



## **WCADIO Announces New Board Member**

The Board of Directors of the Women's Commission on Alcohol and Drug Issues would like to introduce you to our latest Board Member:

### **Claudia Wilcox**

Claudia is a native of Eastern Oregon, born and raised in Vale. She grew up training and showing horses in the Fair as well as competing in Little Britches Rodeos. Claudia is the oldest of five children. She has three wonderful children of her own and six months ago became a grandmother ("Being a grandmother is better than I ever anticipated".)

She is a recovering addict of 11 years and has made a career of alcohol and drug treatment, education and prevention. She spent four years working for Lane County Mental Health, DUII, Methadone and Sex Offender Unit in Eugene; seven years working at Lifeways in Ontario, Oregon, the first two with adolescents. She advanced as the Treatment Provider for women in the Malheur County SAFE Court Gender Specific drug court program and the A&D Specialist/Consultant for DHS/Child Welfare the last five years of employment with Lifeways. While at Lifeways she also opened a Methadone Clinic and was the part time site Manager.

After some consideration, she applied for the Policy and Program Development Specialist position with Addiction and Mental Health at Central Office in Salem and was hired. This was her dream job she states, and she loved working for Karen Wheeler, Program Manager, Diane Lia and with the rest of the staff. She felt this would be the job until she retired. However, because of health and family issues she needed to move back to Eastern Oregon. She applied for the Executive Principal Manager C position with DHS/Child Welfare and was hired and has been there since July 2007.

At this time, Claudia is learning a whole new set of OAR's and ORS's and to understand the Child Welfare System. With the new Oregon Safety Model the state implemented in April of this year, there is much work and revision in practice taking place. The way parents who are addicted and how case managers interact with them is one. With her knowledge and experience she has been able to educate and assist the staff with making decisions that are more appropriate for the parents. She says, "We are making changes in children's lives just by treating their parents with respect and dignity without shame. Parents actually want to work with us and make changes in their lives. Imagine that!"

She enjoys supervising case managers, guiding them to assist addicted parents and their children in a respectful way and getting them the help they need. Treating the whole family unit is what works and the field has known that for years. Now the time has come when we can really make a difference and she is pleased to be a part of it and knows that God has put her in this position for a very important reason.