

A Place Where You Belong

Neighborhood Foster Care, what does your neighborhood mean to you?



See Family, page A5

"Christmas With Babyface"

10-time grammy winner Kenneth "Babyface" Edmonds records his first Christmas album



See Entertainment, page B4

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THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Dow Soars to 9,374

Stocks surged to record levels again this year. The Dow Jones Industrials rose to 9,374.27, the fifth biggest point gain of the year. Investors credited the recent October 15th interest rate cut for causing the market to soar. The Dow Jones set its previous record on July 17th, closing at 9,337.97.

Impeachment Inquiry Begins

Impeachment proceedings began, opened by Independent Counsel Kenneth Starr. This would make it the third impeachment inquiry in the nation's history. Democrats were strongly opposed to the prosecutor's motives and tactics where he charged that the president misused his authority and power.

European Monetary Union

Germany, France and Italy are the three key players in the monetary union to create a unified European currency on January 1st, 1999. They plan on creating a new central bank and offer lower interest rates to offset Europe's critical unemployment problem.

Microsoft Lawsuit

A federal judge ordered Bill Gates to remove all modified versions of the programming language Java from its Windows 98 program or stop selling it. Sun Microsystems Inc., original designers of Java are seeking the changes and \$35 million in damages. The recent court ruling has finally settled the ongoing antitrust battle between both companies.

Juvenile Crime Drops

According to Attorney General Janet Reno, arrests of young people for murder and violent crimes are down for the third year in a row. Since 1997, juvenile murder arrests have dropped by 16% and juvenile violent crime fell by 4%. The government plans on spending \$95 million for crime prevention activities for children at risk.

Power Outage

The first winter storm hit the Oregon coast and inland that knocked out power to 100,000 Portland General Electric customers. Power lines were down, trees fell and traffic signal failures occurred throughout the Portland Metropolitan area. The great windstorm of 1995 was more severe in causing widespread power failure to 300,000 homes.

Physician-Assisted Suicide

Oregon Health Plan officials will decide on December 1st on whether to cover physician-assisted suicide for terminally ill low-income Oregonians who qualify. Obtaining such insurance coverage is almost certain. The Oregon Health Services Commission proposed a ruling to have the Oregon Health Plan cover medication and required medical care expenses.

Drug Free Zone May Expand

The Portland Police Bureau and Multnomah County District Attorney's Office want to banish suspected drug dealers from inner north and northeast Portland.

The two agencies want to institute a North-Northeast Drug Free zone. The proposed zone would be bounded by Northeast 33rd and North Concord avenues on the east and west, and North and Northeast Dekum Street, on the north. The southern boundary would be Northeast Prescott Street between 33rd and 15th Avenues, North and Northeast Russell Street between 15th and North Interstate Avenue. The territory would encompass two existing drug free zones near Northeast Beech and Alberta streets.

There were more than 1200 drug-related arrests in this area last year, more than for any comparable-sized area of the city except downtown.

By contrast, there were 121 arrests in central North Portland.

Those arrested for possessing or selling illegal drugs could be ordered "excluded" from the area for 90 days, or until trial, and for a year if convicted. If those excluded are later

found in the zone, they can be arrested for criminal trespass. Those living, working or having legitimate business in the zone can get variances to travel to those destinations - but not to go anywhere else, visit friends, shop or even stop to chat.

"We have a lot of drug dealing here, we have shootings, we have at-risk youth who are getting caught up in these things, and we're tired of it."

lieutenant Mike Bell told the Piedmont Association. "This allows us to make one good arrest, then banish these people from your community for a year. They're subject to arrest every time an officer sees them here."

In a trial last year, the ordinance was ruled

to be "double jeopardy." The case is on appeal. In the meantime, the D.A.'s office uses exclusions only as part of negotiated conditions of pre-trial release or plea bargaining.

The new zone, expected to go to City Council in January, has received unanimous votes of approval from the Boise, Piedmont

and Woodlawn neighborhood associations, with the last two calling for the northern boundary to be extended to Northeast Lombard Street. "We have some problem pockets north of Dekum," Woodlawn chair Tony Radmilovich told the Observer, "and it didn't seem fair or equitable to do this in just part of the neighborhood."

In the Eliot and Irvington neighborhoods, however, some people expressed concerns that the law interferes with civil liberties, and can be abused by the police. The Eliot board supported the zone by a thin seven to five vote (although its general membership gave it a much stronger endorsement), and Irvington took no position.

"I don't give up my civil liberties so easily," Irvington board member Michael O'Malley told deputy D.A. Jim Hayden last month.

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A Northeast Portland Building Under Investigation For Illegally Storing Hazardous Chemicals

When the owner of a warehouse building in the 3300 block of Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. contacted police on October 11th for a property theft in his estate, authorities didn't expect what was to follow. While inquiring the complaint, the Portland police discovered what seemed to be a hazardous chemical spill and illegal chemical storage. Police immediately contacted the Fire Department to investigate the situation further. The department noticed a substantial amount of toxic chemicals in and around the building. Soon the situation involved the Environmental Protection Agency and On Scene Coordinators from Denver and Seattle to search for evidence of toxic chemicals.

According to Duc Nguyen, an On Scene Coordinator from Denver, there were both labeled and unlabeled hazardous chemical containers everywhere. "The building is full of what appears to be a 20-year collection of garbage and debris," said Nguyen, "once we went in we couldn't find our way back." However, the Fire Department overlooked the danger of the amassing Erwin Franklin Grant, the owner of the 70-year old building, and residents in the compound were evacuated immediately following the discovery of possible hazardous chemicals. According to housing authorities, the building is not legally qualified to accommodate residents. The building is unsafe for residents not only because it is contaminated with chemical substances but also is equipped with unsafe wiring and unapproved wood stoves.

According to officials, Grant used the chemicals to extract gold from compounds of metals for which he did not have a permit.

Deanna Cox, who was residing in a school bus inside the building, told reporters that Grant would not allow tenants to enter some parts of the building at any time. He told us

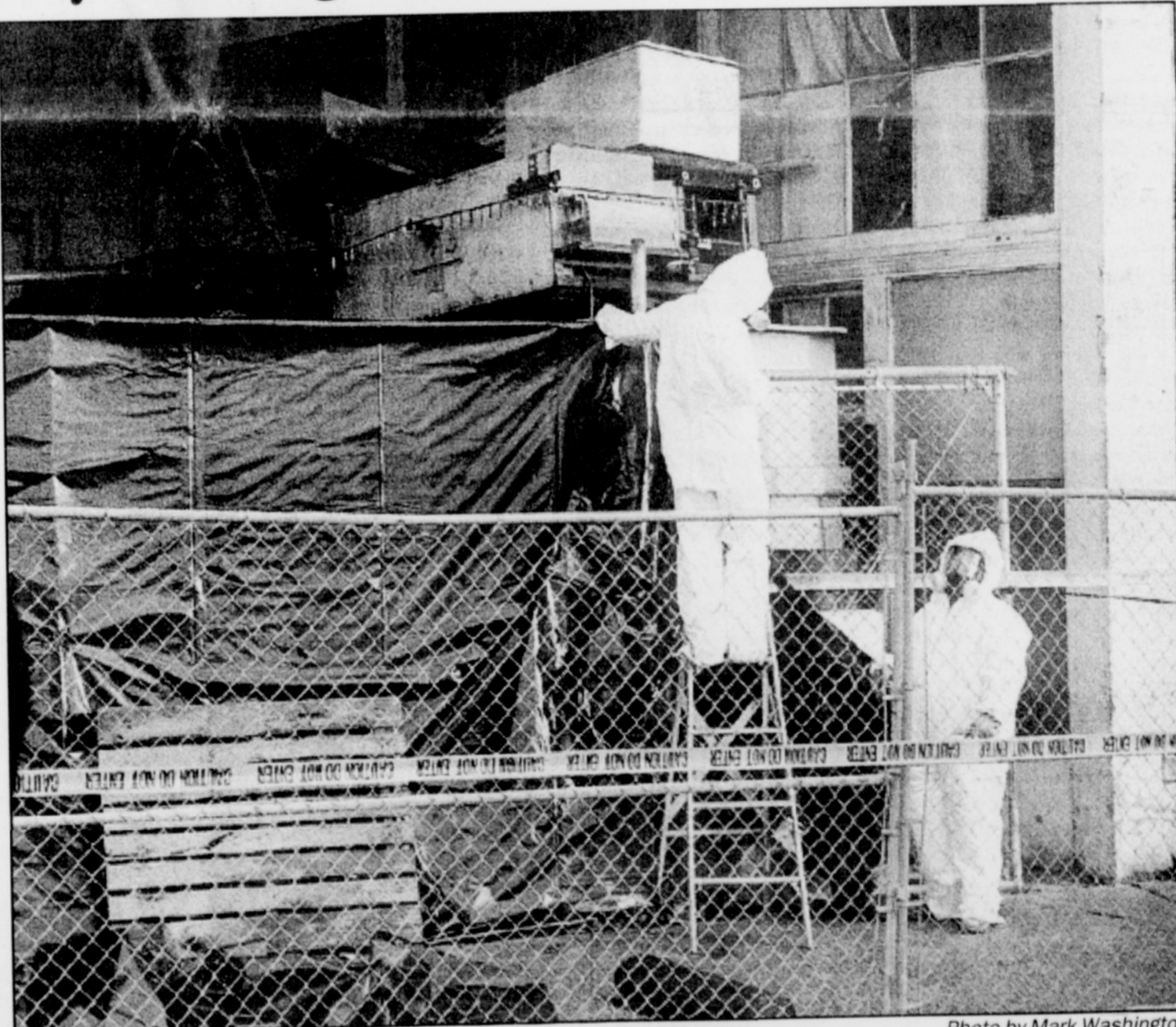


Photo by Mark Washington

not to go into some of the rooms, said Cox, and we didn't bother to see what was in there.

Cox also mentioned that Grant was kind enough to take her, her two children and a few

others into his building with a rate they all
CONTINUED TO PAGE A6

"The Dream"

This Maquette is a rare collector's item. It is a replica of the 8' monument that stands outside of the Oregon Convention Center. "The Dream" is a limited edition of 200. After the edition is sold out the mold will be cut up by the artist and a piece will be sent to every owner. The price is \$3,500.00. Please contact Michael Florin Dente' at 503 283-1638. Please visit the web site: artbydente.com

