

PHOTO COURTESY OF WIKI COMMONS

Portland City Council has again postponed a decision on a controversial proposal that critics say will open the door to increased public surveillance in the city. The proposal, brought by the Portland Police Bureau, is to hold property owners harmless to any damages caused by police installing and using surveillance cameras on the property. The PPB wants to install cameras in the Old Town Chinatown neighborhood to track and prosecute illegal drug trafficking. The proposal, however, has come under attack by the American Civil Liberties Union of Oregon and Portland Copwatch, who say that such surveillance tactics have been ineffectual elsewhere and are open to civil liberties violations. The proposal was heard May 2, but questions regarding police policies around their use prompted a delay to May 16. It has now been rescheduled to May 30.

**HOLDING THE LINE, FROM page 3**

bilingual specialists respond and juggle their calls accordingly. Breaks for the specialists are essential – an opportunity to take off the headset, walk away from the booth, and collect his or her thoughts. This is not a counseling hotline. But it is the front line for people reaching out from what is often a desperate situation. “I really enjoy helping people,” says Kurt, one of the call center specialists. “To talk to people for a moment or two and be able to let them tell their story. And they know that they can call back. It’s being accessible.”

*“You’re a stranger and I’m a little embarrassed talking to you.”*  
Even with his reservations, the caller, an older man, continues. He wants resources overcome his addiction to alcohol, and to address his anxieties and mental health concerns when he’s sober.

*“It’s kind of embarrassing ... I don’t really have a permanent address. I’m calling you folks so maybe I can get some help ... I want off it all. It’s killing me.”*

The specialist gives him the information on several services that could be appropriate, along with resources for getting transportation to the programs. The mix of \$4-a-gallon gas and no income is another barrier mentioned by several callers to simply getting to where they need to be.

As the clock nears 5 p.m., the calls show no signs of slowing down. At one point, the number of callers in the queue peaks at 17.

*“I’m trying to find out some help. I’m moving from a divorce with my kids and I don’t know where to go or where to begin. I’m currently staying in our car right now.”*

She’s 31 with two young boys. She works, usually making about \$1,000 a month. But she recently had a car accident, and waiting on the doctor’s assessment regarding work has put her behind financially. The past two weeks, it’s gotten worse, she says, and now she doesn’t have any money.

The specialist asks if she has any family or friends to stay with. She responds in a very solemn voice.

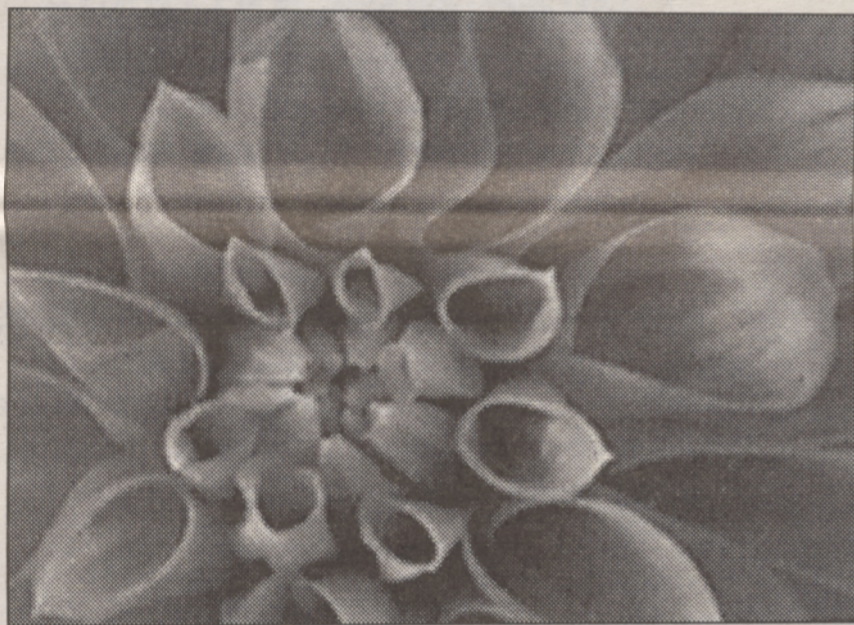
*“My spouse will see the vehicle and he’ll take it.”*

The specialist refers her to JOIN, which helps get families and individuals into permanent housing. At the time, the family winter shelter program had been extended to the end of April, affording the caller a few days respite at the shelter. That shelter closed April 30.

She takes down the address.

It’s quiet, and then the call comes to an end.

*“OK,” the voice on the line says. “Thank you.”*



Special thanks to

**Old Town Florist**

404 NW Tenth Ave.  
In the Pearl District

*For your support of Street Roots!*

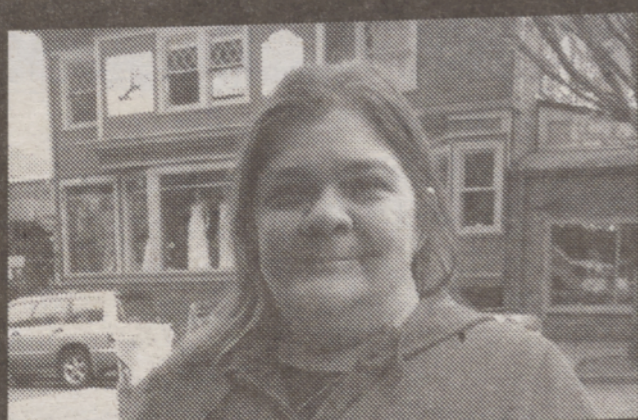
**good. local. food.**

**ALBERTA  
COOPERATIVE  
GROCERY**



1500 NE Alberta St.  
Portland, OR 97211  
503.287.4333

www.albertagrocery.coop  
open to everyone 9 -10 daily



*This woman works.  
So does Street Roots.*

**Ponderings**

By Nathan Roper

As I sit and ponder my plight  
I wonder what ever became of the fight  
Did I quit on it?  
Or did it quit on me?  
As I get older  
And Humanity turns colder  
The urgency of it all fades away  
So many lost causes have come my way  
I turn a half century plus two  
Broken and lost  
The price of independence to high a cost  
With my monkey locked in a cage  
I walk blind and naked out on the stage  
Nothin’ left in my bag of tricks  
Nothin’ left to use for kicks  
Just a beleaguered soul remains  
Lots of old scars on a lingering pain  
I sit and ponder my plight  
And see no end in sight.

  
**LOOKING FOR AN AFFORDABLE PLACE TO RENT?**  
Your online housing search just got easier.  
**HOUSINGCONNECTIONS.ORG**  
Thousands of listings • Free service  
Includes special needs housing  
Call 2-1-1 or 503-802-8562  
