The Portland **Observer**

Volunteers Repair Local Homes

On April 27 and 28 more than 400 volunteers made homes safer, warmer and more comfortable for some area elderly, low income and disabled citizens.

Christmas in April got its name because, for these residents, it's like a Christmas present to have volunteers patch the roofs, replace worn carpeting and linoleum, put in wheelchair ramps and do other repair work on their homes. These are repairs homeowners cant afford or are unable to do themselves. Last year, Christmas in April contributed more than \$90,000 in materials and in-

This is the 4th year for Christmas in April in Washington county, and the 6th in North Portland. Homes are selected on a basis of need, working closely with the various community agencies that serve the low income elderly and disabled.

Local volunteers come from corporations such as Intel and US Bank as well as church groups and trade unions (painters, plumbers, bricklayers, and carpenters).

Materials and other contributions come from such companies as Parr Lumber, Lumber-mans, Franz Bakery, and Fred Meyer.

This year was probably the most successful year ever, according to Ace Guffey President of the Oregon State District Council and skills trades coordinator for Christmas in April.



"Christmas in April is a great way for the Oregon Building Trade to give back to the community. It gives a great deal of satisfaction." said Guffey. "But we couldn't do it with out the hundreds of volunteers who gave up a weekend to help.'

More than 26 homes in Washington County and North Portland were chosen this year for work ranging from painting, installing deadbolt locks and smoke detectors to glazing windows to reduce energy bills. In addition six non-profit community centers also received work.

Christmas in April is the leading local volunteer organization that rehabilitated the houses of low-income homeowners particularly the elderly and those with disabilities. There are 115 Christmas in April Chapters in 39 states.

The motto of Christmas in April is "Not just fixing up homes in a day, but fixing up people's hearts for a

Home Gardening Project Recieves Grants

Pacific Power is providing a grant to the Home Gardening Project of Portland to help feed elderly, disabled and single parents.

since 1984, volunteers have constructed 1270 vegetable gardens. This year, they will add 150 new spaces -- many in the inner northeast

They also supply seeds, starts and fertilize to previous participants.

our special grants, we look for programs that reach the people who need it most," said Carl Talton, Pacific Power's Portland general business manager. "The Home Gardening Project provides needed vegetables

"When we select recipients for

for those who are in need of inexpensive, healthy balanced meals -- while teaching environment stewardship -wise use of our land."

Over the past 12 years, the project has built gardens for clients for Oregon Access, the Multiple Sclerosis Society, AIDS Hospice and others.

"We measure our success as a company by the success of the communities and people we serve," Talton said. "What better way than to assure that people eat balanced meals and learn to put the land to Productive use. A winning combination."

Tomato Growing Tips From OSU Expert

Growing tomatoes has always been a challenge to many Oregon home

Cool summers often mean slow ripening fruits, and when it first frosts of fall come, many home gardeners find themselves with an overabundance of green tomatoes.

To avoid this, make sure to get tomato starts in the ground between May 2 and mid-June, recommended Bill Mansour, Oregon State University vegetable crops specialist.

Spring is here, marked by the roar

of chain saws as people clear away

winter debris. While the big clean-up

begins the Bonneville Power Ad-

ministration is asking northwest res-

idents to help keep trees and other

potential hazards away from power

housing and recreational activities

are spreading into what were once rural areas where high-voltage pow-

er lines are located," said Kirk

Tousley of BPA. "This situation along

with tumultuous weather conditions,

can create a dangerous mix of people

"As northwest cities grow, more

Some of Mansour's home garden tips on growing tomatoes:

-Plan only high quality semi-hardened transplants without blossoms. Pinch blossoms off transplants to avoid delayed flowering

-Prevent transplant shock by setting plants out in a protected area for a week before planting in final place.

-Thoroughly water plants 12 to 14 hours before transplanting to the gar-

-Be careful about fertilizing young

BPA owns and operated more than

15,000 miles of high voltage power

lines in the northwest. Many of those

lines pass through rural neighbor-

hoods, including private property.

Local public utilities own and oper-

ate lower voltage distribution lines

that run along streets and deliver

power directly to homes and busi-

erty with trees, fences or other struc-

tures BPA advises them to keep in

mind power lines nearby.

When people improve their prop-

Trees need not touch power lines

and electricity.

Irrigate tomatoes to maintain a steady moisture content in the soil.

-Use black plastic or other heat transmitting ground mulches and/or row covers or tunnels if possible.

-Lengthen the tomato harvest season by gathering mature green tomatoes before the first frost. Store them at 50 degrees and ripen at 70 degrees.

-Plant tomato transplants about 1-2 feet apart in rows 3-5 feet apart. For more information call OSU.

to be dangerous. During hot weather,

or when carrying heavy amounts of

electrical power lines can sag dan-

gerously close to trees. Electricity

can "arc" or jump from power lines

to nearby trees. Safely growing and

pruning trees and shrubs can make

the difference between creating beau-

Warnings About Spring Cleaning Around Power Lines

Only trained experts should remove

trees that are close to transmission

Anyone planning to remove de-

bris or plant or build anything that

could interfere with power lines or

facilities should contact BPA first.

Their danger tree specialists can pre-

Housing Grants Awarded

Commissioner Gretchen Miller Kafoury announced the third annual award of grants for non-profit organizations developing affordable housing. Fifteen organizations will receive funding totalling nearly \$580,000 under the program. Groups selected include Cascade AIDS Project, Central City Concern, Franciscan Enterprise of Oregon, Portland Habitat for Humanity, Housing our families, Human Solutions, Inner Westside Community Development Corporation, Low Income Housing for Native Americans of Portland Oregon, Network Behavioral Healthcare, Northwest Alternative Housing, Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, Portsmouth Community Redevelopment, REACH Community Development, Rose Community Develop-

ment, and Sabin Community Development. Recipients under the Operating Support Program were selected through a competitive application process by a Review Panel of seven citizens

Kafoury said, "We are very pleased with our strong partnerships with the non-profit developers. These grants help build their delivery and in turn help stabilize neighborhoods.

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Farmers' Market Opens Portland's

Portland Farmers' Market announced that its fifth season will begin Saturday, May 11. The market will be open every Saturday from 8 a.m. to p.m. through Octo-

The market is found along the Willamette River at 1200 NW Front Ave., just north of the Broadway

At the Market, customers can buy fresh produce directly from the farmer who grew it. In May, along with early season vegetables, vendors will be selling a wide selection of starts and bedding plants. There will also be plenty of cut flowers and bouquets

Specialty products sold at the market include wild mushrooms, goat

milk cheese, jams and jellies, honey breads, pies and other baked goods.

Five garden talks are scheduled at 10 a.m. for the beginning of the season. The Chefs in the Market program will begin June 22 with 16 local chefs giving cooking demonstrations using fresh market pro-

For more information 705-2460.

Housing **Fair**

The Portland Housing Center in partnership with the Fannie Mae Foundation will host the annunal Home Buying Fair May 18 at St. Andrew's Catholic Church, 4940 NE 8th Ave. from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. It presents an opportunity for low-income renters interested in buying a home to talk to lenders, non-profit housing developers, and realters.

There will be mini workshops on credit, the home loan process, working with realters and how to get started. A childrens activity corner will help with childcare, and there will be door prizes.

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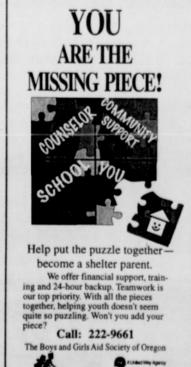
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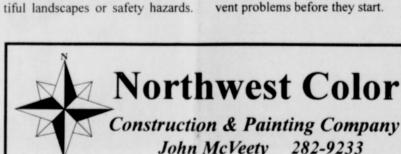
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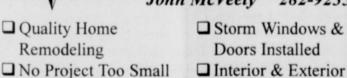
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