### **BOOKS**

Continued from Page 3

Seligson said.

In spite of their heavy loads, Kaufman believes that the University community has groups and individuals who could find 30 minutes once a month to "take on a little addition to help the commu-

"We no longer live in a world where we can consider only our home, our family, our children. And this program has no negatives. It's all positive," Kaufman said.

Rebecca Hammons is a University English major, mother and court reporter who knows the fun involved in storytelling

Hammons took a pot, a potato, stones, salt, barley and other ingredients to her last visit at Maplewood Meadows, a low-income housing project. The children hid food and made "stone soup" as she narrated the story of three hungry soldiers trying to make soup in a village where food was being hoarded.

Talking Books members from 15 to 85 years of age practice with each other and at Washington Park Preschool, an easy location

'Most of the

children we work

with come from

disadvantaged.

They may be

homeless, in

or living in

transitional

institutions.'

domestic crisis

Sue Hunt-Thompson.

dysfunctional or

disrupted homes.

where children know how to listen and behave in a group, Seligson said.

However, each site has different characteristics. Some of them can present problems and few situations fit a perfect image of quiet, rapt children enthralled by the storyteller's every word.

For instance, Matt Henry, 38, often finds children at Brethren Housing excited and wanting to climb all over him.

"They are very physical and want to touch and be touched. They long for nurturing, physical contact. It won't work if you're just there to give a show," Henry said.

"We're not just entertainment for these kids," Hunt-Thompson said.

The children's generally enthusiastic response to storytelling keeps the volunteers striving for success. They meet periodically to share

site coordinator for Talking and solve problems through understanding.

"We try to warn volunteers that these children may be in trauma and in huge amounts of stress," said Jo Fanning, a mother and potter who schedules Talking Books volunteers.

Fanning's mother was a professional storyteller who instilled in her a love for ethnic and folk tales. But a story need not come from a book, Fanning said.

Fanning's four children often asked her to repeat family tales. Unfortunately, mothers who are involved with alcohol and drug recovery, abuse or stricken by poverty may not realize the importance of books for children.

It is frustrating if a volunteer selects and rehearses stories and then mothers forget to bring the children or they remove them before the session is finished, Fanning said

"But most of the time the children are sitting there waiting, and you can't disappoint them because they may have already had so many disappointments in their life and they need reliable adults. Children may not have happy families, but books can be friends they can carry with them their whole lives," Fanning said.

Little Caesar's Pizza of Eugene is a corporate sponsor of Talking Books that helps the organization with expenses. Occasionally, members will accept a contract to raise funds.

Talking Books' major goal is to establish its own library of storytelling demonstration tapes, books and other materials that would help members plan stories and develop storytelling skills.

On Dec. 6, Talking Books volunteers will tell stories at the Saturday Market Christmas Fair at 11 a.m.

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