

Family Living

'Cloud Maker' Remembered

When 10-year-old Rory Weitzel, diagnosed with cystic fibrosis, thought about what he would like to do in Heaven, he told friends he wanted to be the person who made the clouds.

In Saturday's Walk to Cure Cystic Fibrosis, a statewide fundraiser, walkers will walk in memory of Rory, who died Aug. 11 of last year.

Walkers in Portland, Eugene, Pendleton, Roseburg, Brandon and Wallowa will honor Rory's spirit and determination.

"He was the bravest person I've ever known," said his best friend, 11-year-old Conway McDonald-O'Lear, who has organized a team of walkers called Rory's Rowdies.

In last year's walk, the Rowdies raised more than \$4,000. The team is composed of Rory's family, his former hospital nurses and his friends and former classmates at Holy Redeemer Area School in north Portland.

The fact that this year's walk is dedicated to Rory is largely the work of Conway who wants to be sure no one forgets his friend and who wants more people to become involved in finding a cure for cystic fibrosis.

"It's kind of hard for me and so I wanted for other people with the disease to not go through what he did," said Conway. "Even



though he had that disease, he just let his life go on as if he was a normal person."

The walk, organized by the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, hopes to raise \$150,000 for research on a disease that kills 365 Americans each year.

Cystic fibrosis is a genetic disease which causes the exocrine glands to produce abnormally thick layers of mucus which then block the bronchi. The disease is fatal with a medium life expectancy of 30.5 years. One of every 3,300 births are diagnosed with cystic fibrosis.



Friends of the late Rory Weitzel prepare bulletin board in his honor. The students at Holy Redeemer Area School in north Portland are Patrick Fromherz (from left), Conway McDonald-O'Lear, Kealani Haines, Angela Richard, Jason Norris and Brianne Holmbeck.

(Photo by Neil Hellpner)

Child center anything but ordinary

As the child care debate rages, a team of experts has built its beliefs into a building: the Husky Child Development Center.

The prototype child care center shows that the facility itself can provide the sense of safety and positive stimuli children need in order to feel secure and grow optimally.

The new Center was built for Husky Injection Molding Systems Inc. in Bolton, Ontario.

Headed by developmental psychologist Anita Rui Olds, Ph.D., world renowned for her pioneering work in designing environments for children, the team includes architect Barbara Winslow and interior design/color specialist Carla Mathis.

The group capitalized on their diverse backgrounds to create a day care setting vastly different from today's more institutional facilities.

Most day care centers rely entirely on the staff to nurture a child's development.

The Husky Center shows that the environment can be another teacher, encouraging individuality, creativity and the healthy growth of children.

The team used human-scaled architectural elements, a home-like layout, furnishings, color and lighting, and ethnic and hand-crafted details to design the unique setting.

"Research shows that the sensory environment children confront in their early years can promote or inhibit a child's physical, emotional, social and intellectual development," said Dr. Olds, director of The Child Care Design Institute at the Harvard Graduate School of Design and Tufts University. "As day care, not home, is today's primary child-rearing habitat, our challenge is to create day care facilities that provide a nurturing context for children's healthy development."

The Center is based on Olds' unique

Afro-academics on parade

Area residents are supporting students pursuing academics at an awards banquet Saturday for the Afro-Academic, Cultural, Technological, Scientific Olympics.

Students of Portland invite you to this celebration which will include live entertainment and food.

"Support your local ACT-SO competitors as they go for the gold!" banquet officials said.

Admission is \$5 for students under 18, and \$10 for adults.

The Portland public schools event is sponsored by the NAACP.

The celebration begins at 7 p.m. at the Kaiser Town Hall, 2704 N. Interstate.

For more information call Donna Johnson at 287-5399 or Jeff Milner at 224-5858.

Oregon 8th graders lead on tests

Oregon eighth graders outscored their national counterparts on a 1996 science test conducted by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Oregon students scored 155 on the test, 7 points above the national average. According to NAEP, only 4 states - Maine, North Dakota, Montana and Wisconsin - scored significantly higher than Oregon.

"We're pleased with our results," said State Schools Supt. Norma Paulus. "Our students are excelling in science through hands-on learning. In this way, teachers help students connect knowing with doing."

"Teachers have been very creative in connecting their lessons to Oregon's mag-

nificent natural resources," Paulus added. "Our own backyard provides the best science classroom. There are wonderful educational opportunities across this state from the John Day Fossil Beds to the Hatfield Marine Science Center to OMSI."

"We have made great efforts in education to close the gender gap," she said. "But this is another indicator that there is more to be done."

We need to ask teachers to double their efforts to encourage girls of all ages to pursue science.

"We need more women role models in science," Paulus added. Only 32 percent of Oregon's science teachers and 16 percent of

all practicing engineers and scientists are women."

About 2,100 Oregon eighth graders participated in the national test. Students were selected based on a random sample of a cross section of students.

This is "benchmark" data for science achievement in Oregon. The state will know more next year when it tests the science skills of all students in grades 5, 8 and 10.

Among other things, the report will list characteristics about students and teachers and describe how various factors - some outside the classroom - affect achievement.

Paulus is one of 26 members of the National Assessment Governing Board.

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