

changed. "The reasons they are on the streets have remained the same," she says, citing abuse as the No. 1 factor.

But she adds: "Another big reason is because they are gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender. For a lot of them, the family kicks them out or it wasn't OK at home. For others, the streets are where they experiment."

Today, queer and questioning kids constitute nearly 40 percent of the homeless clients served by Outside In. The additional element of gender identity or sexual orientation can create friction in one's home environment, Hinds explains.

Often, the street can seem a more accepting place, where people are not going to be as demanding that others meet a particular mainstream identity or fit some standard mold or preconceived notion. "Many queer kids are kicked out of their homes, but some left because they don't fit in and they are looking for some reflection of themselves," says Hinds, who believes Outside In is not only the most queer-friendly agency but also is on the cutting edge for health issues among sexual minorities.

This attitude is reflected in its hiring practices. Early on in the application process, for example, potential employees are presented with two defining aspects of the organization. One is that Outside In is a pro-choice clinic. The other is that its staff, clients and associates are composed of a variety of sexual orientations, a diversity the organization values.

"Advocacy for queer youth is one of our primary goals," professes Hinds, suggesting the organization's open arms set it apart. For exam-



Kathy Oliver (left) and Ann Hinds

ple, Oliver sees a continuing trend toward more services geared specifically for trans clients in addition to helping the growing number of homeless youth with kids of their own.

Alcohol and drug use remain a constant concern, but staff today find themselves dealing more and more with mental health issues, including anger management, depression and suicide. The challenge for the organization is that every youth's situation is unique, and service providers such as Outside In must reach out to kids where they are, in a nonjudgmental and respectful way.

"Youth face multiple complex issues, including mental health, health, alcohol/drug issues, homelessness, lack of education and employment skills, and exposure to HIV and hepatitis C," Oliver says. "Outside In has designed multiple strategies to address these." □

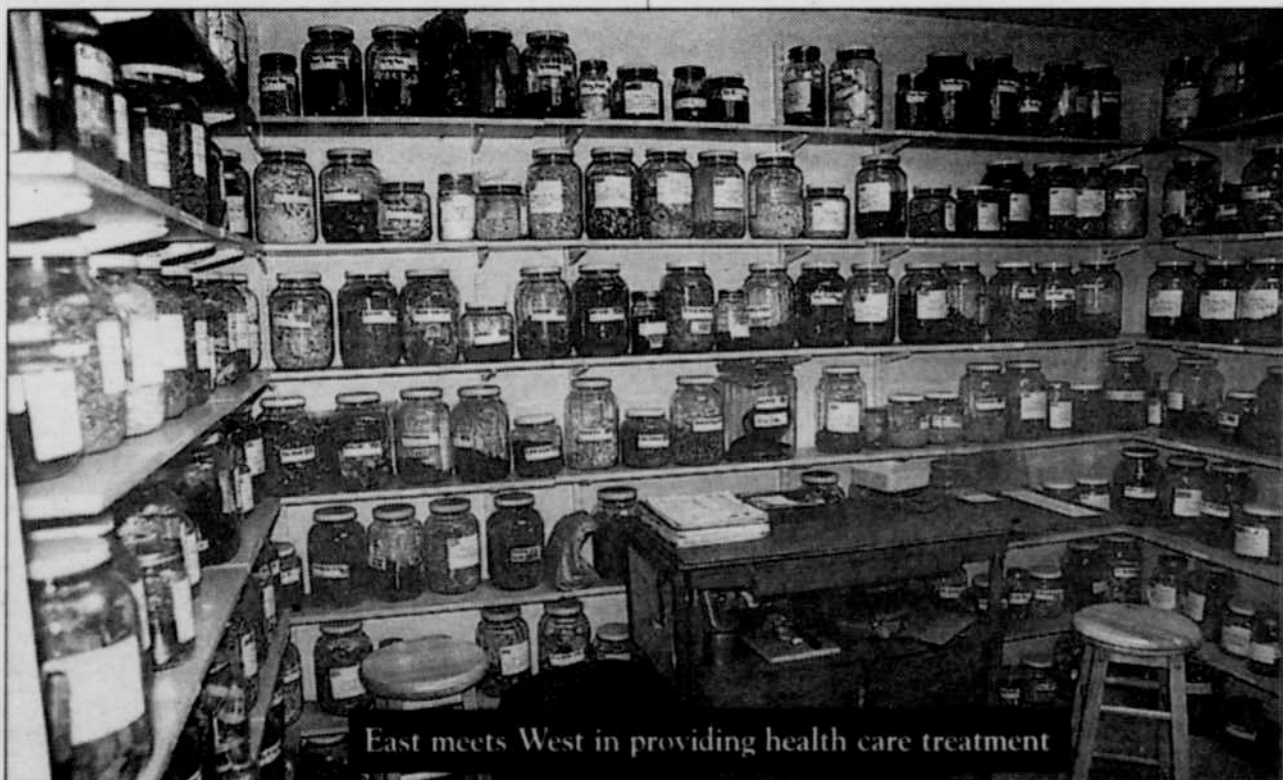
Keeping house at a homeless agency

Outside In addresses the changing needs of homeless youth and other low-income and marginalized people as they work toward self-sufficiency and improved health by providing them with innovative social, medical and mental health services and material resources.

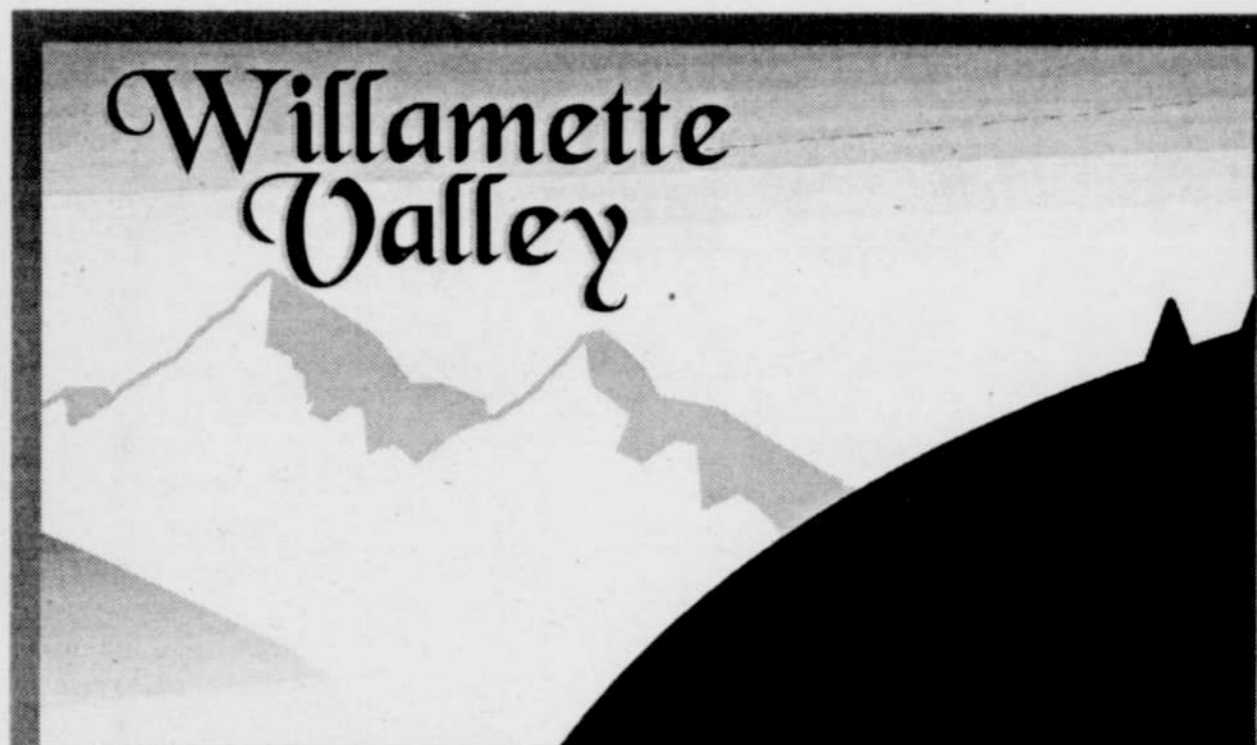
The nonprofit agency operates with about 40 staff members, nearly 75 volunteers and an annual budget of a little more than \$2 million, not including recent capital revenues earmarked for the new building. More than three-quarters of the organization's budget paid for the delivery of its programs, while administrative costs amounted to about 19 percent of the 2000-2001 operating budget.

OUTSIDE IN, now located at 1132 S.W. 13th Ave., will hold a grand opening event at 6 p.m. Feb. 21. For details, contact the organization at 503-535-3801 or visit its Web site at www.outsidein.org.

TIMOTHY KRAUSE is a writer and editor in Portland. E-mail him at timkra@millenicom.com.



East meets West in providing health care treatment



CORVALLIS KENNELS and CATTERY Inc.

Boarding & Grooming for Dogs & Cats
"Individual Love and Attention"

720 SW Wake Robin Ave
Corvallis, OR 97330
(541) 757-9089 Larry & Marlene McNeill

Oregon Camera
Everything Photographic

We have a knowledgeable, friendly staff helping you find the right camera, binoculars, or photographic accessories.

A 'family' owned and operated business since 1997.

582 SW Adams Avenue (541) 753-2653
Corvallis, OR 97333
www.oregoncamera.com

YOUR WILLAMETTE VALLEY FAMILY REAL ESTATE CONNECTION

I support GALA choruses!

Upcoming concerts:

Confluence 2/16 Corvallis Unitarian (2945 NW Circle) 8pm
2/17 Salem Unitarian (5090 Center St. NE) 4pm

CLARK HOUSE Sales Associate (541) 758-1234 x 211
e-mail: clarkshouses@aol.com

Bryant Realty Inc. GMAC
1575 NW 9th Street • Corvallis, OR 97330

Carol A. Carver Ph.D.
Clinical Psychologist

Specializing in Lesbian/Gay Clients since 1984

Pioneer Plaza Building 305 SW C, Suite 4 Corvallis, OR 97333

Medical Insurance Accepted
(541) 757-2066

PHOTOGRAPHY

* Portraits
* Wedding/Ceremony
* Birth

Susan Detroy
541-345-2514 dets@efn.org

Willamette Valley Advertisers

Your Ad Here

Call (503) 236-1253
For Special Ad Rates