for help. His biggest fear was needing to tell his teenage son they had to pack up their stuff and leave their home of three years – with nowhere else to go. Even though he would be physically able to return to work in a month, there was no guarantee he'd have a job to go back to.

It has been two months now. Bob is back at work half-time and is slowly recovering from surgery. He said this experience has made him realize he isn't as young as he used to be and that his physical recovery is going slow. He appreciated someone taking the time to explain what resources were available to him like food stamps and utility assistance. Most of all, financial assistance from HomeBase and the Community Relief Fund helped him focus on getting back on his feet and back to work. "I didn't have to worry about my son and I becoming homeless. Getting help with the rent was a godsend."



NHA News & Notes

- Jonathan Trutt received national recognition for his stellar work in developing affordable housing. He was named as a 2009 Young Leader by Affordable Housing Finance magazine. This honor was only bestowed on 12 individuals across the country.
- NHA hired Scott Brumitt (see article to the right) and will welcome Julia Doty, a new VISTA member who will provide resident service coordination for tenants in NHA's senior housing in Portland.
- Oregon Business Magazine named NHA as one of the 100 Best Nonprofits to Work For in Oregon – but we already knew that!

Many ways to give

Annie Ross House staff has been calling our loyal friends and donors to thank you for all you have done and to let you know what we're doing to help families experiencing homelessness in these tough economic times. With so many Oregonians struggling during this crisis we are also **asking for donations** to make sure that everyone will have a safe place to land and the resources to get back on their feet.

We are also coming up on the season for **workplace giving**. If you would like to make a contribution to Annie Ross House or Northwest Housing Alternatives, please let us know if your employer will match your gift. It's a great way to double the impact of your kindness!

One more way to help – **we need a staff car** in good working condition so HomeBase staff can help families access the services and resources they need.

Questions? Call Tim Collier, 503-654-1007, ext. 113.

Thanks for your support!

The Oak gets a face-lift and a new face

NHA's housing development staff has just finished a major rehabilitation project at The Oak Apartments in downtown Portland. The Oak offers 90 studio and one-bedroom apartments available to seniors and people with special needs.

The building was constructed in 1909 and originally housed offices. It was converted to apartments in the 1960s. NHA purchased The Oak nine years ago and added resident service coordination just this month.

Scott Brumitt brings many years of experience working with people with special needs. As the resident services coordinator, he will connect tenants to the resources they need to remain stable in their housing and enhance their independence. He will also help tenants organize social and recreational activities to create a cohesive community where tenants know, respect and support their neighbors.



The apartments and common areas were rehabilitated; Scott Brumitt works to help residents access services.



Keeping apartments affordable

Many people don't know that NHA provides affordable housing all across Oregon. We recently acquired seven properties in Bend, Hermiston, Medford, Milwaukie and Portland.

NHA develops new apartments to serve the growing need for stable and low-cost homes. But we also acquire affordable housing that is at-risk of converting to market rates. In that way, we help preserve housing for current tenants, and make sure that

affordable apartments are available for years to come.

Communities outside the Portland metro area are especially hard hit when apartment rents increase because tenants have fewer housing options.

Today, NHA offers 1,487 units of affordable housing – for families, individuals, seniors and people with special needs – in 16 counties.