

METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

Community Calendar

Gospel, Soul Food At Maranatha

Soloists and a renowned gospel choir will perform at a special afternoon singing celebration of Black History Month, on Saturday, Feb. 10 from 1:15 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. at Maranatha Church in northeast Portland.

Local Band Performs

The band Paulette 'n' Power with Kita Montgomery performs Feb. 2 and 3 at M & M Restaurant and Lounge, 137 N. Main, Gresham.

Performers Wanted

Performers with skills in gymnastics, dance, movement-theater, improvisation, contact improvisation, aerial trapeze and circus skills are wanted for Do Jump! Movement Theater in the Hawthorn district. If interested, send resumes to Do Jump! 1515 S.E. 37th Ave., Portland, OR 97214.

Vancouver Honors War Hero

Pearson Air Museum has unveiled a new display dedicated to Capt. Harley Hall of Vancouver, the last U.S. aviator shot down in the Vietnam War. Hall graduated from Evergreen High School and spent two years at Clark College before joining the Navy in 1957. The display reflects on his superb pilot skills as the leader of the Blue Angels.

Volunteers Help Women, Kids

A Volunteers of America program for homeless and battered women and children has opportunities for volunteers to assist in all shelter programs, including working with children, women's support services, housing management and office support. Training is provided, call the VOA Family Center at 232-6562.

Energy Kits Available

Low-income households can qualify for a free kit of energy conservation materials worth \$120 as part of the Community Energy Project. Participants are asked to attend a home weatherization workshop. Call 284-6827 for information and registration.

Paint, Glaze Days

The Children's Museum, 3037 S.W. Second Ave., holds special Paint and Glaze Days on Saturday, Feb. 3 from 9:45 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. and Wednesdays, Feb. 14 and 28 from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. The museum is open every day, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Felines Converge On Coliseum

More than 350 pedigreed cats, kittens and non-pedigreed household pets from across the United States will participate in the Oregon Cat Fanciers show, Saturday and Sunday at Memorial Coliseum. Visitors will also find cat items for sale, including toys, carriers, scratching posts, jewelry and crafts.

Evening With Peter, Paul And Mary

The Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall will host an evening with Peter, Paul and Mary on April 28 at 8 p.m. Tickets are available at all Fred Meyer Fastix locations.

SUBMISSIONS: Community Calendar information will be given priority if dated two weeks before the event date.



Harrison Hall is the latest edition to the Portland State University campus. The newly opened building gives the school more classrooms and a multimedia facility for conferences and special events. The hall is also being touted as a blueprint for redevelopment of Portland's south downtown area as a retail, housing and cultural center.

Wells Fargo Buys First Interstate

Wells Fargo & Co., California's second-largest bank, has won its three-month hostile bid to acquire First Interstate Bancorp and create the nation's eighth-largest bank.

The \$11.6 billion bid - the nation's biggest bank takeover - bested a friendly offer by Minneapolis-based First Bank System Inc., which was enticed to join the fray two months ago in an effort to block Wells Fargo's advances.

As a result of the Wells Fargo-First Interstate combination, 350 bank offices will close in California and as many as 7,000 of the banks' 47,000 jobs will be eliminated, analysts said.

The banks, declining to specify job losses, said that figure was too high.

"Jobs are certainly an issue; I won't sugarcoat it," Wells Fargo Chairman Paul Hazen said in a teleconference with reporters.

Hazen said job cuts would be spread equally between the banks.

San Francisco-based Wells Fargo will trail only BankAmerica Corp. in size.

Northeast Resource For Men

Area residents are finding help in the fight against drug and alcohol abuse at the Volunteers of America Men's Residential Center in northeast Portland.

VOA Center staff and volunteers work with a multi-cultural and diverse population at its centrally located facility at 2318 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

As part of the recovery process, the men at the center also give back to the community through work on supervised community service projects.

The center is a state-licensed program and most clients are men referred from the Multnomah County criminal justice system as non-violent offenders.

Officials said because most residents at the center initially deny their substance abuse and criminal past, the treatment program involves respectful confrontation of these issues.

Treatment services are combined with required attendance at 12-step recovery programs to promote successful reintegration into society.

During residential treatment clients are in group and individual counseling.

For more information, residents are encouraged to call the center at 335-8611.



Essie M. Morphis (upper left) directs step study class at the Volunteers of America men's center on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

(Photo by Michael G. Halle)

Has The New Precinct Made Northeast Portland Safer?

BY PROMISE KING

Van Cong Phan stooped and hit the ground in the balcony of his store, a smile runs carefully in his mouth as he demonstrates how he used to dodge bullets not too long ago.

Phan, a Vietnam immigrant, is among business owners and neighborhood residents who are lauding police efforts at curtailing crime in the area.

Phan's franchise BP gas station and auto services on Northeast Killingsworth and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. was once a battle ground for rival gangs resulting into gruesome killings.

But after years of witnessing gory crime scenes in his domain, he is breathing a sign of relief, courtesy of the northeast police precinct.

"Now I feel good and safe. I think it's okay, no drugs around my business, no fighting. It's good now," said Phan in heavy Vietnam accent.

Like many others who are watching the momentum of change, Phan is wishing for

more police patrols.

"Anyhow, this area is better than before," he quipped.

Holly Houston of the Safeway store on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., once dreaded the inner northeast area, but now shares Phan's optimism.

"The police are doing an excellent job in keeping this area free from crime," said Houston. "But petty shop-lifting is still going on. I am sure they think they can get away with it."

Laverne Hampton of First Interstate Bank, another area business, sees a lot of improvement in the neighborhood, even though her bank was robbed last year.

"I feel the precinct has made an enhancement as far as security is concern. There is certainly a great improvement," said Hampton who is also a long-time resident of the area.

If anything, the police are conscious and calculating in their optimism in their own assessment of crime in the area.

"After 12 months, crime has decline slightly. We would like to work towards bringing

it down further," confided lieutenant Rod Beird of the northeast precinct.

The precinct commander, Alan Orr, who is saddled with the responsibility of keeping the area crime free, said the police with its



Alan Orr is the commander of the northeast precinct.

limited resources does not have the magic wand to wipe crime away overnight.

Local critics have accused police of not coming down hard on crack houses and treating dope dealers with kid gloves. The police also receive hard knocks from critics who say the response to distress calls are still slow in the area.

"We know what their interest (police) is. I don't see a genuine commitment, apart from harassing young black men," says a critic, who wishes to remain anonymous.

Crime problems, especially relating to drugs, Orr says, have been a concern in the neighborhood for a long time and it's going to take time to eliminate all the "crack houses and save the neighborhood."

"People should get busy at work to bring down crime, call the landlord or call our officers, we need the community, the police cannot do it all alone," pleaded Orr. "Things are getting better" he assured.

Orr says the precinct is working with neighborhood groups to create a safer business environment.

In 1994, the precinct received almost 27,000 calls, compared to 26,000 calls in 1995.

But Orr, like most commanders, wishes he had more "troops" to respond to 911 calls for police assistance.

It is not known whether City Hall will answer this request.