

# KERR CONNECTIONS

A Newsletter for Donors, Volunteers and Friends of Albertina Kerr Centers

## EXPANDING CARE TO YOUTH IN NEED

### Kerr's Newest Addition Dedicated to Helping Teens Thrive

*On a surprisingly hot day in September, residents of Albertina Kerr's Youth Group Homes flood Hillsboro Stadium for the Kerr Games, the year's most popular event, complete with sports, carnival games and talent show.*

Brittany\*, a teen wearing dark-rimmed glasses, waits in line at the snack bar, hoping a blue snow cone will help her cool off. Lauren\*, in shorts and bright gold T-shirt, watches kids, staff and volunteers all take turns in the dunk tank.

For both girls, it is their first time at the games. In July, Kerr took over the care of four adolescent girls, including Brittany and Lauren, by adding their home to the network of Kerr's 15 total youth group homes in Washington, Multnomah and Marion Counties.

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## Kerr Youth Group Home Snapshot

- At any one time, Kerr's group homes for youth are providing 24-hour care for 63 children, ages 9 to 18, in 15 group homes in Multnomah, Washington and Marion Counties.
- Currently, Kerr is one of the few organizations in Oregon uniquely qualified to provide care for children who have both a mental health disorder and a developmental disability.
- Skills taught include: forming positive relationships, interpersonal and social skills, handling money, finding a job, taking public transportation, shopping, and personal safety.
- The majority of the children stay in the home between 18 months to two years; some have stayed up to five years.
- Approximately 50% of the children are wards of the state.
- 25% have strong family involvement.
- 25% have minimal family involvement.



## Expanding Care to Youth in Need

CONTINUED FROM COVER

Brittany hopes to get to know more kids from the other homes at the games. Lauren had been looking forward to the day of activities so, “I can meet new people and play games with new people.”

Kerr has been providing group home care for youth ages 9-18 that have been diagnosed with both a developmental disability and mental health challenge for nearly 20 years. Kerr’s overall goal is to provide the children with the skills they need to live as independently as possible when they become adults.

For Linda Ortiz, the new home’s program manager, these skills build a foundation of success that the residents carry with them into adulthood.

“Kerr’s Youth Group Homes are important because we can show these young adults life skills and make sure they’re in a good living environment,”

Ortiz said. “We have these young individuals that need support. We help prepare them with skills so they’re ready to take care of themselves.”

**We have these young individuals that need support. We help prepare them with skills so they’re ready to take care of themselves.**

– LINDA ORTIZ

The services provided focus on basic life skill development, behavior management and appropriate socialization. Each home is staffed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, by direct care staff. They work as a team with psychiatrists, therapists and behavior support specialists to develop each child’s treatment plan to meet shared goals.

Many residents have a history of abuse and neglect and have experienced multiple placements outside their own home. Because of this, moving to a Kerr group home allows the youth to establish a safe, nurturing and stable home environment. These children are comforted by having their own bed, assured that food would be available each day and know that their possessions will be there when they return from school.

It is through your support of Kerr programs like these that children can begin to recover from their past experiences of abuse and neglect, address mental and emotional health challenges and receive life skills training to live successfully on their own and become independent, contributing members of our community.

*\*Name has been changed to protect confidentiality.*

## United Way Campaign Begins

Each fall, many employers conduct workplace charitable giving campaigns. These programs often allow donors to utilize automatic payroll deductions to make contributions. If you plan to make a United Way or Combined Federal Campaign gift, please consider designating Albertina Kerr Centers Foundation through the Donor Choice Option.



# NEWS & UPDATES

## Raising the Awareness of Kerr

As a supporter of Albertina Kerr, you know about the important work the organization does every day for people in our community. We've been working to support some of Oregon's most vulnerable populations for more than 100 years, but we've done so quietly. We hope to change that.

This fall, you will start to see a new campaign aimed at getting people involved with Albertina Kerr. From ads in newspapers and magazines to bus shelters and television commercials, we are spreading the word about our "Army of Angels" and how others can join. To learn more, visit [www.kerrangels.org](http://www.kerrangels.org).

## Annual Golf Classic Raises over \$30,000 for Kerr's Endowment

Over 110 golfers of all levels joined us at Pumpkin Ridge Golf Club on September 18 for our 17th annual benefit golf tournament. It was a gorgeous late summer day on the links, capped off with a banquet and a live auction. Many thanks to volunteers, sponsors and players who continue to support the Albertina Kerr Centers Foundation endowment. Thanks also to the Golf Tournament Planning Committee, chaired by Greg Mottau, who coordinated this popular event.

*Tournament sponsors included co-cart sponsors Pacific Continental Bank and Portland Valve & Fitting, corporate sponsors Comcast SportsNet, Dave Shepard Enterprises and U.S. Bank and presenting sponsor Portland Pearl Rotary.*

# GET INVOLVED

## Annual Holiday Giving Campaign

As the holiday season approaches, we all look forward to the warmth of a family celebration. Albertina Kerr's annual Holiday Giving Campaign captures this spirit and is a source of much-needed support for children and families struggling with mental health challenges and individuals with developmental disabilities. Become a part of something special this holiday season to help the people served by Albertina Kerr.

We are seeking community partners to host giving trees in businesses, churches, schools or homes. Pre-made tags will be provided to you detailing the special wish of someone in need at Kerr. Simply display the tags and encourage visitors to fulfill a wish. For some, this is the first time they will receive a present during the holidays, but for everyone, this one simple gift truly represents the magic of the season.

For more information or additional ways to give, contact Stephanie Bolson at 503.262.0187 or [StephanieBo@AlbertinaKerr.org](mailto:StephanieBo@AlbertinaKerr.org).



## Washington County Community Development Block Grant: Improving Homes for Children

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are federal funds awarded to cities and urban counties for housing and community development projects. This program assists residents who are below 80% of the area median income.

The Washington County CDBG has been granting funds to Kerr since 2006 for purchasing and refurbishing our youth group homes. In total, Washington County CDBG has granted Albertina Kerr \$1,042,897.

This investment has allowed Kerr to purchase four group homes and refurbish another six. These properties house 34 children at any given time, although each site may serve up to 10 different children in one year. This program has truly allowed Kerr to make houses into homes for these youth.

## Albertina's Restaurant & Shops

Reservations: 503-231-0216

*Nov. 14 & 21, Dec. 5, 12 & 19*  
Saturday Holiday Openings

The shops are decorated! Start your holiday shopping! Saturday luncheon seating at 11:30 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. Shops open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

*Saturday, February 13*  
Valentine Tea

Tickets \$25 per person. Tea served at 2:15 p.m. Shops open 1 to 4 p.m.

## Kerr Bikes

Information: [KerrBikes.org](http://KerrBikes.org)

*Fall Hours Until October 31*  
Visit Us on the Waterfront

Saturdays & Sundays 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Spring hours begin April 1, 2010.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*Wednesday, October 28*  
102nd Board of Directors  
Annual Meeting & Reception

A luncheon featuring keynote speaker, John Elder Robison, author of the bestselling memoir, *Look Me in the Eye: My Life with Asperger's*. In his talk, Robison will show how he overcame enormous odds to lead a fulfilling life: from an anti-social child to a husband and a father now running a multi-million dollar car specialty shop.

*November - December*  
Holiday Giving Campaign

Help us provide gifts for all the children, families and adults we serve this season. Visit our website or contact Stephanie Bolson at 503-262-0187 for details.

*Sunday, April 11, 2010*  
Race for the Roses  
5K, 10K, Half Marathon

Join more than 4,000 runners and walkers at Albertina Kerr's 12th Annual Race for the Roses. This not-to-be-missed event steers participants through some of the city's most vibrant sights—over bridges, through city streets and along the waterfront—in support of Kerr's vision. Visit [Race4theRoses.org](http://Race4theRoses.org) for all the details and a customized training plan.

*Details for all events can be found at [www.AlbertinaKerr.org](http://www.AlbertinaKerr.org).*

We envision a community where all children and adults with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges will thrive in nurturing homes and inclusive communities.



**KERR**  
ALBERTINA KERR CENTERS

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