

*Blue Valley
Community
Action, Inc.*

Annual
Report
1980 - 1981

A Decade and a Half of Service

In April, 1980 Blue Valley Community Action commemorated its 15th Anniversary.

It was in 1966 that BVCA incorporated as a private non profit organization. Four counties in southeast Nebraska were served: Fillmore, Jefferson, Saline and Thayer. Today Blue Valley Community Action provides assistance for low income persons and senior citizens in five additional counties: Butler, Gage, Polk, Seward and York.

Local solutions to the heartfelt problems of poverty and aging is the touchstone of all BVCA program goals. Reinforcement of these goals was strengthened during the 1980-81 year by inviting community volunteers, through local organizations or as individuals, to apply for Community Service Awards.

The true spirit of volunteerism in rural Nebraska unfolded as 36 applications from seven counties were received by the Community Service Awards Committee. The committee selected twelve local volunteer projects to receive the cash awards with the assurance that the money will be used to benefit local people directly.

Dear Blue Valley Community Action,
 We would like to thank you so much for awarding our club the \$500 first place in your recent community contest. It is so gratifying to be recognized for our work. The money will be put to good use in other projects. Thank you for all the work which you do in all the various communities. We know you improve the living here in Nebraska.
 Good luck to your group in the next 15 years.

Belvidere Women's Club.

Mr. Rick Nation, Executive Director
 Blue Valley Community Action, Inc.
 P.O. Box 273
 Fairbury, Neb. 68352

Dear Mr. Nation:

I want to thank you very much for the \$100.00 that was awarded to the American Legion Auxiliary of Polk through Blue Valley for the Community Service Award. We have started a savings account with it until we decide what to do with it. I am sure that we will use it somehow in the community. The award was greatly appreciated by all.

Again, thank you very much for this award!
 Sincerely yours,

Becky Carlstrom, President
 American Legion Auxiliary
 Rural Route 1, Box 110
 Polk, Neb. 68654

Dear Sirs,
 As the treasurer of the Oregon Trail 4-H Club, I wish to thank you for the \$100 grant on the behalf of the other members.
 Our club has donated \$50 to the landscaping and development program at the new 4-H center at the State Fairgrounds. The other half of the grant will be used for future local community projects.
 The Oregon Trail Club believes community service is important and we think that your program is a good way to help organizations extend their service. Thanks Again!

Sincerely Yours,

Brian Bauer
 Treasurer-Oregon Trail 4-H, Fairbury

Blue Valley Community Action
 Fairbury, Nebr.
 Dear Sirs-

My Sincere Thanks and appreciation for the \$150 Award which was presented to me on July 4th. It was wonderful that you made this possible through my Sunday School Class members. Such a delightful surprise and thrill! The money will be used to help others in some way-either in our church or community or the Rest Homes near by.
 I feel very humble and unworthy to be so recognized, but it is appreciated.
 God Bless your splendid organization that does so much for others in so many ways.
 Again my heartfelt thanks!
 Sincerely,

Mildred Anderson
 Polk, Nebraska

Congratulations To The Community Service Award Winners

They are as follows:

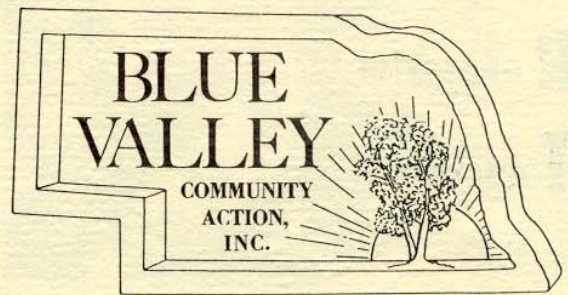
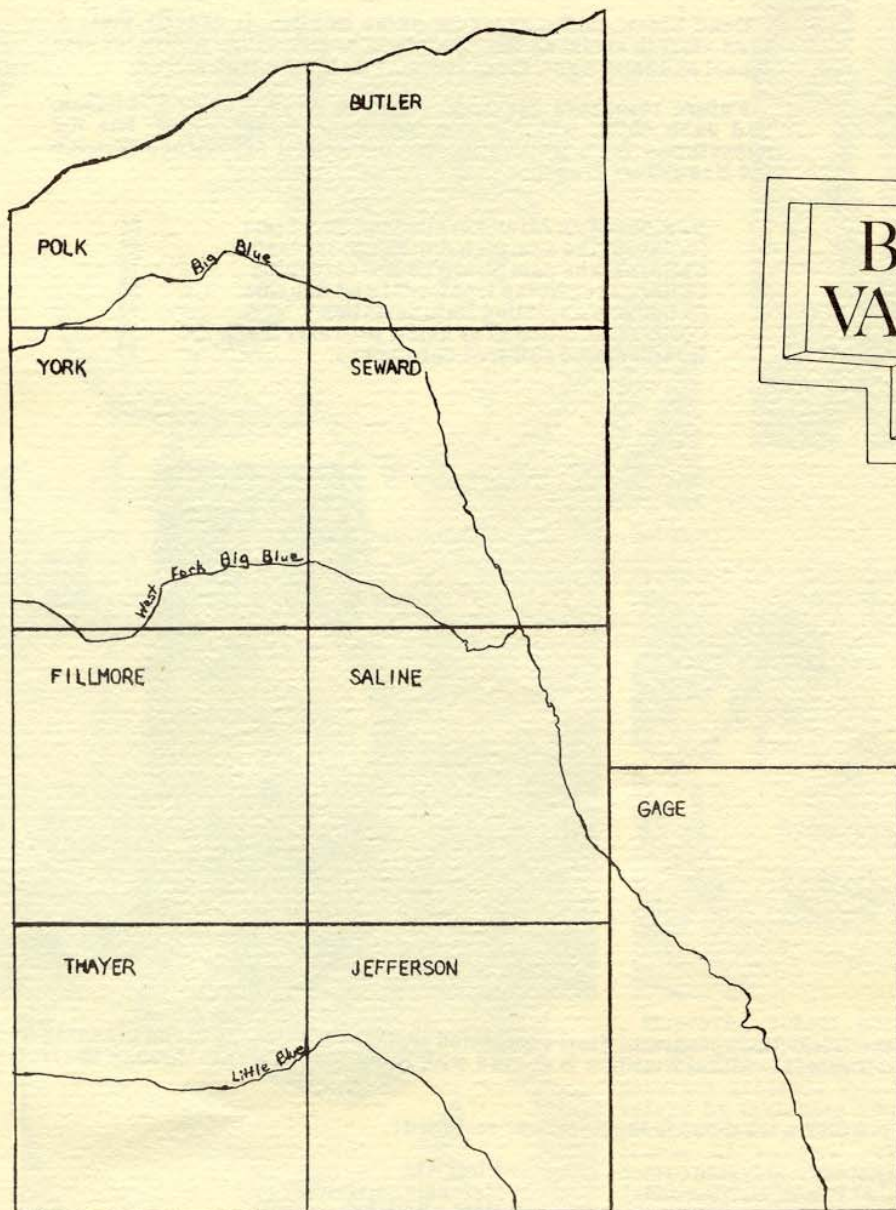
The Belvidere Women's Club	.....\$500.
The Women's Civic Improvement Club - Stromsburg	.....\$325.
The Osceola Area Jayceettes	.....\$225.
Mildred Anderson - Polk	.....\$150.
Happyrock 4-H Club - Fairbury	.....\$100.
Geneva Art Association	.....\$100.
The Social Action Committee of Saint John Lutheran Church - Beatrice	\$100.
Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary - Hebron	.....\$100.
The Strang Improvement Committee	.....\$100.
Thayer County Hospice	.....\$100.
Oregon Trail 4-H Club - Fairbury	...\$100.
The American Legion Auxiliary - Polk	.....\$100.

Throughout Nebraska, one senses a tradition of pride in the State, its land, and people. As generations of Nebraskans have shared their heritage, so has Blue Valley Community Action continued to keep the proud spirit of rural Nebraska alive.

In assisting families and individuals to achieve a better standard of living, and lessen the burdens of a difficult economy, this agency works toward the elimination of poverty, rather than the maintenance of dependency.

Blue Valley Community Action is dedicated to the idea of people helping people. In this time of great need, we will continue to help the less fortunate in order that the people of Nebraska may always be proud.

Richard D. Nation



Helpful
Eager
Attentive
Dedicated
Sensitive
Trained
Alert
Respectful
Teachers



Head Start, as the program name implies, is exactly that: A head start in social skills, education, health and nutrition for pre-school children, ages, three to five, and their parents.

Future resources are to be found in a community's children, and each child, whether low income or handicapped, has the opportunity for a well-cultivated pre-school experience through the Head Start program.

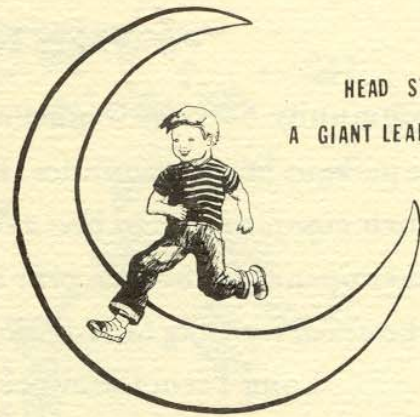
Number of children enrolled in Head Start	84
Children who completed medical screening	82
Children who completed dental screening	75
Children receiving treatment and flouride	62
Children completing immunization	61
Children enrolled at or below poverty level	76
Handicapped children enrolled	21



Nutrition is an essential ingredient in the Head Start program. Staff completed training sessions in menu planning and the use of cultural foods in a learning environment. All information is shared with Head Start parents through the Home Educators.

Other workshops in the past year included:

- Child Development
- Management of Problem Situations
- Parent Involvement
- First Aid
- Defensive Driving
- Home Visits



HEAD START —
A GIANT LEAP FOR KIDS!



In the past year Blue Valley Community Action operated the immunization clinic in Jefferson County where 378 children were immunized for diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTP) and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR). BVCA oversees Thayer County immunization clinic and assists with two clinics in Saline County. 962 children have been immunized in the three counties.

Blue Valley Community Action, under the sponsorship of the Nebraska Department of Health, implemented the Child Health Dental Program for those children whose families could otherwise not afford the cost of comprehensive dental care. Dental services, in cooperation with local dentists, included: diagnosis, prevention, oral surgery, restorative pupal therapy and emergency care.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN
SCREENED
FOR DENTAL SERVICE

COUNTY:

Fillmore	27
Jefferson	43
Saline	11



Improved school performance, stronger self concept and reduced levels of delinquency are just a few consequences of the Big Brothers-Big Sisters program in Southeast Nebraska. The program achieves these benefits for society and the youth involved by matching adult volunteers with children from single parent families. The Big Brother-Big Sister volunteer provides a source of positive role-modeling, guidance and important companionship that might not otherwise exist for the youth. In Jefferson, Seward, Thayer and York counties 71 youth were enrolled in Big Brother-Big Sisters program. 38 youth were matched with 36 adult volunteers in the past year.

Community Service

The Community Services Department focuses their work around senior citizens and low income persons in eight counties. BVCA believes that utilization of local employees who know their community can best generate local self-sufficiency. Three community-based offices have opened in the past year in Polk, Butler and Seward Counties. The Staff received 1221 hours of training in order to perform their activities of Outreach, Direct Services, Long Term Casework, Community Organization and Advocacy.



Above, 1 of the 8 County Volunteer Advisory Boards (CAB) meet to advise staff and the Board of Directors on local projects and discuss alternatives to local low income problems. Composed of low income residents and other community persons, the groups donate a great deal of time becoming knowledgeable of existing programs, assisting the staff with Center activities, and raising money for CAB projects.



Christmas time is the focus of many County Advisory Board projects. ABOVE: Rows and rows of toys have been collected, repaired and arranged for the Santa's Workshop in Saline County.



In the past year, 95 persons were given food from BVCA Pantries and 451 persons received recycled clothing and household items donated by local community groups and private citizens.



Above, Leona Sell, Energy Crisis Intervention Program Coordinator, is making one of her group presentations, reaching 331 senior citizens. She informed them of the Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP) and BVCA Weatherization Services.

1057 persons were referred to the County Welfare Offices which administered LIEAP. 27 households (89 persons) were assisted with health threatening situations in the form of electricity, natural gas or propane payments.



Three days a week, Fillmore County volunteer, Michael Wilson, delivered hot meals to senior citizens. This past year, 37 seniors received 2,352 nutritious meals. The service facilitates an individuals desire to remain independent in their own home.



In the rural area of Nebraska, getting from one place to another, can be a major problem. In the past year the Fillmore County BVCA van assisted in alleviating the problem. Transportation was provided for 140 senior citizens for doctor appointments, business errands and grocery shopping. In other counties served by BVCA transportation was available in emergency situations.



The telephone lines are busy each day as 425 senior citizens in Jefferson, Thayer and Fillmore Counties participate in the telephone reassurance program. The dedicated volunteer effort of the "callers" rewards the "callees" with companionship and support.



Homegrown and Homemade was last year's theme for the Farmers Market organized by BVCA staff and Jefferson County Advisory Board. Backyard farmers gathered once a week to sell their fresh produce. There were 24 different sellers and 1,058 buyers during the season.



In Fillmore County, an average of 54 senior citizens attend 3 different club meetings each month. During the year, each group hosted a social gathering for all the clubs. BVCA assists in the coordination of senior citizen activities.



In order to remain healthy and active in life's later years, it is a proven fact that one needs to experience new places and new people. Blue Valley Community Action enjoyed being a part of this vital process when staff took 27 senior citizens to the Senior Olympics in North Platte.



It was a Merry Christmas in 1980 for 111 people who attended the Annual Christmas Dinner in Jefferson County. 23 people received meals delivered to their home and 44 people were provided with transportation. BVCA staff coordinates the event each year with local community groups and businesses.

Housing/Energy



In Jefferson County discarded newspaper is collected once a month by the Fairbury PTA and sold to Parco, Inc. for recycling into insulation material. Blue Valley Community Action buys the insulation material from Parco and uses it to weatherize low income homes in the 9 counties the program serves. Over 2000 homes have been weatherized by BVCA since the service began in 1974.

Homes weatherized by BVCA in 1980..... 465

Number of people served 888

Weatherization Includes:

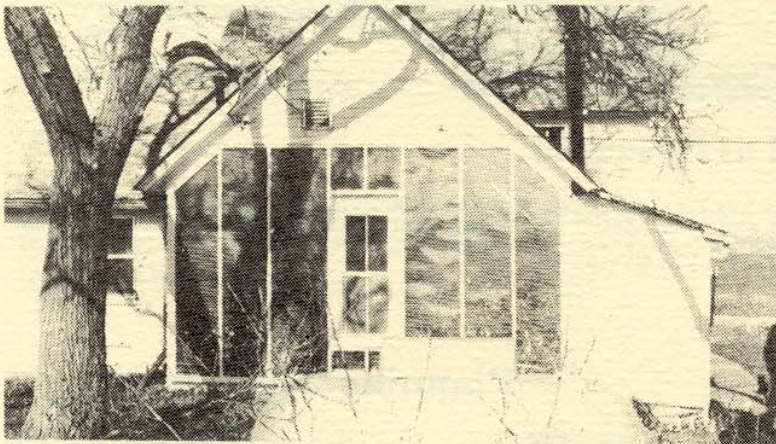
- Insulation of attic sidewalls and hot water pipes.
- Installation of storm windows, replacement of broken glass.
- Caulking cracks in foundations and walls.
- Any minor repairs to reduce heating and cooling expenses.



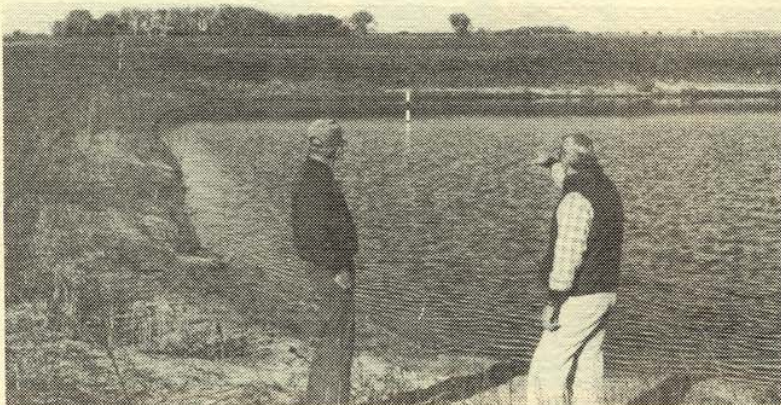
The Energy Conservation Director, Bill Thomas, held 12 workshops concerning alternate sources of energy in eight counties of Southeast Nebraska. Workshop emphasis was on alternate energy and featured instruction on assembling a 2 panel solar hot water collector. Presently the collectors are being installed on low income homes.



Note solar hot water panels on roof.



Southeast Nebraska Small Farms Action Group and Blue Valley Community Action combined efforts in order to install this solar vertical wall collector on a home in Seward County. The homeowner has commented that the conventional heater does not come on at all during the day. The unit supplies 90 degree heat to 480 feet in the house.



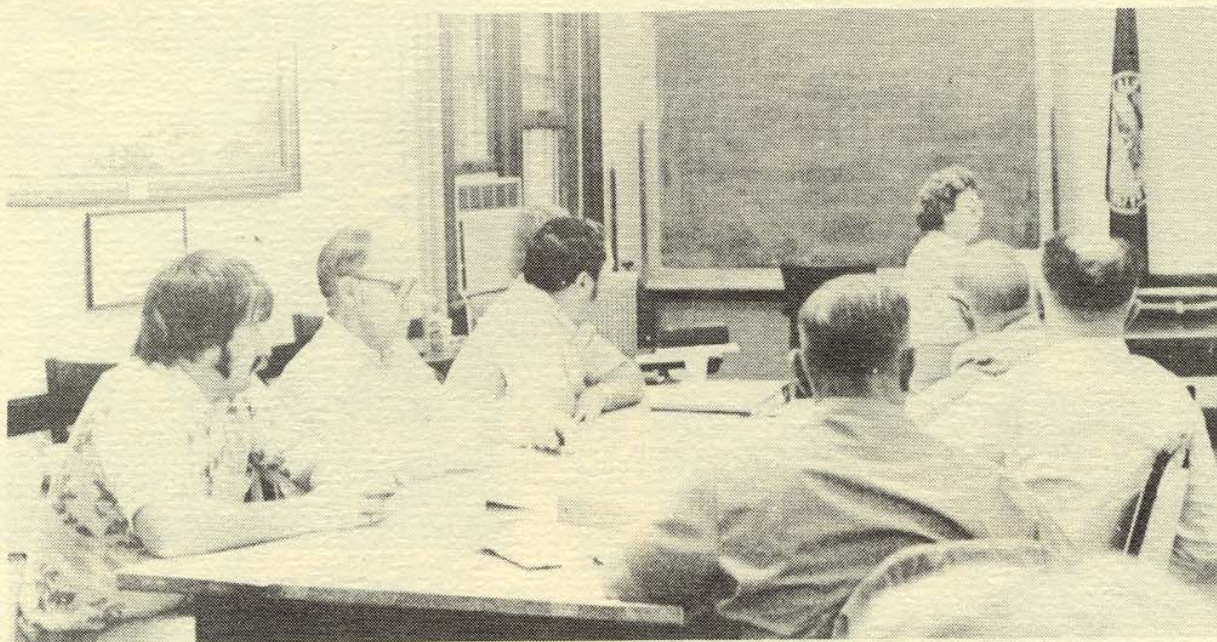
Harlan Johnson, Water-Waste Water Coordinator and Bob Sanders, Mayor of Ohioa, inspect part of the waste water facility installed just outside the rural community. Pictured is the two cell lagoon and the control and alarm system for lift station.

A survey was conducted in the nine counties served by Blue Valley Community Action and it was discovered that many rural towns and villages were experiencing difficulty in complying with federal and state water-waste water regulations. A number of small towns do not have the staff or time to pursue the various and often complicated alternatives to this problem.

BVCA functioned as a technical liaison between the communities and the state or federal agency that provides financial assistance through grant and loan programs.

BVCA also provided financial assistance to low income persons who could not afford sewer and water hookups.

Charting the Course of Action...



Board of Directors

Blue Valley Community Action's Board of Directors has been called one of the most active community action boards in the four state region of Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri and Iowa. Active governing board participation by private sector groups, public officials, and low income citizens ensures that consideration and thoughtfulness goes into each step of planning for local needs in each individual community served by BVCA.

Fiscal Department



An independent accounting firm audits Blue Valley Community Action's accounts annually. This all agency audit produced no exceptions or questioned costs. BVCA maintains fiscal integrity and accountability to insure proper and efficient use of all funds handled by the agency. Requests for fiscal assistance have come from other agencies in the state and BVCA's business department has provided help to those agencies.

Planning Department



The Planning Department staff completed 6,049 hours of research relevant to poverty related issues and priorities set forth by the Board of Directors. In the past year specific emphasis was given to areas related to interagency coordination, small community development, and energy and housing. Grant proposals were written to private and public funding sources on behalf of local communities.

1980-81 FISCAL YEAR FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME

STATE GOVERNMENT

Nebraska Energy Office \$417,821
 Nebraska Dept. of Public Welfare 14,261
 Dept. of Health 2,000
 Nebraska Dept. of Labor 72,985
 Educational Service Unit No. 5 1,948

PRIVATE

National Center For Appropriate Technology 2,500
 Nebraska Panhandle CAA 15,000
 Private Donations 2,466
 Midwest Assistance Program 983
 Center For Rural Affairs PY 1,495

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services . . 144,776
 U.S. Community Services Administration . 343,009
 U.S. Dept. of Agriculture 4,545
 U.S. Action 938
 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency 2,700

OTHER

* P Y Carried Forward 98,461
 Interest Income 991
Total \$1,126,879
Balance Forward \$34,237

EXPENSES

COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

Grand Island Disaster Assistance 5,000
 Senior Services 48,390
 Employment Services 71,718
 Emergency Energy Assistance 87,020
 Meals Program 10,634
 Nutrition 8,050
 Community Services 147,323

HOUSING-ENERGY DEPARTMENT

Weatherization 449,696
 Housing Rehabilitation 14,103
 Alternate Energy Projects 6,463
 Water-Waste Water Project 12,330
 Information-Training 1,261
 Energy 12,276

YOUTH DEPARTMENT

Head Start 149,166
 Big Brothers & Sisters 7,227
 Dental Health Project 926
 Handicap Program 19,870

ADMINISTRATION DEPARTMENT

Board Expenses 2,912
 Administration Costs 36,277
 Community Awards 2,000
Totals \$1,092,642

* Includes several programs of prior year monies carried forward.

Jefferson County Center – 729-5568
Head Start – 729-2161

Fillmore County Center – 759-3564
Head Start – 266-3311

Gage County Center – 223-3091
Head Start 223-3091

Polk County Center – 765-2601

Saline County Center – 826-2376
Head Start – 8262376

Thayer County Center – 768-6704
Head Start – 768-6727

Seward County Center – 643-6425

Butler County Center – 367-4592

Central Office – 729-2278

