



the ANTI-HUNGER ADVOCATE

July 2004



Leon Johnson and David Hughes give the new petition a thumbs up.

AHAC Circulates New Living Wage Petition

The Anti-Hunger Action Committee has made up a new petition concerning living wages to deliver to Nancy Workman at the end of July, with the intent to pass it on to the County Council so they can pass a living wage ordinance for Salt Lake County.

The petition will be circulated at various locations, including: bus stops, outside DWS offices and at temp agencies, to name a few. AHAC hopes that by doing this at these particular locations, people can be recruited more easily around the living wage issues. If you would like a copy of this petition for your friends and family to sign, please call 364-7765.

It's Still A Beautiful World *by Rudy Roca*

The world we live in is a fairyland of exquisite beauty, full of wonderful sceneries and grandeur. In this fast changing world, our moral values are influenced by the environment around us. We seem to be complacent at times, but when things get worse we realize that we did not make ourselves involved to make the difference.

In my daily life I had some experiences with people and found people to be funny. Our best friend today will be our worst enemy tomorrow. We must be aware of this fact. But in spite of this there are people who have a good heart full of love and compassion. Here are some examples:

When I was about to take the bus I could not carry all the stuff I was carrying. A kind passenger, a lady, came down to help with my things. How I thanked her for being so kind and helpful.



Another incident was in the Fred Meyer store downtown where I got a lot of groceries amounting to \$80.00. Since it was the last day of the month I did not know that my Horizon Card had a zero balance.

When my card was processed there was no amount in it and the man behind me, a complete stranger to me asked the cashier how much I owed. He offered to pay with a \$100 bill.

I could hardly believe my eyes what I saw in this unforgettable incident. This kind, good natured guy saved me from the embarrassment. I thanked him a million times.

If you do something good to people and you don't expect something back, some other people will also do good to you. With all of these experiences I can say it is still a beautiful world.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

The 2nd Annual AHAC Barbecue is this month!

When: July 13, 5:30 PM

Where: Liberty Park

What: AHAC friends, fun and free food!

Bring your family & friends. Everyone is invited!

New! AHAC T-shirts will be available for purchase at \$8.00 each.

A Moment In Time: A Public Hearing through the Eyes of an AHAC Member

by Beth Vincent

All too often I come away from protests and/or public forums with my AHAC cohorts wondering if my attendance had any impact at all.

I think most of us feel that way at times. But, there comes a moment in time when you realize all the efforts you made were worth it. My day came on June 17th when I attended the Utah Department of Health's "Medical Care Advisory Committee Public Hearing." I went hopeful but with an underlying sense of pessimism. I left totally exhilarated and feeling victorious!

The budget breaks down like this: \$3,904,900 is needed for Restoration of Dental Care. With the Federal match of over 9 million dollars the grand total would be well over 13 million dollars!

Restoration of Vision Care was also discussed. This time the State would need to put \$1,126,000 in and with a Federal match of over 3 million dollars we could end up with

nearly 4 million dollars for eye care! I could have left the meeting after the figures were read but I'm so glad I didn't.

The testimonies that followed were the icing on the cake. In the past I haven't heard a lot of support for restoration of dental and eye care, except from members of AHAC and DRAC. This time it was different. There were at least a half dozen high profile Utah agencies supporting restoration of both programs.

One voice after another made it crystal clear to the Health Department that oral care is a necessity. The mouth is a gateway to germs. Not only do those germs cause dental problems but they also cause an endless array of diseases - some of which can be fatal.

Some of the people who spoke were from: ARC, the Utah Dental Association, The Utah AID'S Foundation, the Legislative Coalition for People

With Disabilities, Voices for Utah Children, Utah Issues, and Salt Lake Community Action.

Interspersed with the above speakers were comments from Barbara Toomer, about a half dozen faithful speakers from AHAC, and several citizens who took advantage of addressing representatives from the Health Department. It was fantastic. I even got a thank you for attending and pushing the issue from one of the Health Department Board Members. Imagine that!

I think of June 17th as Victory Day for all of us at AHAC. It was a privilege and honor to be part of it. I came home Thursday with a renewed desire to make a difference in the community, and a knowledge that each contribution we make to AHAC makes a difference - whether we realize it or not. We have to keep on, keeping on!

Joke of the Month by: Douglas Cotant

If Ella Fitzgerald married Darth Vader (Star Wars character) she would become an Elavator.



A Message From AHAC Co-Chair Darla Ball

I always loved helping others. It's very rewarding to me. I am pretty sure that if you helped others, you would probably find it as rewarding as I do.

The *Anti-Hunger Advocate* is a monthly newsletter of the Anti-Hunger Action Committee (AHAC).

Our Mission: AHAC organizes low-income individuals and their allies to take action on their on behalf to improve the social safety net and promote better jobs.

Submissions: To submit an item to the newsletter, please contact AHAC at 364-7765.

Previous editions of the newsletter are available at www.crossroads-u-c.org.

Remembering AHAC's Food Stamp Challenge

When AHAC was created in February 2002, our first goal was to reduce the amount of red tape people had to go through to get food stamps. We held two press conferences, collected almost 600 signatures on a petition and met with Governor Leavitt's Chief of Staff.

When none of those things worked one AHAC member said, "I'd love to see the Governor try to fill out that application." So we invited Governor Leavitt to an event called the Food Stamp Challenge where he could fill out the food stamp application while our members watched. He didn't come, but he did send the Executive Director of the Department of Workforce Services Raylene Ireland. At the end of the event she promised to shorten and simplify the application.

Here are the memories of two AHAC members who went to the Food Stamp Challenge:



Leon Johnson

“Applicants for food stamps had been complaining that application forms were too long, and asked too many unnecessary questions. AHAC, as always, was sensitive to the feelings of their clients. But how to persuade the powers that be to print a shorter form? How about a race? What an intriguing idea!

We organized a race on June 17, 2002. Different states had application forms of different lengths. We pitted four states, including Utah, Against each other. We set up four tables. Behind each table was an actor portraying a Department of Workforce Services employee. On the other side was an actor portraying an applicant, who was to fill out the form. We even had a panel of judges, to determine the loser. We invited Raylene Ireland, a big wheel in Workforce, to witness the contest. She graciously accepted our invitation.

Utah, with the longest form, was of course the loser. Ms. Ireland saw it for herself, and she was convinced. She was accommodating, and we got our short form. It felt really swell not to be the adversary.”



Joe Coult

“I remember when AHAC was just starting out. We had a Food Stamp Challenge and filled out a Utah Food Stamp application. Raylene was so happy that she finished on time until Bill Tibbitts told her some bad news- that Raylene had to fill out the entire application, not just part of it. After the challenge, Raylene said the application needed to be shorter and now it is.”

AHAC Upcoming Events Calendar:

July 5, Crossroads Urban Center Food Pantry Closed for Independence Day

July 6, 10:00 AM - Meeting with UTA Officials, Weigand Center.

July 13, 5:30 PM - AHAC Barbecue, Liberty Park

July 15, 5:30 PM - AHAC Board Meeting, Crossroads

July 23, Crossroads Urban Center Food Pantry Closed for Pioneer Day

July 26, 5:00 PM Medicaid Committee Meeting, Crossroads

Let's Have a Capitol Time

It's hard to stay tuned in.
Noise: Endless bits and pieces of conversation
reverberate up and down the marble halls.
Buzzing and beeping.
Like the sound of a truck backing up.
It's a tedious and tiresome tone.
Yet voices grow ever louder to be heard above the din.
Total chaos surrounds me.
Yet there is symmetry and order.

The men in green blazers with silver hair and a twinkle
in their eyes.
They are the ushers in this house of mayhem.
Yet they're always ready with a smile and a treat.
At the end of the session I'll bring them a thank you
and something sweet.

Men in suits and ties with "missionary haircuts" are
everywhere.
Some very old and some quite young.
I respect the ones without a tie, or a "Mr. Mac" suit.
I've decided the good guys don't wear ties or suits.
They know this isn't a church meeting.
They are independent dressers and thinkers.
They don't even wear their jackets.
They have their sleeves rolled up and are ready
to work.
I count on these guys.

More beeping, more prattle.
When will it end?
I'm tired and I want to go home.
Yet I wrote and encouraged others to participate in
these games.
I must encourage myself or glue my shoes to the
floor if I'm to stay and remain sane.
Finally a decision is rendered.
This time it's time for a victory dance!
Yahoo! It was worth coming for this fantastic feeling of
accomplishment.
But maybe next year I'll bring ear plugs.

-Beth Vincent



Joey's Painting by Mary Torgerson

Is Your Telephone Bill too high?

If you and your family are eligible for food stamps or other assistance programs, you can apply to the phone company for a discount on your phone bill!

**Applications for the *Utah Telephone Assistance Program* are available in the lobby of Crossroads Urban Center.
For more information call (800) 244-1111**

AHAC Needs Your Help!

- * Help make our July BBQ a success:
You can help with: Calling members to remind them, Set up, Cooking meat, Clean up.
- * Be a Petition Volunteer! Collect signatures on our Living Wage Petition
- * Host a Medicaid Writing Event in your home to tell state politicians to restore vision and dental benefits.
- * Contribute to and help edit the AHAC Newsletter

If you can help out with one of the above projects, call AHAC at 364-7765