**GFO — More Than Just A Café**

*Not much longer now!*

Grounds for Opportunity (GFO for short) is set to open early this summer. This innovative new CAP program will fulfill several purposes when it is up and running: it will be a café for downtown Kelso, a job skills training center for the food service industry, and it will also become CAP’s central kitchen where Meals on Wheels and the Senior Community Lunches are prepared daily.

“GFO as a job skills training center will be a resource for our local restaurants,” said CAP Executive Director Ilona Kerby, who first had the vision for this enterprise six years ago. “The people who graduate from our program will be trained and job-ready for the workforce." (See “Freddys Just for the Halibut” story on page 3.)

The training program offers a 16-week certificated course where participants will learn all aspects of the food preparation and service industry.

GFO is located at 413 South Pacific Avenue in Kelso, near the train station. Renovation of the former Corner Tavern began in November by local contractor J H Kelly. Several unforeseen complications (old sewer lines, tree removal, etc.) have delayed the planned spring opening.

A slideshow of the renovation’s progress is available on the CAP website at www.lowercolumbiacap.org.

Ilona is now inviting community service clubs and businesses to be part of this vision by donating a major piece of kitchen equipment. “We will have a permanent Donors Wall in the café,” she said. “Several foundations and service clubs have expressed interest in the project and we are hopeful that their names and logos will soon be decorating our Donor Wall.”

A “wish list” of equipment is also on the CAP website—Click on “Grounds for Opportunity—The Vision.”

CAP staff and members of the CAP Board of Directors and CAP Foundation Board have individually purchased chairs and tables for the new café, and CAP staff are holding their own in-house fundraisers to purchase the espresso machine.

“We are all very excited to have GFO open for business, for job training, and for service to our seniors,” said Ilona.
Ladies, get some girlfriends together and come out to the Monticello Hotel on Friday, May 18, for a Girls Night Out.

“It’s going to be a party like this town has never seen,” said Angie Leppert, marketing specialist with Fibre Federal Credit Union and co-chair of the planning committee. “We are planning a party that captures the Material Girl spirit of the ‘80s.”

Fibre Federal Credit Union is the title sponsor for the event. Activities will include music, dancing, raffle prizes, and live and silent auctions. Local singer Raeann will be the DJ for the evening and will host the karaoke segment with songs from the ‘80s. There will also be prizes for the best ‘80s outfits and best karaoke performances, and raffle prizes donated by more than 25 local businesses that cater to women, including Estetica, Spa Euphoria, and Simplicity Salon. Free “glamour” shots will be provided by Jessica Lemmons Photography.

Auction items include a seven-night stay on Kauai, a houseboat cruise with lunch and dinner for 6 on Lake Merwin, an afternoon of sailing on the Columbia River for four, and a day’s fishing trip for two through Erik’s World Class Fishing Adventures.

The event is a fundraiser for the CAP Foundation, which raises funds to support the programs and services of Lower Columbia Community Action Program (CAP).

Tickets are $40 in advance, and $50 at the door. Tickets can be purchased at CAP, 1526 Commerce Avenue, next to the Columbia Theatre, or at Longview Curves, or online at www.lowercolumbiacap.org.

Auction Items:

- **7 nights on Kauai for 2**
  Master Studio Suite with sunset lanai in beautiful Poipu Beach, Kauai, 3 minute walk to world famous Poipu Beach and Brennecke’s Beach.
  Donated by: Hale Aka House

- **Lake Merwin Cruise for 6**
  The cruise takes in some of the most beautiful parts of the lake, and includes champagne mimosas, a barbecue lunch of hamburgers & gourmet sausages, dinner with a choice of filet mignon, lobster or chicken, with wine, and ends the day with s’mores and hot tubbing.
  Donated by: The Dave Petersen Family

- **Full Day Fishing trip for 2 with Guide Erik Brigham**
  A full day of guided fishing for steelhead and/or salmon, depending on time of year in local rivers. *(Great Father’s Day gift!)*
  Donated by: Erik’s World Class Fishing Adventures

- **An Afternoon Sailing on the Columbia for 4**
  Includes lunch, wine, and a really wonderful time.
  Donated by: Hal Palmer, Woodford Commercial Real Estate
For over 30 years, CAP has been weatherizing homes to help low income families conserve energy and reduce their utility costs. In 2011, CAP launched its newest program, the Home Energy Audit Team (HEAT), which now makes home energy assessments available to the general public. A fee is based on the home’s number of square feet. “Savings vary from home to home, but on average people will save 20-30% once their homes are weatherized,” said Joel Haymes, CAP’s HEAT technician.

In spite of a continuing tough economy, the community responded generously once again in 2011 by donating $26,940 to CAP’s annual appeal—“Give Up A Cup for A Good Cause.” In addition, The Daily News expanded their annual Neighbors in Need campaign to include CAP and St. Vincent de Paul along with the Salvation Army as recipients of the money raised to help our neighbors, which resulted in $24,488 to support CAP’s services and the CAP Foundation’s endowment. Our thanks also to Comcast for their regular TV spots, keeping the “Give Up A Cup” appeal before the community.

Rick Wenner (left) successfully completed the 16-week training program, under the supervision of CAP’s Chef Keven Robinson (right.) Fred Kamp, owner of the popular Freddy’s Just for the Halibut, hired Rick as a prep cook in April 2011. Because of Rick’s attitude, willingness to learn, and desire to develop additional skills, Fred expanded Rick’s responsibilities to perform a variety of duties at his restaurant. “Rick’s one of my best employees,” says Fred. “He’s proven himself and I know I can count on him.”

Local Restaurants Support CAP
Go to www.lowercolumbiacap.org to check for additional restaurants
2011 Stats

Help Warehouse
1.7 million lbs of food were distributed through area food banks

Meals on Wheels
31,846 meals were delivered to homebound seniors

Self-Help Housing
22 families became homeowners by building their own homes in Castle Rock

Vocational Skills Training
(Stats for 1/1/11 thru 6/30/11)
208 dislocated workers & low income adults found jobs at an average starting wage of $13.87/hr

Asset Building
149 low income families developed assets in 2011 (A total of 201 families have saved $421,311, since the program began, resulting in asset purchases totaling more than $14,106,617.)

Money Management
255 people took the MoneySmart course on money management in 2011, (815 people have taken the course since 2007.)

Small Business Development
48 local small business entrepreneurs received assistance in 2011 with plans to enhance or start a local business.

Weatherization
99 homes were weatherized

Harvest Classic breaks All Records

In 2011, the Harvest Classic broke every record in its 31 year history. With 760 runners and walkers, the event nearly doubled its previous record of 441 participants (2008), and raised $9000, easily topping the record-breaking $7500 from 2010.

Organized each year by the Longview Early Edition Rotary Club as a community event, the Harvest Classic raises funds for CAP’s Help Warehouse to purchase and distribute food to the area food banks. In addition to the money, participants donated 1,078 pounds of food.

Boeing Employees Donate To Replace Elevator

The Employees Fund of Boeing Portland presented $5000 toward replacing Help Warehouse’s 50-year old freight elevator. Consultants have warned that the elevator on which our food distribution system depends is “on its last legs.” So far, CAP has raised about half of the $100,000 needed to replace the elevator.

Walmart Supports Help Warehouse

L-R: Help Warehouse staff Colleen Dean and Lois Shelton receive a check for $6000 from Walmart Superstore manager Susie Lanier and Ocean Beach store Manager Bert Stalter

Dine Out for Meals on Wheels

Twice as many restaurants participated in the second Dine Out for Meals on Wheels event than in 2010. On May 17, twenty-nine local restaurants donated a percentage of their sales from that day, raising $6,850 for CAP’s Meals on Wheels program, which delivered 31,846 hot and frozen meals to homebound seniors in 2011.

Plan to dine out for Meals on Wheels on Tues, May 22, 2012.
The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Rotary International District 5020 partnered to provide funds to local organizations working to end family homelessness. The Rotary Club of Longview was awarded $5,000 and contributed an additional $2,500 of their own funds to CAP's homeless program. The Rotary grant helped meet basic needs of homeless families that cannot be funded under federal program guidelines. “Housing is crucial to a family’s stability,” said Tim Temples, then-President of the Rotary Club of Longview, “and we are happy to respond to this very real need in our community by helping families get back on their feet.”

Noonday Rotary Assists the “New Homeless”

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Left: Welch Challenge poster child Erica Snyder epitomizes this community’s compassion and commitment – and its hope for the future.

Right: Tim & Lee Hutton-Welch

$132,000 Raised For Endowment

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Right: Tim & Lee Hutton-Welch

Friends of Tim & Lee

- Jerry Adams Family Trust
- Bill & Karen Boehm
- Ben & Judy Coombs
- Dan Evans
- Bob & LaVina Jones
- Bob & Pauline Kirchner
- Ed & Dollie Lynch
- George & Marilyn Ramirez
- Rick & Barbara Wollenberg

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Left to right: CAP staff involved in the Homeless Program Lois Shelton, Colleen Dean, Jade Cassio and Michael Torres with representatives from the Rotary Club of Longview Angie Warning and Tim Temples.

Photo courtesy of Doug Koenig

CAP Foundation & Columbia Bank Host Business Luncheon

On October 25, former US Congressman Brian Baird, and Mr. Frank Foti, President and CEO of Vigor Industrial LLC, led a dialogue with 200 business and community leaders on how government and commerce can work together to grow businesses and build a stronger community. Frank shared how he made Vigor into one of the largest shipbuilders on the west coast, and Brian discussed ways that Congress could be more effective in building the US economy, as outlined in his book, Character, Politics and Responsibility: Restarting the Heart of the American Republic.

CAP Executive Director Ilona Kerby and Foundation President Tim Welch with former Congressman Brian Baird.

In-Home Care Services

55,375 hours of care were provided by CAP’s team of 42 caregivers

Homelessness Prevention

168 households were assisted in maintaining or finding affordable housing

Energy Assistance

2,144 households received assistance with payments totaling $713,147

I-5 Vans

(Rural Public Transportation) Provided 38,021 rides between Vancouver and Chehalis

Senior Community Lunches

16,510 meals were served at lunch sites in Castle Rock, Cathlamet, Kalama, Kelso, Lexington, Longview, Rosburg, Ryderwood and Woodland

Senior Rides

1,082 Senior rides were provided

Volunteer Center of Cowlitz-Wahkiakum

556 active volunteers provided a total of 103,570 hours of service to the community, valued at $2,191,541

Housing Rehabilitation

9 low to moderate income living units were rehabilitated

2011 Annual Report available online at www.lowercolumbiacap.org
Earlier this year David Hodgson’s Leadership Class at Coweeman Middle School organized a two week school-wide food drive that resulted in more than 1000 pounds of food for Help Warehouse to distribute to area food banks. “They know there are kids in their own school whose families are struggling,” said David. “This was a way the students felt they could make a difference.”

Approximately 180 volunteers were treated to CAP’s annual Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast on April 25. “Many CAP programs could not operate without our dedicated volunteers,” said Anita Hopkins, coordinator of the Volunteer Center of Cowlitz-Wahkiakum. In 2011, 556 active volunteers provided a total of 103,570 hours of service to the community, delivering meals, tutoring in schools, distributing food, and assisting in other ways for nonprofit organizations in our area. 8 people received Lifetime Volunteer Awards for giving over 4000 hours of service to their community.

Photos courtesy of Alan Rose, Lower Columbia CAP

LEFT: (left to right) RSVP Advisory Council President Rick Johnson with Lifetime Award winners Lidy Carpenter, Jerry Bakken, Lorraine Linn, Linda Wilson, Glenda Schuh, Sally DeBri, Sara Burt, and Volunteer Center coordinator Anita Hopkins. (Not pictured: Mark Bell.)
Comcast Cares...For Sure!

On Earth Day Weekend, 40 local Comcast employees and family members volunteered their time and talents once again this year as part of Comcast Cares Day. The volunteers were part of more than 1,600 local Comcast employees and their families and friends who volunteered to improve a number of sites throughout Oregon and SW Washington. Since its inception in 2001, Comcast Cares Day has become one of the largest single days of corporate volunteering in the country with more than 67,000 Comcast volunteers participating.

The Comcast Foundation also provide grants to local community partner organizations across the country on behalf of each employee and family member who volunteers on Comcast Cares Day. Over four hours that morning, the volunteers painted Help Warehouse’s basement (much brighter!), installed new shelving in the FISH room, and brightened the planters along Commerce Avenue by planting spring flowers and spreading bark dust, they themselves donating the flowers and bark dust.

Our thanks to organizer Miguel Favela and his fantastic crew of volunteers for caring!

Thank You

Below: Comcast employees and their families beautified Commerce Avenue with flowers
Girls
Just wanna have FUN
MAY 18 • 7-11PM
MONTICELLO HOTEL

MUSIc
80’s DJ and Karaoke
by RAENANN

DANCING
Come learn the Thriller dance
and rock out to ‘80s hits.

AUCTION & RAFFLE
Bid on a Week’s Stay on Kauai, Father’s Day Fishing
Package, Lake Merwin House Boat Cruise, Columbia
River Sailing Trip, or win fabulous raffle prizes!

FUN STUFF
Prizes for best ‘80s outfits, free “glamour”shots
with your girlfriends, blackjack,
snacks and more!

TICKETS:
Ticket price includes
1 free drink
$40 Advance
$50 at the door

Ladies.
Come Celebrate
the ’80s

Follow us
at Facebook/
lowercolumbiacap
for a chance
to win free
tickets!

A CAP FOUNDATION FUNDRAISER

1526 Commerce Avenue
Longview, WA 98632
360-425-3430 • 1-800-383-2101
www.LowerColumbiaCAP.org
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Join Us!
Dine at any of
the participating
restaurants on
Tuesday, May 22,
and they will
donate a percent of their revenue to
CAP’s Meals on Wheels program.
(See restaurant list on page 3 or go online to
www.lowercolumbiacap.org for updates.)