

NORTHWEST PILOT PROJECT

BETTER TIMES NEWSLETTER



Fall 2010

Donald West

Donald West, a native son of Portland, was born on August 13, 1953, at Emanuel hospital. Donald was a chronically homeless man when he came to Northwest Pilot Project in October 2009. He had done some couch surfing, occasionally staying with friends, but for the most part he made his home camping along the Springwater Corridor Trail in Southeast Portland. He was ousted by police on several occasions, and moved his camp further down the trail to other locations.

Recently, Donald took me out to his old camp locations near the trail. He showed me how he would climb through the brush at dusk to find a safe place for the night. He used to travel light. He always packed out what he packed in, and made sure he was ready to move if the police came. As we walked the trail there was little evidence of homeless camps, due to recent police raids. Donald shared how frustrating it was to be homeless in our community. “No one wants to see the homeless on the streets downtown, but they also don’t want us to camp in the brush along the trail. The choice is one or the other, because of the lack of space in the shelters, and insufficient affordable housing.”



Donald West

Donald had a tough upbringing, living in a household with a lot of abuse due to alcoholism. He remembers starting to act out in the 8th grade, and how he felt all alone as a kid with no support. At age 15, he decided it would be better for him to try to make it on his own. He left home and began a life of homelessness. Donald had encounters with law enforcement over the years. He bounced back and forth between homelessness and jail. Most of his trips to jail were for petty crimes related to homelessness. Donald talked about his homeless community, and how each individual is in varying stages of homelessness which Donald described as: short

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From the Executive Director



Susan Emmons

Dear Friends,

I keep a folder in my desk that's labeled *Precious Letters and Quotes* containing notes, letters, quotations, and sayings collected over 25 years of working at Northwest Pilot Project. They have come to me from Board members, volunteers, colleagues, clients, supporters, and friends. This July, when I learned of the death of Theresa Flowers, I went to this folder to remember this saying: "*In Africa, when an old person dies, it is a library that burns down.*"

I got to know Theresa in 1987 when she became active with NWPP's Downtown Senior Advisory Committee (see article on page 3). I watched Theresa develop into one of the most articulate, well-informed, and relentless advocates for affordable housing that I have ever known. Those of us who knew Theresa agree that there are so many great stories about her ranging from intense to inspirational to hilarious. One of my favorites was during a time when the West End

Plan was being created and debated. Theresa lived in a subsidized one bedroom apartment at Chaucer Court, located at 1019 S.W. 10th Avenue, in the heart of the West End. We were at a public hearing where the majority of comments were from business people and developers who said that the city should not be creating more housing for low income people in downtown Portland, because it wasn't good for business.

Theresa had dressed carefully for the hearing, and was looking particularly elegant that day. I could feel her agitation mount as she waited for her turn to speak. I saved a transcript of the hearing, and this is what Theresa said: "I'm troubled to hear it said that people living in low income housing can't afford to shop at Nordstrom's, and we're not the kind of people the city should be building housing for because it's not good for downtown businesses. I resent that some people look down on us because of where we live, without knowing anything about us. I live in subsidized housing. The people in the building I live in have had productive lives. Due to circumstances beyond our control we are living on fixed incomes. This doesn't make us unproductive. And by the way, I have extremely narrow feet, and I *do* shop at Nordstrom's because it's the only store with shoes that fit me. I invite any of you here today to visit me at Chaucer Court, and meet my neighbors so you know who you're talking about." By the time she was done, the room was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop.

After the hearing a group of us met for coffee to debrief, and plan our next steps. We asked Theresa if she really did shop at Nordstrom's. She said she did, but it was probably only one pair of shoes a year, due to the exorbitant price. We all howled with laughter, but I knew that

Theresa had made a huge impression on the people who were there that day. When she died, we did lose a library.

During my years at NWPP I've learned so much about the importance of community from the people we have served, and from my colleagues in the agency. This newsletter introduces a new series (see pages 8-9) where we intend to feature a building in each issue that we consider to be exceptional. The idea for this series came out of a staff discussion where we started asking ourselves – why is it that some buildings work so well? Is it the physical space and design? Is it the management? What are the right ingredients, and can it be replicated? The Village at the Headwaters, owned and developed by Northwest Housing Alternatives, is the first to be featured in our **Best Buildings** series. As you will read, the sense of community that's been created there is remarkable.

In December we'll gather for our annual holiday luncheon (see page 10). It's a festive time at NWPP, an opportunity to connect with people we have helped with housing and transportation. Many of the people we have housed we only see at this annual event. We get to catch up with everyone, and it's remarkable to see the transformation in people's lives when they are given the opportunity to live in stable housing, and become part of a community. After last year's luncheon I received this note from a woman who is still in the housing we'd helped her find in 1997. "Thank you to everyone at NWPP - the luncheon and loving kindness, all in the spirit of Peace and one human family – and extraordinary in this difficult period. My heart is full."

With hope and a full heart,

Susan Emmons

In Memory of Theresa Flowers

1927 – 2010

When Theresa Flowers died on July 18, 2010, we lost one of the most active, energetic, and persuasive advocates we've ever met. When Portland's City Council held public hearings on housing issues, you would find Theresa in attendance. She knew city and county commissioners by name, traveled to Salem to lobby the state legislature on transportation and affordable housing issues, and passionately defended funding for senior programs at the county, state, and federal levels.

Theresa's activism, and her commitment to our community, came from a life of service, and her own personal experiences of health problems that resulted in the loss of her career and her home. Born in 1927, Theresa became a Registered Nurse in 1948. She worked in every field that there was in nursing, maintained her home, raised her children, and owned a Dairy Queen. She was a golfer, a bowler, and loved to dance. All of the activities she loved were taken away from her when she suffered a back injury while working as a nurse. Theresa became confined to a wheelchair because of her back injury and vascular problems. She lost her job and her home. In April of 1986 she found herself moving into a subsidized apartment at Chaucer Court, located on S.W. 10th in downtown Portland.

Initially Theresa was distraught and lonely when she first moved into her apartment. She felt that everything she valued had been taken away from her. But gradually she became involved with people in her building: "I discovered there was a real sense of community at Chaucer

Court." Theresa joined NWPP's Senior Advisory Committee, and through her work with us was introduced to Elders in Action, an advocacy group that works on issues affecting seniors in our community. She trained to be a volunteer ombudsman for seniors who are victims of crime and elder abuse. She chaired the Housing Task Force for Elders in Action, served as a Board member, and participated in her neighborhood organization, the Downtown Community Association.

In the spring, summer, and fall of 1998, Theresa became actively involved in an effort to pressure Portland's City Council to adopt a Housing Preservation Ordinance. Theresa, armed with postcards, writing paper, stamps, and envelopes, and relying on her motorized scooter, visited downtown buildings, talked with people, and involved other tenants who helped her to generate hundreds of letters and postcards to members of City Council. She spoke eloquently for her neighbors who were too frail to make it to public hearings, who lived in the subsidized housing that the adopted ordinance sought to protect. Before Theresa's death, she learned about the efforts that are currently underway to guarantee the preservation of Chaucer Court, her beloved home for the last 24 years of her life.

In addition to Theresa's diverse and prodigious advocacy efforts, she was also quite active in her building and downtown neighborhood – organizing weekly coffees,



*Theresa Flowers with NWPP Santa,
Dena Chilikos, 12/08*

keeping her door open to fellow tenants to discuss medical needs and other issues. She was just as likely to be calling the bingo games for a gathering of seniors, as she was to be testifying at City Hall. She loved social events, attended all of NWPP's gatherings, and was an ardent supporter of our Walk-A-Thon.

Theresa Flowers was resourceful, creative, persuasive, and tenacious. She touched the lives of thousands of people in our community. She was feisty and outspoken. She had a heart of gold.

In late July, Theresa's family organized a gathering at Chaucer Court in her memory. Her son talked about how much she valued her apartment, and her life in the building: "I know she would wish to be here right now with all of you. This was home to her." It's hard to imagine our world without Theresa. We will miss her greatly.

Donald West (continued from page 1)

term, down-on-your-luck homeless individuals, those with disabilities or addictions, or those who are worn out and have lost hope. He identified himself somewhere in between those with disabilities and those who have lost hope.

Donald is disabled, and unable to work. He tried to work on several occasions over the years, but was never able to maintain employment due to his disabilities. He was even unable to navigate the social service systems in Portland. He was unable to manage the process to obtain food stamps, so he collected cans and bottles for recycling to earn money for food. He had a regular route, and people who would separate out cans and bottles for him. People knew him in the neighborhood. He told me he was “that guy” pushing a shopping cart down Foster road full of cans heading to recycle. He remembers one night around Christmas a woman saw him and said, “I left some cans for you around back - be sure to get them tonight,” as she got in her car and drove away. When he got to the cans one of them had a twenty dollar bill attached to it.

Donald lived for 41 years homeless, trying to meet his very basic needs one day at a time. At least ten times over the years, he came home to his camping spot to find all of his possessions had been stolen.

Later in adulthood Donald was diagnosed with chronic depression, and severe anxiety. He was also diagnosed with a very severe form of

restless leg syndrome (RLS). When individuals are diagnosed with this form of RLS early in life it usually lasts for the rest of their lives.

Donald was often overmedicated and given strange concoctions of medication therapy to try and treat this syndrome. His disabilities prevented him from engaging with social service providers. He would begin the process, and then lose his way due to the stress. The few times he tried to stay in local shelters, he would end up feeling like he had to leave because the severe tremors in his legs would disturb other shelter residents with whom he shared a bunk bed. He finally gave up on getting help and made camping outside his lifestyle.

Donald remembers how it was too difficult to manage the stress and anxiety of working with social services and trying to meet his basic needs at the same time. It's like having two full time jobs. Do you pick the process of possibly having a place to live some day, or ensuring you can eat today? Today's needs always beat out the long term for Donald.

While sleeping in an abandoned car in 2009, he was arrested and charged with two misdemeanor crimes: unlawful entry of a vehicle, and criminal mischief.



His case was referred to Multnomah County's Community Court. The Community Court Project tries to address quality-of-life crime, by collaborating with citizens, law enforcement, court and social service agencies. The Community Court Project encourages defendants to contribute positively to their community through community service projects, and offers them social service assistance to address underlying problems that can lead to criminal behavior.

At Community Court Donald met Kathy Shumate, M.S., for the first time. His recommended treatment, in order to have his cases dismissed, was to get services through NWPP for housing assistance. It was clear to the court that Donald's primary problem was housing. “The court facilitator gave me hope and inspiration,” Donald said. “Of course, I wanted my case dismissed; but beyond that Kathy made it seem like an opportunity - not a sentence, which really gave me the drive to follow through.”

During Donald's first visit to NWPP, he shared very little about

his story. The tremors in his legs were so severe he had trouble signing his name. His voice was shaky, so we focused on building a relationship. Donald remembers meeting Heidi at NWPP: “She was the best thing that ever happened to me. I admit I was apprehensive about getting involved with NWPP, but she was always so positive and reassuring that I felt comfortable and able to work through the process with her.”

It was clear that Donald had a number of unmet medical issues. We were able to get him a doctor’s appointment with Multnomah County’s Health Department within two weeks. We called the Social Security Administration to set up an interview for benefits, and learned that Donald had started to apply once before, but had stopped the interview part way, stating that he didn’t think he was disabled. So this time, Donald sat in one of our offices with an NWPP volunteer, who assisted him with the phone interview. In the following month we assisted him in obtaining identification, and a social security card. Things were really looking up for Donald. The Health Department assigned him a mental health counselor, and a general practitioner to begin treating him. The weekly counseling sessions made such a great impact on Donald acclimating to his new situation.

As Donald’s health began to stabilize, we were fortunate to be able to move him into one of NWPP’s transitional housing units, where he focused on his health, and waited for subsidized housing and Social Security benefits. We knew without the stability of housing, it would be very difficult for Donald to follow

all the medical recommendations of his doctors.

Kathy Shumate, from Community Court, called to say: “When Donald came to the court for his last appearance in order to have his case fully dismissed, he shared with the court that he had keys to a loaner apartment, where he could close the door and rest.” The court was amazed not only by his physical transformation, but also by his ease in talking with the court. She said, “Donald took a negative situation and turned it into something good. He did the work and followed through. We were all thrilled.”

In June of 2010, Donald was approved for Supplemental Security Income (SSI) through Social Security, and began receiving \$674 per month. Through the SeniorConnect program that NWPP has piloted with Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, Donald received new glasses, and food box deliveries every month. His transitional housing was next door to the Cathedral, so Donald came over often on Wednesdays during the community meal they provide. The Senior Connect volunteers got to know Donald and watch him grow. It was very exciting for all of us when Donald got the word he was moving into his own subsidized apartment.

On July 27, 2010, Donald received his keys to his own apartment at the newly renovated Admiral Apartments, near the south park

blocks in downtown Portland. After his tour of the building, he told me how amazed he is to think he will be able to call such a beautiful place home. His apartment is subsidized by the Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), and he pays 30% of his income in rent and utilities. When Donald received his keys he said: “I have gained self-respect, I feel like I am really part of a community for the first time.”

It took ten months for Donald to move from his homelessness of 41 years to sustainable subsidized housing. His transformation is nothing short of amazing. Donald has a new spirit about him, and a skip in his step. We know this has improved his health, and his outlook on the future. When all of our systems work together - we can help people change their lives. Each time Donald comes to visit, he beams from ear to ear with a smile that will light up your life.

This article was written by Heidi Scofield, NWPP Housing Specialist, who also works with Trinity Episcopal’s SeniorConnect project.



The newly renovated Admiral Apartments are owned and managed by REACH Community Development

What's Affordable Housing?

At Northwest Pilot Project we are often asked how we define affordable housing. The expression has become so widely used, it is now applied to housing that serves a broad range of income levels. In response to this question we have started to publish an annual update of the income levels of the people we work with and what they can afford to pay for their monthly rent. You'll find this information listed below.

The people served through our Housing Program reflect a broad spectrum of backgrounds, careers, and work histories. We work

with people who were bank tellers, nurses, teachers, custodians, bookkeepers, construction workers, cooks, farm laborers, veterans, waitresses, loggers, and social workers. What they hold in common is that they are now living on an income of \$985 per month or less. They are people who worked hard all their lives, but did not have retirement benefit plans attached to their jobs, and are now living on a limited Social Security, a Supplemental Security Income, or a Veteran's Pension.

In 2010 there were two buildings

that re-opened in downtown Portland – the Admiral Apartments, 910 SW Park Avenue (37 units), and the Martha Washington, 1115 SW 11th Avenue (108 units). Both buildings were completely full shortly after their re-opening. Other affordable buildings have waiting lists of over two years.

We have a drastic shortage of housing for the very poor. This is why we continue to work so hard to preserve every building we have, and to agitate for the development of new housing that is truly affordable to the lowest income people in our community.

INCOME LEVELS AND HOUSING AFFORDABILITY FOR NWPP CLIENTS IN 2010

Income Source	Monthly Income	Annual Income	% of 2010 Median Family Income*	Affordable Monthly Rent**
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	\$ 674	\$ 8,088	16%	\$202
Employed half-time at minimum wage (\$8.40/hr)	\$ 728	\$ 8,736	17%	\$218
Social Security (average)	\$ 912	\$ 10,944	22%	\$274
Veteran's Pension	\$ 985	\$11,820	24%	\$296
Employed full-time at minimum wage (\$8.40/hr)	\$1,456	\$17,472	35%	\$437

* \$49,900 annual income is the 2010 Median Family Income (MFI) for a single person in Multnomah County as determined by HUD (Department of Housing & Urban Development).

** HUD defines *affordable rent* as paying no more than 30% of your income for housing.

NWPP Transportation: A Lifeline to Independence

Transportation is a key issue for our elderly friends who are struggling to maintain their independence. Many seniors are unable to access public transportation, and cannot afford taxi service. Seniors consistently rank transportation as one of the most difficult needs to fill. NWPP's Transportation Program is meeting this need by providing crucial rides to medical appointments, physical therapy, life-sustaining medical treatments such as chemotherapy and dialysis, grocery shopping, banking, and other personal errands.

Wayne McIlhenny, NWPP's Transportation Coordinator, joined our staff in June 2006. He is highly regarded by the

people who receive transportation services from him. A regular participant in our program wrote this note to us recently: "I am very appreciative for the smooth and pleasant ride to my doctor appointments. Wayne is punctual, thoughtful, responsive, a careful driver, and a lovely person. This has been a god-send to me!"

Ride Connection provides crucial funding for NWPP's Transportation Program, and we are grateful to the individuals, businesses, and foundations that provide additional support to make this program possible.



Harpers for Housing: December Concert Benefits NWPP

On Sunday, December 5, at 2:00 p.m., **Harpers for Housing**, a wonderfully talented and generous group of musicians, will be hosting a benefit concert for NWPP's Emergency Fund. The concert will be held at Lincoln Street Methodist Church, 5145 S.E. Lincoln Street.

In the fall of 2009, we were thrilled when a group of people who play the harp, and had been giving concerts for years, contacted us to say they had chosen Northwest Pilot Project to be the beneficiary of their fall concert. Members of the audience were given information about our work and asked to make a freewill offering. \$1,000

was raised at the 2009 concert, and used in our Emergency Fund to provide resources to seniors in need of permanent housing.

Please save December 5th on your calendar, and join us for a Sunday afternoon of gorgeous harp music. These musicians will be performing in a lovely setting, and their music covers a wide range of styles and time periods. All

donations received will be used in NWPP's Emergency Fund. If you have questions about the concert, please contact Brenda Carpenter, NWPP's Deputy Director, at 503-478-6874, or: brendac@nwppilotproject.org



Harpers for Housing 2009 Concert

Best Buildings

Northwest Pilot Project is beginning a new series of articles featuring outstanding affordable residential properties. In each of our newsletters we'll be featuring what we consider to be the "best" buildings in our community for low-income seniors. Some of these buildings may be featured because of an outstanding property manager or owner; others might be highlighted for design and livability. Even though the need for more affordable housing has never been greater, we want to share our experiences of working alongside some exemplary properties. The first property that we would like to highlight is the Village at the Headwaters.

Village at the Headwaters History

Opening its doors to new residents in late 2006, the Village at the Headwaters is a beautiful residential property located in Southwest Portland. Owned by Northwest Housing Alternatives (NHA) and managed by Cascade Management, Inc. the Village at the Headwaters is an example of how well-planned, thoughtful community involvement and solid leadership can lead to wonderful results towards the goal of securing affordable housing for low-income and homeless seniors. To come to fruition, this project required the efforts of more than twenty community partners.

The Village at the Headwaters provides 56 units of affordable housing to seniors age 55 and older. The apartments range in affordability, but 14 of the units have been set aside for those with extremely low incomes, earning 30% of the median family income

or less (please see chart on page 6 for description of median income information). This project was developed with a commitment to affordability for those who would be living there, but also with a commitment for green building practices and sustainability. They achieved both. The attention paid to energy efficiency not only benefits the community, but also those living there. Residents save \$25.00 per month on average for utility costs; this is no small amount for those living on very-limited incomes. In addition, this development included the restoration of an onsite creek which provides both green space and ecological revitalization. These are just a couple of examples of a long list of practical sustainable practices that were incorporated into the development of this property.



The Village at the Headwaters

The Village at the Headwaters is located within walking distance to the quaint neighborhood of Multnomah Village. This location provides easy access to downtown via public transportation, cultural opportunities, and shopping. This makes it a very vibrant and livable area for those living there. The Village at the Headwaters is a wonderful example of how a property can be both affordable and green, but most importantly provide a beautiful and permanently affordable home for our community's seniors.

What Makes the Village at the Headwaters one of our Best Buildings?

When we asked NWPP staff members what sets this building apart, and makes it so special, this is the answer we received: "The sense of community is exceptional." Here are some of the comments they are receiving from clients they have helped move into the Village at the Headwaters. "Everyone is so nice

here!" "Everyone gets along so well." "People go out of their way to make you feel welcome." "This is the best place you could have moved me to."

When you see the property, it is indeed lovely to look at. It is part of a mixed use site with condominiums

across the lushly landscaped courtyard. Melynda, a new Villager, loves the built-in balconies which allow her to take in the view and some fresh air without leaving the building.

Christina Wagner, the on-site manager, says that the beautiful

surroundings contribute to the open and friendly atmosphere. She believes that the Villagers take a special interest in the Village, and strive to build community. As a manager, she likes working at the Village because everyone gets along so well that they resolve their own problems collectively.

Sia Sellu, NWPP Housing Specialist, has been working in the field of affordable housing since 1998. She believes that NHA, the owner of the Village at the Headwaters, has a unique approach to the work they do, and had this to say about them: "Northwest Housing Alternatives has a vision they can clearly articulate. Their involvement doesn't end when the ribbon is cut."

Some of the ways that community is created at the Village include the thrice weekly excursions provided by a Northwest Housing Alternatives van that whisks Villagers away to shopping excursions and local cultural events like the County Fair. The Village also boasts an on-site Resident Services Coordinator, who organizes activities and the bi-monthly visits to the Village by nursing students from Oregon Health Sciences University. The nursing students provide health screening as well as foot care.

All of these activities show a true commitment to the health and well-being of all of the community members at the Village. Cascade Management throws a birthday party every month for residents at the property. This tradition was started by a Villager who was providing the

cake and ice cream at her own expense. An example of how well things work at the Village, Christina was able to secure a monthly birthday party budget.

Melynda recently moved to the Village at the Headwaters. She worked as an interpreter until her health declined significantly, and she was no longer able to work. Melynda came to NWPP, and was able to apply for a subsidized unit at the Village at the Headwaters, where she pays 30% of her income for rent. Melynda, who has some mobility issues, finds the Village easier to navigate than her previous apartment complex. Melynda was immediately welcomed by her neighbors. Every Villager she met made a special point of greeting her, and they have also been very welcoming to her visiting family members. One NWPP Housing Specialist noted: "It's unusual for established residents to go out of their way to make a new person feel so welcome – another thing that sets this building apart from others."

Melynda appreciates that her neighbors respect the non-smoking policy. Her health was compromised at her former apartment in a building where residents smoked. Melynda also appreciates the quality of the on-site manager: "Christina has been wonderful."

"The beauty of this place is really for the people." Many new buildings have lovely aspects, or beautiful community space, but residents don't always feel welcome using them – there's a sense that the property has to

look a certain way, and that the beauty is not meant for the people who live there. At the Village at the Headwaters, residents feel it is their home – they take great pride in it, and feel welcome in every aspect.

Melynda loves everything about her new home, but especially her balcony: "You know when they say imagine your safe, peaceful place? The balcony is my safe place. I love this balcony. I really get to enjoy it. I hear my neighbors laughing and talking. And it has a little covering for the rain. It is just wonderful."

The buildings and surrounding grounds at the Village of the Headwaters are beautiful. What we learned on our journey with the Villagers is that the people are even more beautiful than their surroundings.

This article was written by NWPP staff members Jason Coulthurst and Sia Sellu



Community Space at the Village at the Headwaters

**To learn more about the work and mission of Northwest Housing Alternatives (NHA)
Please visit their website at: www.nwhousing.org**

Our Favorite Event

Here at NWPP we have several annual events we enjoy, but the most popular amongst our staff is our annual Client Holiday Luncheon. At this event, we literally put on our holiday hats, and invite the people we've worked with to a festive holiday celebration with all the trimmings. In November we mail out invitations to current and past clients, and apartment buildings, letting people know about the holiday luncheon and inviting them to attend. We also have invitations in the offices of our Housing Specialists, so that they can hand them out to the clients they see. Attendees must RSVP, and the excitement begins as we see the names on the attendance sheet.

The Holiday Luncheon is also a time when Housing Specialists can see clients they haven't seen in awhile. After the achievement of housing stability, it's a wonderful reconnection between Housing Specialist and client, talking about how things are in the client's life. Sometimes our Housing Specialists sit at several different tables during the luncheon, just so they can talk to everyone!

We also have music and sing holiday carols. Last year we had a guitarist, and our own staff person, Jason Coulthurst, playing the piano. Jason played holiday music, while Housing

Specialist Cindy Mosney, dressed as an elf, led everyone in carols. Santa Claus comes to the luncheon, ready to greet everyone and have his picture taken with our guests. Some people suspect that Santa is actually a staffer at Northwest Pilot Project. I'll not comment on that, instead taking the 5th and not incriminating myself.

For over twenty years we have teamed with St. Mary's Academy students for this event. The girls serve the lunches, and wait on the tables with great charm. Their leader, Carrie Swetonic, stands on the dining room floor and directs the girls to all the tables. Being this well organized, no one has to wait long to be served. The girls are very attentive, filling water glasses, coffee cups, and serving seconds. Our seniors feel well cared for and catered to.

The luncheon menu is always the same, and people definitely enjoy it. It's a holiday lunch of turkey, mashed potatoes, dressing, gravy, cranberries, vegetables, rolls, and pumpkin pie with whipped cream for dessert. There is always plenty for everyone.



Santa Claus & Robert Gutierrez, 12/11/09

At the end of the luncheon, we have gifts. A group of knitters, called the King City Knitters, donate beautifully hand-crafted hats, scarves and mittens to our agency. Our guests choose from a large array of colors and patterns. Also, we have beautiful centerpieces created by another volunteer, Judith Heath. One lucky person at each table gets to take the centerpiece home.

The fellowship we feel at this luncheon is the best part. The time we spend talking and singing together gives us a feeling of closeness. It certainly creates that wonderful holiday feeling of warmth and compassion. It's good to have the holiday season again.

- Dena Chilikos
Volunteer Program Coordinator

Gift Cards: Another Way to Give

Most of our seniors have income problems, and these income problems can prevent them from enjoying their favorite holiday foods. You can be the solution to this problem by purchasing holiday gift cards. Gift cards to local grocery stores are an essential part of our Holiday Stockings. These gift cards provide our seniors with a way to purchase holiday treats that are normally unavailable to them.

Gift cards are perfect for those of us with willingness to give during the holidays, but not a lot of time to shop. You can simply purchase the gift cards and drop them off at NWPP's office, 1430 SW Broadway, Suite 200. Our dream again this year is to have a \$20 gift card in every stocking for every senior. For more information contact Dena Chilikos (503-478-6861) or email her at: dena@nwpilotproject.org

Carolyn Ostergren and the Holiday Stocking Project

Northwest Pilot Project is a very busy agency. Helping out with all the activity are over 250 volunteers. One very busy volunteer has created a project that nurtures and benefits our clients with beautiful and lovingly made stockings during the holidays. This project is called the Holiday Stocking Project, and volunteer Carolyn Ostergren is the creator. Of course, if you ask Carolyn, she would say that her sister created the project 25 years ago, when she suggested that Carolyn's family exchange stockings instead of presents during the holidays. Carolyn's family had so much fun, they decided they'd never go back to traditional gift exchanges. With her sister's death in 2002, Carolyn found herself wanting to help one senior woman in need with a stocking. She asked her friend Anne Hughes how she could find such a senior. Anne referred Carolyn to Northwest Pilot Project. Carolyn discovered an unmet need with Portland's low-income seniors.

It's become a tradition for Carolyn, her friends, and friends of her friends, to begin collecting items for stockings right after Christmas and New Year's. Some of them make it into a year-long project. It brings friends and families from all over Portland and Oregon together. These volunteers bring their creations to Northwest Pilot Project in December. From there, our staff members sort the stockings between men and women, and then begin delivering the stockings to our seniors, who are 55 years old and older. Over the years, some groups and individuals have further labeled their stockings to indicate those appropriate for seniors who are diabetic. Some stockings go to individuals that may not have family close by, or are apartment bound. Some go to buildings that have a lot of seniors, some go to medical facilities, where seniors are alone. Every client at NWPP feels valued

and thought of when they receive a stocking. The stockings contain all kinds of goodies: candies, gifts, books, magazines, puzzles, candles, teas and coffees, mugs, soaps, nail files and flashlights. Scarves, gloves, hats, socks, flannel shirts, fleece throws, and gift cards are other items in the stockings.

Traditionally an invisible population, more people are now aware of low-income seniors' difficulty in finding affordable housing. As more people become involved in the stocking project, the awareness of low-income seniors ripples out to a widening audience. There are at least 300 people and agencies making stockings from Carolyn's initial effort. In December 2009 we received stockings from: Elders in Action, Lake Oswego Jazzercise, the Institute on Aging at Portland State University, and Northwest Mobile Services, to name just a few. The number of groups and individuals participating has grown every year.

Not only do the recipients of the stockings have a richer holiday, the makers of the stockings do too. The people delivering stockings to our agency talk about how much fun they have had, and how meaningful it has been for them to create the stockings. They are also very proud of their contributions. As a family holiday project, it teaches about a vulnerable population. Stocking decorating parties and stocking filler parties with neighbors and friends are quite popular. Due to the popularity of this project, our agency received over **700 stockings** delivered to us during December of 2009!



Vicki Schmall & Carolyn Ostergren delivering stockings

Carolyn Ostergren's Holiday Stocking Project has reached and enriched hundreds of lives. Carolyn says the point of the project is for seniors to know they are thought of during the holidays. Carolyn has done a remarkable job of making this come true, as can be seen in a letter we received last December from a man in his eighties who received a holiday stocking. He is a veteran, living alone on a limited income. "To think someone I have never met would do this for me - new warm socks, hat and gloves, flashlight, batteries, cookies, tea, and more. It was all I could do not to cry. You made my Christmas."

Getting Involved with Holiday Stockings

If you would like to participate in NWPP's Holiday Stocking Project, please see our list of suggested items by going to: www.nwpilot-project.org, click on Volunteer, then click on Holiday Stockings. Or, call our office: 503-227-5605 and request the list be mailed to you. We need three times as many men's stockings as women's stockings. Completed stockings can be dropped off at NWPP, 1430 SW Broadway, Suite 200. Contact Dena Chilikos with any questions, at 503-478-6861 or by email: dena@nwpilotproject.org

From the Board Chair



Linda Goodman

If there is one thing I've learned in this job, it is all about the people! The people NWPP serves, the great staff at NWPP, and you, our contributors. Without you, so many seniors would go without the support they so desperately need. During our fiscal year that ended June 30, 2010, we received a record number of contributions from individuals, businesses, and at our annual Walk-a-thon! We had our best Walk-a-thon ever, and were happy to see new teams and

more walkers. It really made a difference. When we talk with the staff, we hear over and over again: "If only we could help more people. It is so hard to turn people away who are in dire need of our services."

This year it is important for us to continue doing what the agency does so well – helping people with permanent solutions. At the same time we need to find ways to get the word out about NWPP to a wider group of individuals, businesses, churches, and community groups. We will be using a recently awarded capacity building grant from Meyer Memorial Trust to improve our outreach to the community, and to create a video about our work that can be used by our speakers bureau of Board members and volunteers as we introduce ourselves to new groups in the community. As Board members we are fully committed to our goal of increasing our ability to provide housing for all the low income seniors who come to us in desperate need. We also want to continue our advocacy for affordable housing that is so crucial for the seniors we serve. You can see from the pie chart below, NWPP continues to be a great place to give. For every dollar you give, 88 cents goes to direct client support. I'd like to hear where else

you can get such a great return for your charitable contribution!

Our clients' average income is still under \$1,000 a month – many under \$700, and some with zero income. Most have given up hope when they arrive on our doorstep. Last year I talked about how well the staff work with their clients to ensure they feel valued, and walk away with short and long-term plans. Treating clients with respect, finding solutions to their problems, and continuing to support them after they receive housing provides real results! Many of our Board members participated in a housing tour during the past year, and visited some of the apartments our clients live in. I couldn't believe how welcomed we were, how proud they were in showing us their apartment, and how appreciative they were for NWPP's efforts. I am proud to serve with such wonderful people, and look forward to continuing to support this great organization.

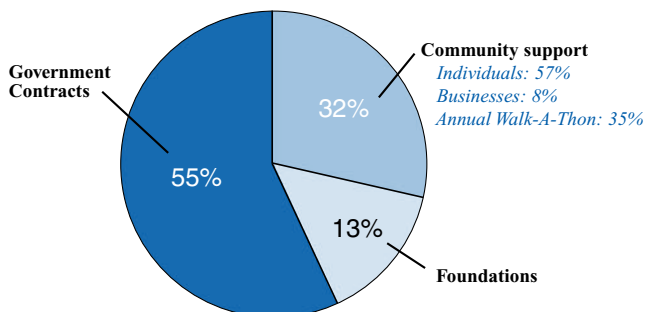
When you are giving thanks for the season, please consider helping those who have so little by supporting NWPP through your charitable giving. I promise you that your money will be well spent.

Linda Goodman

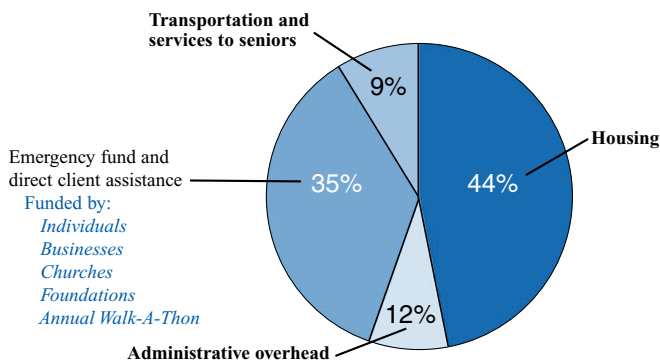
Northwest Pilot Project Total Funds – \$1,587,656

July 1, 2010 – June 30, 2011

OPERATING SUPPORT AND REVENUE



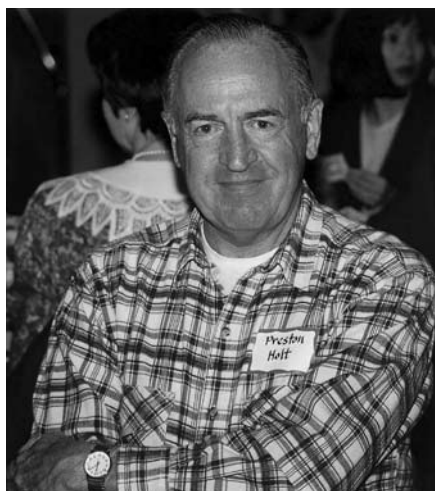
OPERATING EXPENSES



Retiring Board Members: 50 Years of Service to NWPP

At our July Board meeting we adopted our annual budget for Fiscal Year 7/1/10-6/30/11, elected officers and new Board members, and celebrated three long-term retiring Board members. NWPP By-Laws allow Board members to serve two consecutive three year terms, but then require Board members to rotate off the Board for at least one year before being elected to a new term. All three of our retiring Board members had each served for at least twelve years, and made a huge contribution to our work.

David Barringer first joined our Board in 1997 and served for six years until 1993. He rotated off the Board for a year, and then rejoined in 1994, serving another six years. David has consistently served on our Finance Committee during his years on our Board, and became our Treasurer, a position he has held for the last three years. He also served as Vice-Chair and Chair of the Board. During David's tenure he helped us to modernize our bookkeeping system, improve our monthly financial statements, conduct a comprehensive review of our By-Laws and get Board approval for an updated version, adopt a Records Retention policy, establish a Board-designated Long Term investment fund, adopt an Investment policy, and provide ongoing monitoring for the fund. David has been a long-time supporter of our car donation program encouraging colleagues and friends to donate their vehicles to NWPP. He has participated in our annual Walk-A-Thon, worked in the calculating tent, and provided invaluable support and advice to staff on budgeting, preparing for our annual audit, and thinking through complicated multi-year issues in terms of budget planning. He's been generous in his support of NWPP on many levels, and we are grateful for his willingness to continue to be a resource for us.



Preston Holt has been involved with the work of NWPP since the early 1980's. He joined our Board of Directors in 1982, and has served as Chairman of the Board, as Treasurer, and as a dedicated Board member and member of our Finance Committee for 26 years. Over the years Preston has maintained a keen interest in affordable housing for very low-income seniors. It was his experience and connections as a realtor that made it possible for the City of Portland to preserve the 133 unit St. Francis Hotel in 1993, when it was threatened with closure and conversion to another use. He's been a major fundraiser for NWPP, and has walked in 30 of our 31 Walk-A-Thons. In the past ten years Preston has raised \$35,000 for our Emergency Fund. An active member at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral for 30 years, Preston helped link Trinity with NWPP as they developed their SeniorConnect project. The resources provided by Trinity have made it possible for NWPP to provide housing for over 230 homeless seniors in the first year of the project, and we are now in our second

year of this exciting collaboration. It's hard to imagine NWPP Board meetings without Preston, but we know he is just a phone call away.

Anne Reif joined our Board in 1997, served for six years, rotated off, and then served another six years. During her time on the Board she has consistently served as Secretary, producing meeting minutes that one Board member described as "the most comprehensive and accurate recording of meetings I've ever read. She can sit in a room, listen to a variety of opinions and ideas around the table, and then synthesize it beautifully – and everything we said is represented and documented." Anne has been a major fundraiser for NWPP, and initiated our monthly donor program – being our first monthly donor. She was instrumental in the redesign of our website, has produced beautiful written materials used by our Board members in marketing and fundraising activities. At our 2006 annual volunteer recognition event, we honored Anne with a hat created specially for her, our *Wizard with Words* hat, that we presented to her with a pair of big glasses to reflect her ability to see the "big picture" in terms of community planning. It was less than a month after her final Board meeting when Anne called to volunteer on upcoming projects. Her commitment to NWPP continues to be exceptional.



Anne Reif receives "Wizard with Words" hat.

Long Term Relationships and Success in Housing

Northwest Pilot Project has developed an extremely successful housing placement program that emphasizes a personalized approach for each individual, and the agency's ongoing commitment to provide supportive services, as needed, to ensure housing stability.

One of the reasons our Housing Program continues to be so successful is that we carefully follow up on each person we serve, and develop long-term relationships. Rebecca Childs, NWPP Housing Program Manager, is pictured here with Emiliano Escobar at our annual holiday luncheon in December 2009. Rebecca has known Emiliano for eleven years.

Some of the men and women we help with housing live indepen-

dently for years, with no additional support needed. Then they might experience a dramatic change in their life situation such as the sudden loss of a spouse, or a significant health problem. We encourage people to let us know if they need additional help, and if their housing is at risk.

We also encourage building managers to let us know if someone we have placed in housing is experiencing a crisis. Apartment building managers, property



Rebecca Childs and Emiliano Escobar at NWPP's holiday luncheon, 12/09

management companies, and building owners appreciate the long-term commitment we make to the people we serve. We believe these relationships are crucial to the success of our program.

NWPP Mailbox

For years NWPP has been hosting graduate students from Portland State University's Masters Degree in Social Work (MSW) program. We are able to do this because our Program Manager, Rebecca Childs, has an MSW degree, and can provide the required supervision. Typically, an MSW student will join our staff in September and be with us through early June. Their practicum year involves two days a week in our organization, and the commitment of our housing program manager and our clinical staff to provide training and support. The following is a letter from Ken Vickery, our MSW student during the 2009/10 school year. Ken made an outstanding contribution during his year with us, and gave his permission to reprint his letter.

Dear Rebecca,

I wanted to thank you again for taking me on as your intern this past year. I found the experience to be greatly rewarding both in learning, and in cultivating a sense of possibility. As you well know from your own past experience in the MSW program, one hears many stories and experiences from others in the field that would seem to discourage any consistent effort toward change with their themes of frustration and folly. However, I have come to know that, in spite of those stories, we *can* pursue and affect change in others' lives and in the community armed with a sense of humor, and a commitment to service, thanks to NWPP.

I enjoyed getting to know everyone, and truly appreciate the support that I have received during my placement. I will feel lucky to find a place in the future with as many fun, interesting, and competent people. Thank you again! Until next time.

Kind regards,

Ken

NWPP Housing Program Focuses on Permanence

Northwest Pilot Project has been providing personalized housing placement services for elderly, disabled, homeless, and poor people for over thirty-six years. We believe that every individual in our community deserves to live in decent, safe, accessible housing that is affordable to them, no matter what their income is. We emphasize an approach that includes understanding the situation of each person we work with, and respecting their dignity, and uniqueness as individuals.

We are interested in outcomes, and knowing whether our services do lead to housing stability and permanence. We know we are achieving phenomenal success rates, because we stay connected with people for years. Over the thirteen-year period from July 1, 1997 through June 30, 2010, NWPP staff helped **5,682** people to find and keep permanent housing, and 88% of these people are successful in their housing over the long term.



NWPP's Emergency Fund Urgently Needs Donations

Every year Northwest Pilot Project touches the lives of 3,000 elderly, disabled, homeless and poor people. As the demand for our services continues to grow, our challenge is greater than ever before to maintain our vital services, and to continue to respond to unmet needs in our community.

This year we have set a goal of raising **\$166,000** for our Emergency Fund. The Emergency Fund is used to pay for housing application fees,

housing deposits, moving expenses, furniture, medical expenses such as prescriptions and emergency care, bus tickets, and meal vouchers.

These resources are crucial to the success of our Housing Program, and our ability to respond quickly to people who come to us in crisis. All donations to NWPP's Emergency Fund directly benefit the people we serve.

As an organization we've made a commitment to have adequate

emergency funds so that our staff have sufficient resources to offer the services we are committed to, and to fulfill our mission.

We need your support! Please use the coupon below and the return envelope in this newsletter to make a gift to NWPP's Emergency Fund.

Your support will make it possible to help someone sleep safely in their own bed, in their own apartment.

Count Me In!

I want to contribute to NWPP's Emergency Fund.

\$25 \$50 \$100 \$500 \$1,000 Other:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Please Charge \$ _____ to my Credit Card number: _____ Exp: _____

Verification Code (on back of card – last three numbers on signature strip) _____

Please return this coupon in return envelope to: NWPP, 1430 SW Broadway, #200, Portland, OR 97201

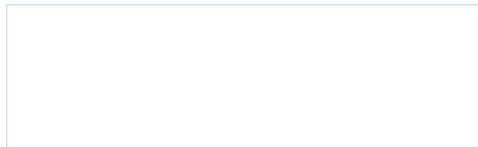
To give online, visit our website at www.nwpilotproject.org.



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NWPP Among 100 Best Nonprofits to work for in Oregon

On September 29, 2010, *Oregon Business* magazine announced its second annual “100 Best Nonprofits to Work for in Oregon” and we are thrilled that Northwest Pilot Project is once again included in this prestigious list.

Rankings were determined by a survey based on employee input that covered 50 workplace qualities in five categories: benefits and compensation, work environment, decision making and trust, perfor-

mance management, and career development and learning.

As this newsletter went to press before September 29, we had yet to learn NWPP’s exact ranking, but will be listing this information on our website after October 1, 2010.

There are over 6,600 nonprofits in the State of Oregon. At Northwest Pilot Project we are honored to be in the top 100. For the full list of the 100 Best Nonprofits, go to

www.oregonbusiness.com or see the October 2010 issue of *Oregon Business*, The Nonprofit Issue entitled “Heart at Work.”



NWPP Newsletter Available Electronically

Would you rather receive our newsletter electronically? If so, please contact Wendy Rudman, NWPP’s Executive Assistant, at: wendy@nwpilotproject.org, or call her at 503-478-6877 with your email address.