

# METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

## Community Calendar

### Kwanzaa Art

A Kwanzaa display of various art works will be presented at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center. Gallery hours will be from Monday through Friday until Dec. 31. IFCC is located at 5340 N. Interstate Ave. For more information, call 823-2000.

### Late night comedy

Stark Raving Theatre will present the triumphant return of "The Gun Happy Teenage Reform School Girl A Go-Go." A fiercely funny parody of propaganda comic books of the 40's and 50's. Opens Fridays and Saturdays through Jan. 3rd. Performances are at 10:30 p.m. All performances are at 3430 SE Belmont, Portland. Call 239-8087.

### Carousel Christmas

Antique carousel animals enliven the holiday season at Pittock Mansion. The very best carousel animals of top national collectors will be brought to life. See dozens of animals prancing throughout the elegant rooms of the Mansion. Opens daily, 12-4 p.m. through Dec. 31. The public is encouraged to call 823-3624 for information and directions.

### Learn First Aid

The Red Cross is offering a nine-hour course on First Aid and Safety. They will teach you how to respond to emergency situations, perform CPR, reduce the risk of heart attack, control bleeding, and provide care in other emergencies. Course fees may vary. For information or to register, call 280-1440.

### Stars on Ice

Discover Stars on Ice presented by Smucker's on Jan. 2. Professional skater, Scott Hamilton will join other talented skaters like Kristi Yamaguchi, Katarina Witt, Ekatarina Gordeeva and others. Tickets are available at all Ticketmaster outlets and the Rose Garden box office. Call 224-4400.

### Afternoon rides

Ride a bike with others and go climbing. Meet at Southwest Corner of Pioneer Courthouse Square between noon and 12:10 p.m. every Monday and Thursday. Free to join along. Contact Ray Thomas at 228-5222 or meet at start.

### Self-Defense for every Woman

Learn practical physical and verbal self-defense skills taught by certified women's self-defense instructors. This is for women and teen girls. Located at One With Heart in Southeast Portland, Saturday workshops are held 11am-4pm and full six-week courses meet Mondays and Wednesdays from 7:30-9pm. The next 6 week course begins Jan. 5.

### Volunteer Opportunity

Parents Anonymous of Oregon is looking for a few good volunteers to make a difference in the lives of Oregon's families. Be a Children's Group Specialist, Facilitator or Parent helpline advocate. Education, on-going training and excellent volunteer support are an integral part of the program. Contact Lynette at 238-8819.

### Sib shops

A recreational program designed to celebrate the contributions made by brothers and sisters of kids with special needs. The next meeting will take place on Saturday, Jan. 17 at Tabor Heights United Methodist Church. The cost of each session is \$5, which includes refreshments and materials. Scholarships are also available for Sib shops. For more information, call The Arc of Multnomah County at 223-7279.

### Walk for the Peace

Sisters of the Road Cafe will sponsor a Peace walk in commemoration of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. The Peace walk will take place on Monday, Jan. 19 starting at 5 p.m. The march will begin at the cafe, 133 NW Sixth Avenue in Portland.

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

## Grandparents Given a Chance

By JOY RAMOS

Senator Ron Wyden arrived on Friday, Dec. 19, at the Multicultural Senior Center. He met with several grandparents who offered their heartfelt appreciation for changing child custody standards. This was done in favor of relatives wanting to adopt the children in their family whose parents are not able to care for them.

Senator Wyden recognized the concerns of the elderly wanting to adopt their grandchildren instead of these kids being left in

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foster care.

There are many children neglected or abused by their biological parents. Instead of placing kids with foster parents, the government now allows extended family first priority to adopt these children.

The new national law, called PASS was enacted on November 19 of this year in Congress. States now have a new form of foster care, called kinship care. Several provisions to this law offer adult relatives preferred placement options, financial assistance and support services. The extended families must meet child custody standards to be eligible for the program.

Kinship care legislation is a marked improvement to the country's child protection system. "As our country is ravaged by teen pregnancy, drug abuse and urban decay, grandparents and



Ella Mae Gay is shown with her grandson, Q.T. at the Multicultural Senior Center to meet with Senator Ron Wyden on the Kinship Care program.

(Photo Joy Ramos)

and concern that must be tapped if we are to help turn these young lives around. Yet when these relatives try to help, they find they are entering a system of laws and social services that is stacked against them," says Wyden.

Ella Mae Gay, 74, was one of the grandparents who attended the meeting with the

Senator on Friday. She was given much encouragement by Wyden for choosing legal guardianship of her grandchildren. It took her two long years to be able to adopt them. Ella was not given that privilege easily. She was discriminated against when going for adoption due to old age and financial instability.

Ella is devoted to these children even though it entails many hardships. Both grandchildren have behavioral problems from attention deficit hyperactive disorder.

"It is only common sense to utilize love, talent and family first. Grandparents are no longer an after-thought," says Senator Wyden.



Martin Luther King Jr. school students practice for their annual school Christmas play.

(Photo by M. Washington)

## Urban League Elects Two To Board

### Portland Chamber welcomes Knauls and Perrin

The Urban League of Portland board of directors has elected two new members: Paul Knauls and Cheryl Perrin. The announcement was made by board chair Duane Bosworth.

Paul Knauls is owner of Geneva's Shear Perfection, a popular hair salon and barber shop in Northeast Portland. He operated night clubs in Northeast Portland for 19 years and has been active in efforts to revitalize Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., including the Walnut Park Project and the MLK Jr. Blvd. Action Committee.

Cheryl Perrin recently retired as senior vice president of public affairs for Fred Meyer, one of the largest retail chains in the Pacific Northwest. She

worked for the company for 22 years and most recently was responsible for the company's government relations and lobbying, news media relations, community relations, and environmental programs. She will continue to serve the company as a consultant. Ms. Perrin is a former member of the Urban League's board.

The Urban League of Portland is a local affiliate of the National Urban League. The non-profit agency's mission is to "strengthen African Americans and all who strive toward economic self-reliance and social equality." The Urban League provides services for families, students, job seekers, and seniors and operates Multnomah County's Northeast Family Center.

## Community Group Steps Out To Address Landlord/Tenant Concerns

By LEE PEARLMAN

Steven Weiss and Anita Rogers are trying to upgrade the living conditions of "the other half" in Portland.

As president and staff, respectively, of the Community Alliance of Tenants (CAT), they are representatives of and for the approximately 50 percent of Portlanders who rent their homes. This percentage is likely to rise in the future, as city planners encourage higher-density housing development, and rising costs put home ownership increasingly out of reach of many residents.

CAT grew out of discussions generated by the Oregon Housing Now Coalition, a non-profit advocacy group. Officially two years old, it has been active and operating for slightly less than a year. Within that time it has attracted 250 members paying \$10 to \$40 a year in membership dues, or doing volunteer work as an alternative to dues. They operate a renter's rights hotline, providing advice on landlord-tenant issues from 3 to 7 p.m. Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 288-0130. They have conducted periodic "speak outs" to discuss tenant-related issues

in various parts of the city.

They have also organized tenants in apartment complexes and buildings and helped them negotiate local issues. In one case, the at Park Terrace Apartments in northeast Portland, they persuaded the owner to extend Section Eight contracts for 39 families that he was planning to terminate for one year.

*"How can we afford to move, we can hardly afford to stay. We have to fight to keep our homes, there's no other way."*

— "We're Gonna Stay," - Mike Rawson

They are still negotiating on behalf of 38 more households.

CAT representatives have spoken out on citywide issues as well. Last July they persuaded City Council to increase fines for housing code violations in rental properties, and to automatically double the fines if repairs aren't made in six months. Last month Weiss urged Council to allow owners to build "granny flat" accessory rental units as part of homes or garages without an on-site owner, a change opposed by most city neigh-

borhood groups.

For the long term, Weiss says, the group has a five-point program:

\*Pass a just-cause eviction law, making owners state a reason for evicting a tenant. (In other states, plans to demolish, convert or use the dwelling for the landlord or his family are valid reasons to evict, as is tenant miscon-

duct.)  
\*Force owners to replace "affordable" housing units lost to demolition, conversion of housing to other uses, or "extreme" rent increases. (There is yet no exact definition of "affordable" or "extreme.")  
\*End discrimination against Section 8 tenants.  
\*Force owners to make needed repairs. CAT considers the city's new code violation fine schedule a big step in this direction.

\*Give priorities in city development ef-

forts to housing for the poorest tenants.

Rent control, an issue in many other states, is not on the CAT list, in part because a state law enacted in the early 1980s outlaws local ordinances. It would have to be passed statewide, an almost impossible undertaking, because eviction is high on the list, and a frequent problem raised in hot line calls. Right now tenants in Oregon can be evicted on 30 days written notice for any reason. A tenants' only defense is to claim that they were evicted in retaliation for protecting their rights under state law. Even then, they must prove their case in court, which is beyond the means of many tenants.

CAT is concerned about city priorities because of a proposed budget for use of \$43 million in federal and local matching funds slated for housing development. The city proposes to build 567 new housing units for people earning 30 to 60 percent of median income, but only 28 units for people earning 30 percent of median or less even though there is a greater housing shortage in the lower income range.