



# CAP-LINES

WINTER  
2009

SERVING CENTRAL AND NORTHEAST KANSAS

## COMMUNITY ACTION'S MISSION SUMMARY

To alleviate the causes and conditions of poverty through the promotion of public policy that helps those in poverty move to greater self-reliance and by providing services and resources that meet basic needs, promote self-reliance and enhance the quality of life for individuals and families.

### THE PROMISE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities and makes America a better place to live.

We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

## Lead Story

# Topeka honors efforts to aid the homeless

## City thanks Community Action, other groups for providing safety net

**T**HE CITY OF TOPEKA recently praised the work of several local organizations to address the needs of our homeless neighbors.

The Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development held a recognition ceremony for the city's homeless providers on Dec. 19, 2008.



Board Pres. Fran Lee and Exec. Dir. Susan Wheatley

Community Action was one of four local groups involved in homeless activities. The other groups were Breakthrough House, Doorstep, and the Topeka Rescue Mission.

Executive Director Susan Wheatley and Board President Fran Lee attended for Community Action.

State Emergency Shelter Grant Program Manager James Chiselom and Topeka Deputy City Manager Randy Speaker presented honorees with "Certification of Recognition" plaques and Dell computers on which to enter data into the statewide network that tracks



(L to R) Kans. ESG Program Mgr. James Chiselom and Topeka Deputy City Mgr. Randy Speaker

the homeless.

The computers will dovetail into the state's count of its homeless citizens, called "Everybody Counts! Point in Time Homeless Count."

The count occurred on Jan. 28 and is a requirement of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for communities that receive federal dollars.

The 2006 count found 474 homeless people living in Topeka. **END**

## Page One

# Westar recognizes agency with donation

## Lauds efforts to prevent shutoffs; KEEP promotes energy efficiency

**W**ESTAR ENERGY recently praised Community Action's efforts to assist those in danger of utility shutoffs with a \$600 donation.

In a letter to Direct Client Services Coordinator Alice Schimmel, Westar Community Affairs Manager Cynthia

McCarvel said the utility is "vitally concerned with the well-being of our neighbors in the communities we serve,



Westar Energy headquarters in Topeka

and your organization is an integral part to improve the quality of life (of) all citizens."

McCarvel also said that Westar wanted its customers and the community to know that "...the commitment we have to provide service to our customers and fellow citizens goes beyond simply providing efficient energy delivery at a reasonable price."

### KEEP Program Promotes Energy Conservation

The Kansas Housing Resources Corporation recently launched its Kansas Energy Efficiency Program, which promotes energy conservation.

The program is open to all Kansas homeowners and provides zero-interest loans for

half of the loan amount (up to \$10,000). Sunflower Bank funds the balance.

Allowable improvements include furnaces, central air units, heat pumps, water heaters, ventilation systems, air sealing, duct work, and appliances. For more information, contact Sunflower Bank at 888 - 8 2 7 - 5 5 6 4 or [www.SunflowerBank.com](http://www.SunflowerBank.com), or KHRC at [www.kshousingcorp.org](http://www.kshousingcorp.org). **END**



Furnace replacements are allowed under KEEP program guidelines.

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“Today, for the first time in our history, we have the power to strike away at the barriers to full participation in our society. Having the power, we have the duty.”  
— President Lyndon Johnson, War on Poverty Address, March 16, 1964

**Head Start**

## Local project donates money to buy coats for children

### New partnership provides child care for working and enrolled parents; Head Start volunteer recognized by President Bush

CHILDREN WHO MIGHT HAVE otherwise gone cold this winter have a benefactor in a local man who provided Community Action with a donation to purchase coats for Head Start children.

Jim Brewer, of the Warm Little Ones Project, on Dec. 22 presented the agency with a donation of \$750 to purchase coats and other cold-weather wear for children in need.



Jim Brewer receives a “high-five” from a Head Start student.

Brewer started the project almost 20 years ago when he learned that some of the children attending the same child-care program as his

granddaughter didn’t have clothing to stay warm.

Brewer said the project relies on donations from the public, and each year he then donates the donations to several local programs serving people in need.

Community Action appreciates the efforts of Brewer and others affiliated with the Warm Little Ones Project.

#### Family Child Care Partnerships

Early Head Start has initiated partnerships with two family child-care providers to provide full-day, full-year care for parents who are employed or attending school.

Michelle Townsend and Stephani Chamberlin each will provide care for one EHS-enrolled child, in addition to other children in their care.

The partners agreed to have their care sites assessed for quality and each environment scored well above the state funder target.

#### Head Start Volunteer Recognized by President Bush

President George W. Bush, through his Council on Service and Civic Partici-

ation, recently honored Community Action Head Start volunteer Rosemary Thompson for her 4,000 hours of service to the agency.

She has volunteered at Community Action for eight years and said the award “made me feel proud. I really like working with kids.”

Thompson added that “if more people would get involved with kids, then things would get better for them.”

She said Community Action is a great organization with which to work. **END**



The President’s Council on Service and Civic Participation recognized Rosemary Thompson with a certificate for her 4,000 hours of service.

**Board Profile**

## President Fran Lee accepts challenges, looks to future

### Helping kids and others to help themselves a lifetime mission

A LIFETIME SPENT IN SERVICE TO children inevitably led Community Action Board President Fran Lee to volunteering for the agency.

Lee has spent the better part of five decades nurturing children, including the past 12 years as a member of the Community Action board, the last three as its president.

Lee taught elementary school and hosted the children’s show “Romper Room” in Wichita before moving to Topeka with her husband Claude and their two children in 1983.

Once in Topeka she worked with the Kansas Department of Education for 10 years, followed by a 10-year stint with the



Kansas Department on Aging.

Lee has served her fellow citizens in other ways, including running for Kansas Secretary of State in 1994 and serving as a member of the Topeka City Council from 1997 - 2001.

Lee understands the challenges facing non-profits during an economic downturn, but will work with the agency’s board and staff to ensure that services still will be delivered to those who need them most.

“Public funds probably will continue to decrease. Everyone will have to tighten their belts,” she said. “We’ll hang in there and look for new funding streams. The community has confidence in us because we have performed in the past.” **END**

### ← THE HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES (CAAS): LBJ LAUNCHES THE WAR ON POVERTY



- ◆ On March 16, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson delivered a special message to Congress declaring “an unconditional war” on poverty.
- ◆ Johnson asked Congress to pass his Economic Opportunity Act, which would create the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) as a cabinet-level agency and have his Chief of Staff, Sargent Shriver, as its first director.
- ◆ Johnson’s OEO included the creation of Community Action Agencies (CAAs) to “strike poverty at its source -- in the streets of our cities and on the farms of our countryside...”
- ◆ Johnson’s proposal also created the Job Corps, Work-Training, and Work Study programs, legal services, and Head Start.

"The curse of poverty has no justification in our age...The time has come for us to civilize ourselves by the total, direct and immediate abolition of poverty."  
 — Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Where Do We Go From Here?," 1967

**Community Services**

**Safe Kids Shawnee County named Coalition of Year**

**Kansas Safe Kids makes pick; Wal-Mart donates to First Tee; VISTA volunteer to help with PR**

COMMUNITY ACTION AND ITS sponsorship of Safe Kids Shawnee County recently was recognized as 2008 Kansas Coalition of the Year at the Safe Kids Kansas annual meeting on Dec. 9, 2008.

Safe Kids Kansas recognized the Shawnee County coalition for its "success in bringing together varied and diverse members of the community resulting in collaborations that provide outstanding injury prevention programming."

Safe Kids Kansas also cited the local coalitions "wide variety of successful injury prevention activities, including a Child Passenger Safety inspection station, regular car seat check lanes around the county, pedestrian safety events, and smoke alarm installations."

Safe Kids Kansas also lauded the local initiative's "strong community partnerships" that include Dillon's, Ed Bozarth Chevrolet, Bill Kobach Buick, AAA, Head Start, Everyone's Resource Center, and state and civic groups.

Community Action Family Institute and Safe Kids Shawnee County Coordinator Gilberto Chabarría is asking for donations to help fund the vital services offered by the program. He said the local initiative also is looking for volunteers. For more information on Safe Kids Shawnee County, please call Chabarría at 235-9296, ext. 128.

**Wal-Mart Donates to The First Tee**

The Wal-Mart Super Center at 1501 SW Wanamaker Rd. recently contributed \$1,000 to The First Tee Shawnee County.

**February - April 2009**

**Safe Kids Buckle Up Events**

- Feb. 14**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Ed Bozarth Chevrolet, 3731 SW Topeka Blvd.
- Feb. 28**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Bill Kobach Buick, 1980 SW Topeka Blvd.
- Mar. 14**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Ed Bozarth Chevrolet, 3731 SW Topeka Blvd.
- Mar. 28**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Dillons Store #37, 6829 SW 29th St.
- Apr. 18**, 10 a.m. - 2 p.m., Earth Day at the Topeka Zoo, 635 SW Gage Blvd.
- Apr. 26**, 1 - 4 p.m., Babies R Us, 2190 SW Wanamaker Rd. (Safe Kids Week)
- Apr. 28**, 4 - 8 p.m., Dillons Store #87, 5311 SW 22nd Pl. (Safe Kids Week Event)
- Apr. 30**, 4 - 8 p.m., Dillons Store #67, 2010 SE 29th St. (Safe Kids Week Event)

Wal-Mart is a national sponsor of the First Tee initiative.

**VISTA Volunteer to help with PR**

Martin Graham, recently retired from the Topeka Capital-Journal, will work with The First Tee and Safe Kids to develop public information and marketing strategies for the two programs. **END**



(L. to R) Amber Phifer, Babies-R-Us; Kat Brown, Kans. Traffic Safety Resource Office; Gilberto Chabarría, Safe Kids Shawnee Co. Coordinator; Yvonne Guy, USD 501 Parents as Teachers

**Home and Housing**

**Additional LIEAP funds received**

**ERP, KAMP funds available; Meriden Heights full, McKinley storm shelter almost finished**

A SECOND GRANT THAT HELPS low-income people pay their winter utility bills has been received.

The additional Low-Income Energy Assistance Program grant began on Jan. 1.

Also, there have been changes proposed to the U.S. Department of Energy grant that include new rules on the number of furnaces installed, the replacement of refrigerators, being able to combine DOE and LIEAP funds to do

more work on individual houses; and certifying contractors, including HVAC workers, as Lead Safe.

**Emergency Repair Program, Kansas Accessibility Modification Program**

The grant funds for 2009 were received in November and are about the same as 2008.

**Housing Complexes**

Meriden Heights' 14 units all have been finished and are occupied.

The storm shelter at the McKinley Apartments' in Clay Center is almost finished. It will be dedicated in early spring. **END**



**Community Action Directory**

**ADMINISTRATION, EARLY HEAD START**

**HOME VISITATION:**

Hancock Center  
 1000 SE Hancock  
 Topeka, KS 66607-1578  
 Phone: 785-235-9561 (866-235-9561)  
 Fax: 785-235-9564

**COMMUNITY SERVICES, HOUSING AND HOME SERVICES, WEATHERIZATION, CACFP:**

Swygart Center  
 621 SE Swygart  
 Topeka, KS 66607-2070  
 Phone: 785-235-9296 (800-792-7056)  
 Housing, Home Svcs.: 785-235-6671  
 Weatherization: 785-232-3499  
 CACFP: 785-232-3258  
 Fax: 785-290-3200

**HEAD START:**

Hudson Center  
 2410 SE Highland Ave.  
 Topeka, KS 66607-1765  
 Phone: 785-266-0245 (800-792-8039)  
 Fax: 785-266-4967

**←THE HISTORY OF COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCIES (CAAs): THE WAR ON POVERTY'S FIRST POINTMAN: SARGENT SHRIVER**

During his remarks before the International Association of Machinists, Miami, Fla., Sept. 11, 1964, Shriver made four points about the War on Poverty:

1. The working man isn't rich, but the really poor of our nation, those trying to make it on \$30 a week or less, are truly in trouble. We can't ignore them any longer.

- 2. The War on Poverty is about creating jobs, not stealing them.
- 3. The War on Poverty is about earning your way, not "giving out dols to the poor."
- 4. The poor are poor not because they are "lazy and shiftless" but because one-third are old and on fixed incomes and another one-third are young and unable to change their circumstances.



Shriver

**COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.**

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CAP-Lines is a publication of Community Action, Inc. Inquiries regarding content may be directed to Michael Bell.

Funding for this publication was provided in part by the federal Community Services Block Grant through the Kansas Housing Resources Corporation.



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 Help Themselves

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 U. S. Postage  
 PAID  
 Topeka, Kansas  
 Permit No. 502

**In Memoriam****Agency will miss Paula Welch****She was a teacher, volunteer, and Community Action award honoree**

**S**IR WINSTON CHURCHILL ONCE SAID that “we make a living by what we get, (but) we make a life by what we give.” Those words describe the life of Paula Welch, who died on Dec. 14, 2008.

Welch spent her life in service to others. She earned a degree in education from Central Missouri State College.

She married Community Action, Inc. Housing Program Director Jewell Welch on Dec. 23, 1961 and shortly thereafter began her teaching career in Bonner Springs, Kansas.

The Welch’s then moved their family, now including three daughters, to Topeka, where Paula was a substitute teacher for USD 501. She retired from teaching in 2003.

She was an active member of the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, a member of the First Christian Church, and a Girl Scout leader.

After retiring Welch volunteered in many capacities, including at Community Action, where her efforts earned her the 2007 Bill McCormick Community Action Person of the Year Award.



**“Love is, above all else,  
 the gift of oneself”  
 – Jean Anouilh,  
 French dramatist**

In November the Kansas Association of Community Action Programs recognized Welch with its Caring Hearts Award.

Executive Director Susan Wheatley said that Welch “was a true friend of Community Action who believed in our mission and purpose and was always willing to help in any way that she could.”

Wheatley summed up the feelings of everyone who knew Welch when she said that “we have truly lost a wonderful person and dear friend.” **END**

**COMMUNITY ACTION CALENDAR****February, March, April 2009****Meetings**

**February 4th:** Executive Committee  
**February 10th:** Community Committee  
**February 19th:** Head Start Review Comm.  
**February 22nd:** Housing Committee  
**February 27th:** Program Committee  
**March 4th:** Executive Committee  
**March 10th:** Community Committee\*  
**March 12th:** BOARD OF DIRECTORS’ MTG.  
**March 19th:** Head Start Review Comm.  
**March 24th:** Program Committee  
**March 26th:** Housing Committee\*  
**March:** Bylaws, Personnel TBA  
**April 1st:** Executive Committee  
**April 16th:** Head Start Review Comm.  
**April 28th:** Program Committee

**\*After March, Community and Housing Committees will meet every other month**

**Events, Holidays**

**February 16th:** Presidents’ Day (Agency Closed)  
**February 27th:** All-Staff In-Service (Agency Closed)  
**April 10th:** Good Friday (Agency Closed)