



the ANTI-HUNGER ADVOCATE

Brought to you by the Anti-Hunger Action Committee

January 2005

UTA LISTENS, BUT WILL THEY RESPOND?

On December 13, AHAC organized a public forum on transportation and low income Utahns. The forum gave real bus riders the opportunity to voice their concerns about bus issues. UTA President John English, Board chair Orrin Colby, other UTA representatives and representatives from the Mayors' office were in attendance to receive suggestions on how to increase ridership. One after another, the bus riders got up and shared their concerns. AHAC co-chair Joe Coult moderated the forum.



AHAC Co-chair Joe Coult & UTA board chair Orrin Colby

The question remains: will UTA officials respond to the concerns raised by bus riders at the forum? After passing the budget for for 2006 at the UTA board meeting the next day, which included raising bus fares, Mr. Colby expressed his hope that UTA will be able to respond to the issues that were raised by bus riders at the forum.



Dale Waudby



DeNorris Bradley

UTA is now proposing \$1.8 million in cuts to bus services. Elimination is being proposed for twelve routes, and restructuring for another twelve.

There will be a public hearing on the proposed changes from 5 to 7p.m. Thursday, Jan. 12, at the UTA board room, 3600 S. 700 W.

One of the main goals for UTA this year is to increase bus ridership. Is raising bus fares and eliminating bus routes the way to accomplish that goal?



Vince Lobato

AHAC has begun a postcard campaign to Orrin Colby asking him to help unemployed people find work. UTA offers several discount bus pass programs, but none available to low income people who need transportation to find work.

If you can help with the postcard campaign or want further information about the upcoming UTA hearing on bus route closures call Crossroads and ask for Bill Germundson. 364-7765

AHAC'S HOLIDAY PARTY FULL OF FUN, HOLIDAY CHEER AND GOOD TIMES!!!

On December 29th AHAC held its annual holiday party. The event featured good food, poetry readings, song and an appearance by Representative Mascaro who offered words of encouragement to AHAC members to carry on the fight for restoring dental and vision services again this year. Representative Mascaro led the fight last year and will again be fighting for Medicaid this year.



Dennis Keating sings a song



Faina Raik thanks Representative Mascaro with a gift



Sam King reads a poem



No party is complete unless Rudy Roca sings



Judy Korlin reads a poem



Lou Anne Stevenson sings a song

The minimum wage has been stuck at \$5.15 for 8 years.

There is a bill in the Utah Senate to raise the minimum wage to \$7 per hour.

Senator Michael Waddoups is a powerful member of the committees that will decide if the Senate is even given the chance to vote on this bill. **Please call Senator Waddoups at 967-0225** and remind him 77% of Utahns believe the minimum wage needs to be raised and so he needs to support this important bill.

For more information about this issue call Bill Germundson from the Anti-Hunger Action Committee, 364-7765.

Pastor Steve Klemz of Zion Lutheran Church speaks from a moral perspective on raising the minimum wage at a press conference announcing a bill being set forth by Senator Ed Mayne to raise the minimum wage.



AHAC's camera project documenting the lives of the working poor is underway. People are out in the community taking pictures of their lives and what it means to them to be working and still living in poverty.

We will be putting together a photo exhibit to take to the Capitol on February 7th to show legislators the face of the working poor.

They say a picture is worth a 1000 words. We hope this turns out to be true and legislators will see the challenges the working poor face, such as going to a food pantry for food or standing in the snow waiting for a bus. The bottom line we hope to show them is that working for the minimum wage does not add up to raising a family.

Medicaid Updates

Dental and vision services are once again a priority for Governor Huntsman and have been included in his budget.

AHAC has produced a thank you booklet to present to legislators. The booklet features pictures of some of the AHAC members who have had dental and or vision work done since benefits were restored last year.

2nd Annual People's Summit on Poverty a success

On December 3rd over 50 people from 15 religious groups, nonprofit organizations and policy makers met to discuss problems facing the most disadvantaged Utahns.

The Reverend Dan Webster opened the summit with a moving speech and County Councilman Joe Hatch offered challenging closing remarks.

In between the opening and closing remarks people broke up into groups: economic security, health care, housing and transportation and concentrated on coming up with action steps in each of the specific areas.

Thanks to all who came to the summit and made it a success! See you next year!



Tia Thulin reports from the transportation group to summit attendees

Lost Traveler - by Sam King

One morning upon awakening
on a city bus bench, angry
disoriented, disgusted "n drenched
too distraught to travel even another inch
I didn't know where I was going
wasn't quite sure where I had been
lost my ticket along the way
as hassles and plots thickened

Attempting to shift blame
i justified everything
implicating foes and friends
as the reasons the saga began

Then reality struck like lightning
in the midst of stormy weather
a voice from the wind said, "look within
only you can choose to be better"
so i made a vow with my head unbowed
to first pull myself together
empowered by choice, indecision was deposed
immediately I took control of body, mind and soul

Doug's Joke of the Month

by: Douglas Cotant



Knock-Knock!
Who's there!
Dwain!
Dwain Who!
Dwain the Tub; I'm dwoining!

AHAC MEDIA TRAINING

Tuesday, January 17
5:30 PM to 6:30 PM
Crossroads Urban Center

Come learn how to talk to the media about important AHAC issues like Medicaid funding and raising the minimum wage. This training will be led by Gena Edvalsen, from the Utah Progressive Network. For more information call Bill Germundson at 364-7765.

Help Eliminate the Sales Tax On Food !!!

With a billion dollar surplus, 2006 is the year in which we have the best chance ever of eliminating the sales tax on food. Crossroads Urban Center is organizing a rally in support of the repeal of this unjust tax on Thursday, January 12th, at 11 AM at the West Building of the State Capitol Complex. Everyone who wants to repeal this unfair tax is invited.

