

# Blue Valley Community Action



**1976  
Annual Report**

**Serving The  
Counties  
Of**

**JEFFERSON  
SALINE**

**FILLMORE  
THAYER**

# INTRODUCTION

WORKING TOGETHER to make good communities better; that is the purpose of Blue Valley Community Action. Acting sometimes as an advisor, at other times as an advocate, BVCA seeks to walk in step with the community's efforts to ensure everyone an equal opportunity to compete in a competitive society.

In this, the tenth year of BVCA's operations we are presenting this report to illustrate our efforts and review our progress in meeting this challenge.

Blue Valley Community Action, Inc. (BVCA) is a private, non-profit corporation founded in 1966. BVCA was funded under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, as stated in Section 201(a) of the Act, the purpose of a community action agency is "to stimulate a better focusing of all available . . . resources." The Act further states that the goal of such an agency is to enable" . . . individuals of all ages . . . in rural and urban areas to attain the skills, knowledge, and motivations and secure the opportunities needed for them to become full fledged self-sufficient."

The responsibility for directing the mission of BVCA and making program and policy decisions lays with the Governing Board of Directors. The Governing Board consists of 12 members from the local community. There are three members from each of the four counties BVCA serves (Jefferson, Thayer, Fillmore and Saline). One is a representative elected from the groups served, one member represents private interest groups invited by the board, and one elected public official.

Dear Friends of BVCA,

As the administrator of a social service agency, I constantly feel torn in opposing directions. In order to survive in the world of corporate business, one must be a little hard headed and at times must make tough, unpopular decisions. But at the same time this hard headed (?), tough (?) administrator has the rare privilege of being exposed to and influenced by manifestations of greatness in people when it comes to service one's fellowman. I refer to the people who make up the staff of BVCA--the folks who make it go.

You will find set forth in this report brief descriptions of the things we do while going about our assigned tasks. However, what to me is more important are the testimonials expressed to us by the people we serve. Consistent with our philosophy of sharing with others, I would like to share with you some of those testimonials.

"I was widowed very suddenly. Was unable to drive, so the Meals Together and transportation have been a God send to me."

"I enjoy the fellowship of the Sociables Club. The young women from the Community Center are wonderful to us and we enjoy having them around."

"It is really gratifying to know I can go to the Community Center and talk to M \_\_\_\_\_ or V \_\_\_\_\_. Sometimes I need their advice and they do their best."

"My thoughts in regard to the services I have received are that they have helped me over a rough time and were greatly appreciated. I often heard that nobody cared for the low income. I can honestly say 'It's wrong'."

"I learned as a Head Start parent how important it is to know that each child is an individual."

"As a Head Start parent I have become more aware of my children's needs. My experiences of working with the staff and children at the center will always be remembered."

"I would like to thank the people for doing such a great job getting kids like me a job, it has taught me a lot."

"They always seem to be there when they're needed."

Available time and space does not permit me to quote further from the many dozens of testimonials in our files. Hopefully, we are able to illustrate by example that BVCA is operating an effective, broad based agency where eligible participants are receiving services that are so badly needed. In this past year we have been able to respond to an increasing volume with a wider variety of such services. Our plans for the future include not only the proven programs so many people of this area have used, but also new and innovative ways by which the way of life in the communities we serve may in some small way be improved.

I will soon be completing my fourth year as director of BVCA. While the joys have been mixed with disappointments and frustrations, I can truthfully say the preponderance of positive things I have seen, and of which I have been a part, have afforded me a genuine pleasure in contemplating my involvement with the agency. I look forward to the future with confidence that this ministry will not only carry on, but will increase in scope and quality.

I salute the people who have served on our boards, those who have volunteered their time and energies, the officials and citizens at large who lend us support and last but not least, the best staff my years of involvement in the field of work has experienced. I know they too look forward to bigger and better things.

May they "always be there when they're needed."

Sincerely,

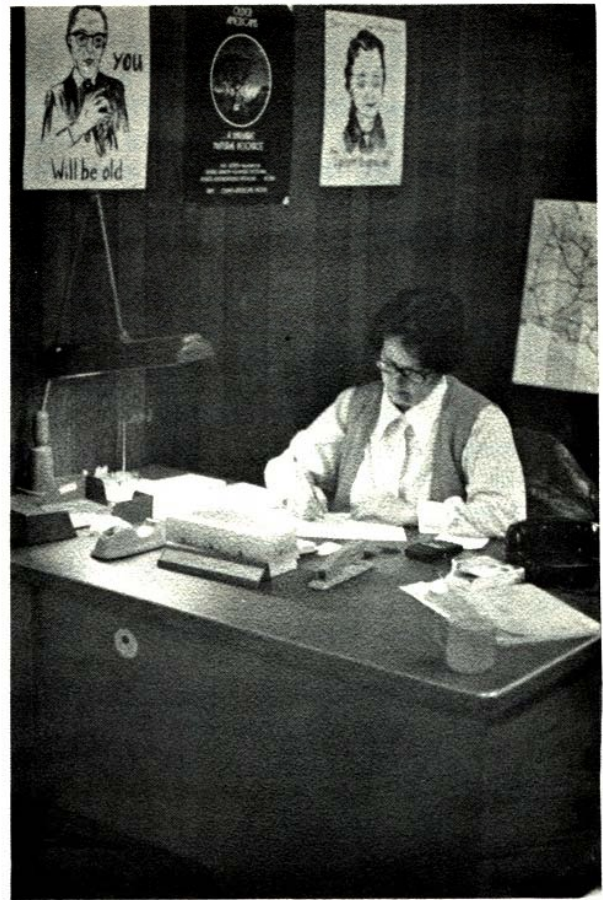
JAMES R. CRISP  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

On May 1, 1976 Blue Valley Community Action marked it's tenth year in community service. As chairperson of the Board of Directors of BVCA, I would like to extend my thanks to the Area Board members, the Policy Advisory Council members, the County Advisory Boards, and all the volunteers who have been so faithful in supporting the agency during the course of the last year.

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## COMMUNITY SERVICES

At the very core of community action are the outreach aides. They are directly involved in the operation of the program and provide the link between it and the people. Outreach takes the services of information and referral out of the county community centers and into the community. There are many people who, without special help, especially transportation, are unable to use available services and some are unaware of services that exist. Information and referral by community services outreach aides are key activities in fulfilling a community action agency's role as an advocate for the disadvantaged. Those key activities are reinforced by individual, personalized attention, designed to insure optimum benefits from such programs as Social Security, Food Stamps, Medicare, Medicaid, Head Start, Winterization, Meals Together, Manpower (Adult and Youth Work Experience) and Telecare/Tele-friend. In contributing toward the fight against inflation, each community service center operates a clothing and household goods "recycling" service. Each center receives donations of clothing and household goods for reuse locally. This project continues to grow so that this year the number of items reused came to the staggering total of 28,500 pieces!



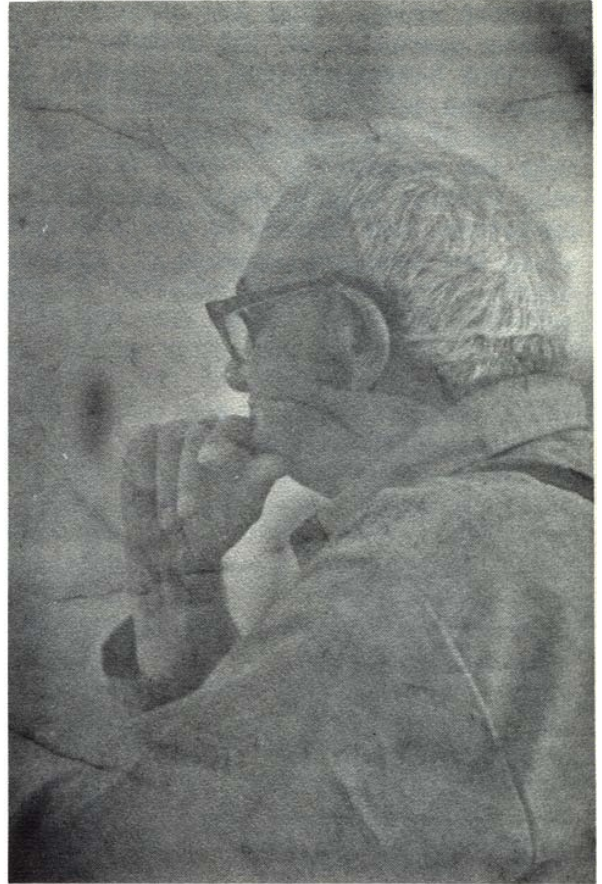
Over 800 families received emergency services in some form from their local community center. Emergency service might include the direct giving of canned goods, or it might be a long term no interest loan for heating fuel. Emphasis is on a "hand up", not a "hand out". Some families lost most of their household goods in fires last year, BVCA was able to assist these families with clothing, household goods, and relocation.

All in all, the outreach staff made over 20,400 contacts last year.

## SENIOR OPPORTUNITIES & SERVICES

Is the term "The Golden Years" a tarnished myth? Loneliness and isolation often accompany retirement. There is a general inadequacy of public services in the rural area and the lack of public transportation is a special hardship for the elderly.

By providing a Senior Opportunities and Services Program, BVCA's Outreach workers visit these persons, informing them of services and programs available and inviting them to participate. In areas where additional services or programs are needed, the workers assist the people to establish new programs to meet specific needs. During the past year over eight hundred individual senior citizens were served in the four-county area which included providing 2500 round trips of transportation. In previous years BVCA has assisted the people to help themselves and each other by becoming organized into senior clubs. This year these clubs continued to grow and were aided by BVCA workers giving technical assistance to 72 such meetings.



In Jefferson and Fillmore counties the "Meals Together" program provided an opportunity for social activities and entertainment with a balanced hot meal at noon three or four times weekly. This year 2751 were served, most of which were served to groups through provided transportation but the workers also delivered some meals to persons who were homebound. The reassurance of being called by telephone (Telecare/Tele-friend) was received by 36 persons everyday who were living alone through the staff and volunteers.

In addition many older persons received the different services mentioned under "Community Services" and "Winterization". The goal of these efforts is not only to help break down the barriers of isolation and loneliness, but also to help older citizens avoid institutionalization and live with dignity.

## **WINTERIZATION / ENERGY CONSERVATION**

In the winter, low income families and the elderly feel the chill of winter more than most people. The soaring increase in their fuel bill places an additional burden upon an already strained budget. In addition to the high cost of fuel, most of the homes they occupy are inefficient in heating, using more fuel than necessary.

Blue Valley Community Action, in answer to this need, is operating a winterization program in Jefferson, Thayer, Saline and Fillmore counties. Crews made up of employees and volunteers, put plastic sash over windows, replaced some windows, caulk cracks in windows and foundation, and weatherstrip doors. Private contractors, assisting the agency, blow insulation into the attics of these homes. The materials are bought at wholesale or donated to help keep the cost of winterizing at a minimum.

In the past year approximately 100 homes in BVCA's four-county area have been winterized. Most of the homes are owned by the elderly.

The average cost of winterizing a single house paid by BVCA during the past year was under \$140. The savings made by winterization would pay for itself in two to three years. The program is offered on an ability to pay basis.



## **HEAD START**

Funded by the Office of Child Development and sponsored by Blue Valley Community Action, the Head Start program has an enrollment of 72 children in the four counties served by BVCA (Jefferson, Thayer, Fillmore, and Saline). 81 children and their families were served by the program this year.

Head Start is designed to meet the needs of the pre-school child. The main goal of the program is to help the child grow socially, emotionally, physically, and intellectually. The daily program planned by the Head Start staff includes individual, small, and large group activities, which foster the child's learning. Field trips help the child better understand his community helpers and resources such as the fire station, grocery store, nurseries, dairy farm, hatcheries and libraries.

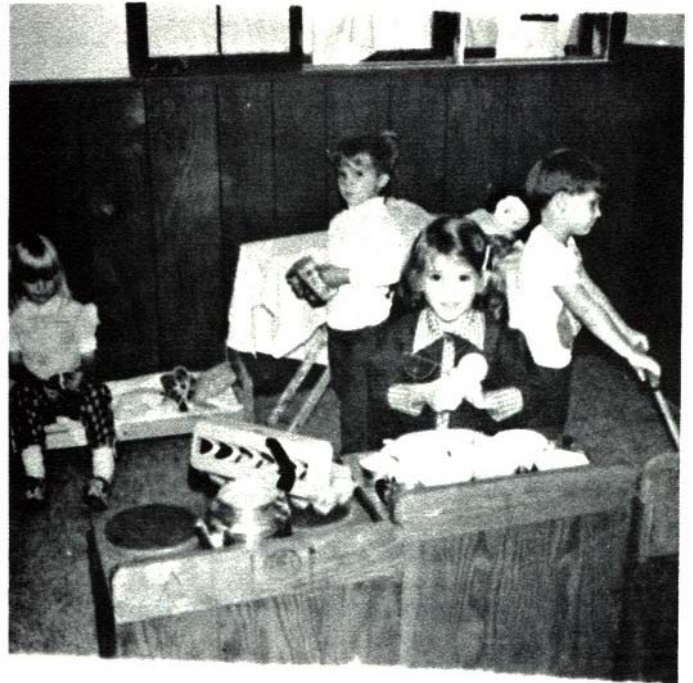
Each child is given a physical and dental check-up and the necessary follow-up is carried out. A mental health professional works with the staff, parents and children. Meyer Children's Rehabilitation Institute has the regional contract to identify the type of handicap and to work with the staff in setting up a program to meet the handicapped child's needs. Ten per cent of the enrollment of a Head Start class must be handicapped children.

The Head Start parents are an important asset to the program. They are involved in several ways, such as planning program activities, volunteering in the Head Start Centers, input into the grant application, fund raising activities and making decisions concerning the program.

Each parent group elects three parents and two interested community persons to serve on the Head Start Policy Council. The council approves the grant application before it is submitted to the directors for final approval, recommends the

staff to be hired, approves the location of Head Start Centers, and other functions as needed.

Beginning in September all Head Start Centers in each of the four counties will be modified to a center-based home-based system. The children will attend classes two days a week and the Home Visitor will visit the child and parent in the home one hour per week. The Home Visitor will take educational materials and ideas into the home for the parent to work with the child.



## MANPOWER

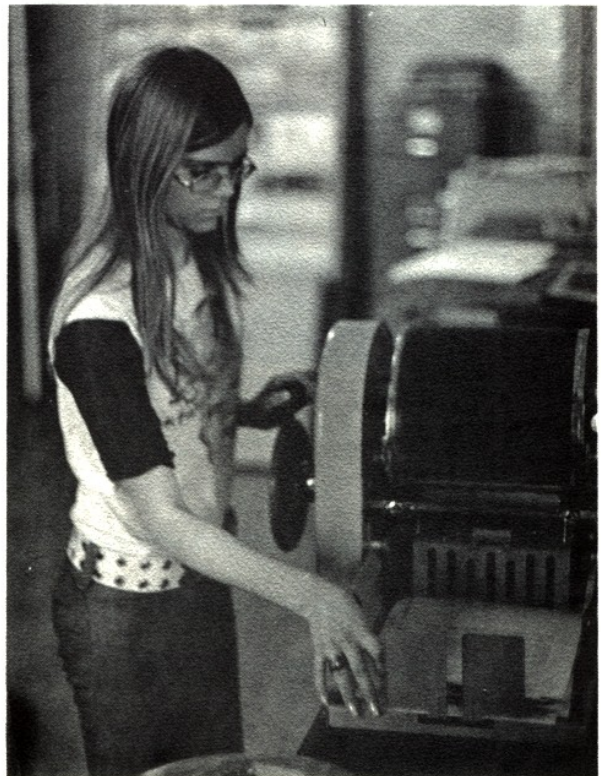
In 1965, the Manpower programs were authorized by Congress as a method of helping urban and rural employment problems. The Nebraska Department of Labor operates this federally funded program under the Comprehensive Employment Training Act.

Blue Valley Community Action, as a sub-contractor, administers the manpower programs in an eight county area (Clay, Fillmore, Jefferson, Nuckolls, Seward, Saline, Thayer, and York).

The Manpower Program is divided into two sections: Youth Work Experience (YWE) and Adult Work Experience (AWE). All employment positions are with non-profit or governmental organizations.

Youth Work Experience provides summer work for over 200 teenagers (age 14 through 21). Under the YWE program vocational orientation, work experience, and counseling aids young people in becoming acquainted with work habits and managing their money. Many students are aided by staying in school and developing a planned educational goal.

The Adult Work Experience component of Manpower is designed to assist people 18 and older to overcome chronic underemployment and unemployment. To qualify a worker must be underemployed or unemployed 14 days. Workers receive pay during a training period of 13 weeks with the goal of permanent placement. An additional 13 week training period may be used. During the last year over 300 adults and youth participated as workers in the Manpower Program.



## **ADMINISTRATION**

The central administrative office of Blue Valley Community Action is located at Room 203, First National Bank Building, Fairbury, Nebraska. The central office for the Manpower component of BVCA is located at 160½ North 9th, Geneva, Nebraska.

Some of the many functions of the administrative office includes guidance, direction and records for all programs; planning and evaluation, personnel, property and fiscal management. The Federal government requires that a community action agency's administrative cost be less than 15% of the total budget. BVCA's administrative cost is consistently far less than the maximum figure.

## **SOME SIGNIFICANT AREAS OF SERVICE 1975 - 1976**

- 80 Preschool Children enrolled in Head Start
- 98 Homes Winterized
- 2751 Hot Meals served to the Elderly
- 9551 General Information and Referral
  - 169 Youth enrolled in Summer Recreation Program
  - 2528 Transportation Provided (Round trips)
- 28,528 Clothing and Household Goods given out
  - 36 Participating in Telecare/Friend
  - 67% Persons placed in permanent jobs from Adult Work Experience
  - 209 Students enrolled in Youth Work Experience
  - 99 Adults enrolled in Adult Work Experience
  - 86 Families received Emergency Service
  - 43 Families referred to housing
- 1828 Active Listening (basic counseling)
  - 72 Senior Citizens Clubs meetings staffed
- 1872 Contacts with Key People

# BLUE VALLEY COMMUNITY ACTION, INC.

## BUDGET REVIEW

### 1975 - 1976

In January of 1975, Congress amended the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964 into the Community Services Act of 1974. The basic funding for all community action agencies comes from grants available under this act as administered by the Community Services Administration (CSA).

PROGRAM	Federal Funding Source	Total Grant AMOUNT Received	Local Participation Needed
Administration	CSA	\$44,100	\$11,025
General Programs	CSA	75,567	18,892
Senior Opportunities & Services	CSA	47,000	11,750
Energy Conservation	CSA	19,000	5,250
Winterization	CSA	10,000	2,500
Community Nutrition	CSA	16,000	*
Emergency Food & Medical Service	CSA	9,932	*
Summer Youth Recreation	DOL	1,503	*
Manpower (Work Experience)	DOL	311,927	*
Title X (Job Opportunities)	Dept. of Commerce	30,676	*
Head Start	OCD	114,606	22,921
TOTAL		\$680,311	\$72,338
*Not Applicable			

Local Participation comes mainly from donated space, volunteer time, and donated materials.

# BOARD MEMBERS 1975 - 1976

## FILLMORE COUNTY

Edward Sieber  
Ohiowa, NE 68416

Edwin Johnson  
Rt. 1  
Shickley, NE 68436

Rachel Trumble  
Fairmont, NE 68354

## JEFFERSON COUNTY

Dan Nacke  
411 A  
Fairbury, NE 68352

Helen Sims  
922 C  
Fairbury, NE 68352

Fern Shamburg  
1227 6th  
Fairbury, NE 68352

## SALINE COUNTY

Veronica Schnell  
2041 Linden  
Crete, NE 68333

Lora Long  
108 W 13th  
Crete, NE 68333

## THAYER COUNTY

Lois Schneider  
Rt. 2  
Hebron, NE 68370

Rev. Karl Lent  
Box 208  
Davenport, NE 68335

# STAFF

## CENTRAL OFFICE

Jim Crisp, Executive Director  
Wayne Faris, Deputy for Administration  
Jean Emery, Deputy for Operations  
Phyllis Hazard, Administrative Support Officer  
David Bernhardt, Planner  
Sandra Gapp, Secretary

## COMMUNITY SERVICES

Ardi Hoins, Community Services/SOS Director

Jefferson County Community Center  
Wanda Hurst, Supervisor  
Sally Markey, Outreach  
Phyllis Livingston, Outreach

Thayer County Community Center  
Rheta Puryzcki, Outreach  
Deanne Wicks, Outreach  
Leona McGhghy, Outreach

Saline County Community Center  
Judy Zabka, Supervisor  
Carol Hrdlicka, Outreach  
Lois Jean (Grub) Targoff, Outreach  
Art Nebelsick, Outreach

Fillmore County Community Center  
Margaret McAllister, Supervisor  
Virginia Clark, Outreach  
Mary Jensen, Outreach

## MANPOWER STAFF

Clarice Machal, Manpower Director  
Roseanne Wehrbein, Counselor  
Daniel Atchison, Counselor  
Cindy Cecrle, Secretary/Bookkeeper

## HEAD START STAFF

Kathryn Molczyk, Head Start Director  
Dale Preston, Head Start Secretary/Coordinator

Jefferson County  
LaVon Waldron, Teacher  
Doris Thornburg, Teacher Aide  
Janile Roesler, Social Service Aide/Home Visitor  
Peggy Cossel, Cook/Driver  
Glenda Baloun, Handicap Aide



Thayer County  
Ardene Mammen, Teacher  
Kris Miesner, Teacher Aide  
Jan Scheuler, Social Service Aide/Driver  
Maudie Majeski, Cook  
Sharon Kugel, Driver

Fillmore County  
Marvel Winter, Teacher  
Martha Marget, Teacher Aide  
Alice Steyer, Social Service Aide/Driver  
Nina Bartu, Cook  
Frances Pracheil, Driver

Saline County  
Velma Smith, Teacher  
Polly Blanchard, Teacher Aide  
Julie Chrastil, Social Service Aide/ Driver/Parent Coordinator  
Beverly Gifford, Cook  
Linda Semerena, Driver

ENERGY CONSERVATION/WINTERIZATION

William R. Thomas, Winterization Coordinator  
Francis Wiedel, Winterization Supervisor  
Vivian Andrews, Winterization Helper