

METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

Community Calendar

The Toads Are Back

The Toad's are back in style for their seventh anniversary cabaret run. With their unique brand of spontaneous theatre that may make you laugh, may make you cry, but never let you down. A good time is guaranteed to all at the show that has never been before nor will ever be again. The first performance will start April 11 and end May 9. Call 736-1192.

Alternatives to Growth Oregon

Alternatives to Growth Oregon (AGO) will hold a Forum, Oregon's Choice: Endless Growth or Quality of Life, Saturday, April 15, 8:30 am. - 5:30 pm. at Portland State University. Keynote speaker will be Bill McKibben, author of *Maybe One: A Personal and Environmental Argument for Single Child Families; The End of Nature; The Age of Missing Information; and Hope, Human and Wild: True Stories of Living Lightly on the Earth.* Registration fee (includes lunch) \$15-35. For more information, call 503/222-0282 or visit their website at www.AGOregon.org.

The Men They Will Become

Eli H. Newberger, MD, one of the leading experts on child and family development and author of the critically acclaimed, "The Men They Will Become: The Nature and Nurture of Male Character" will be in Portland for a one day seminar on April 24, 2000. The conference, which shares the title of Dr. Newberger's book, will be held at the Kennedy School in Portland, Oregon from 9 am. to 4 pm. Dr. Newberger's book explores the developmental process of building character in boys. Call 503/281-6151, ext. 12.

Run, Walk and Stand for the Earth

The city will be host to a unique celebration in observance of the 30th Anniversary of Earth Day on Saturday, April 22, 2000 at 7:30 am. The three main organizing groups, the Earth and Spirit Council, the City Repair Project and The Green House Network, have planned a series of participatory events, including a run to stop global warming, a human circle around the city of Portland, a Mardi-Gras style procession honoring the earth's myriad life forms, tree planting, and a multi-cultural ceremony and celebration at Pioneer Courthouse Square.

Blue Sky Concerts

The DCO present 25 NW choreographers in 3 fabulous concerts featuring modern, ballet, jazz and multi-cultural dance including flamenco, & middle-eastern dance. The program at the IFCC benefits the Dance Coalition of Oregon and the International Firehouse Cultural Center, 5340 N. Interstate. Tickets are \$10, kids \$5. For more information, call 293-6195.

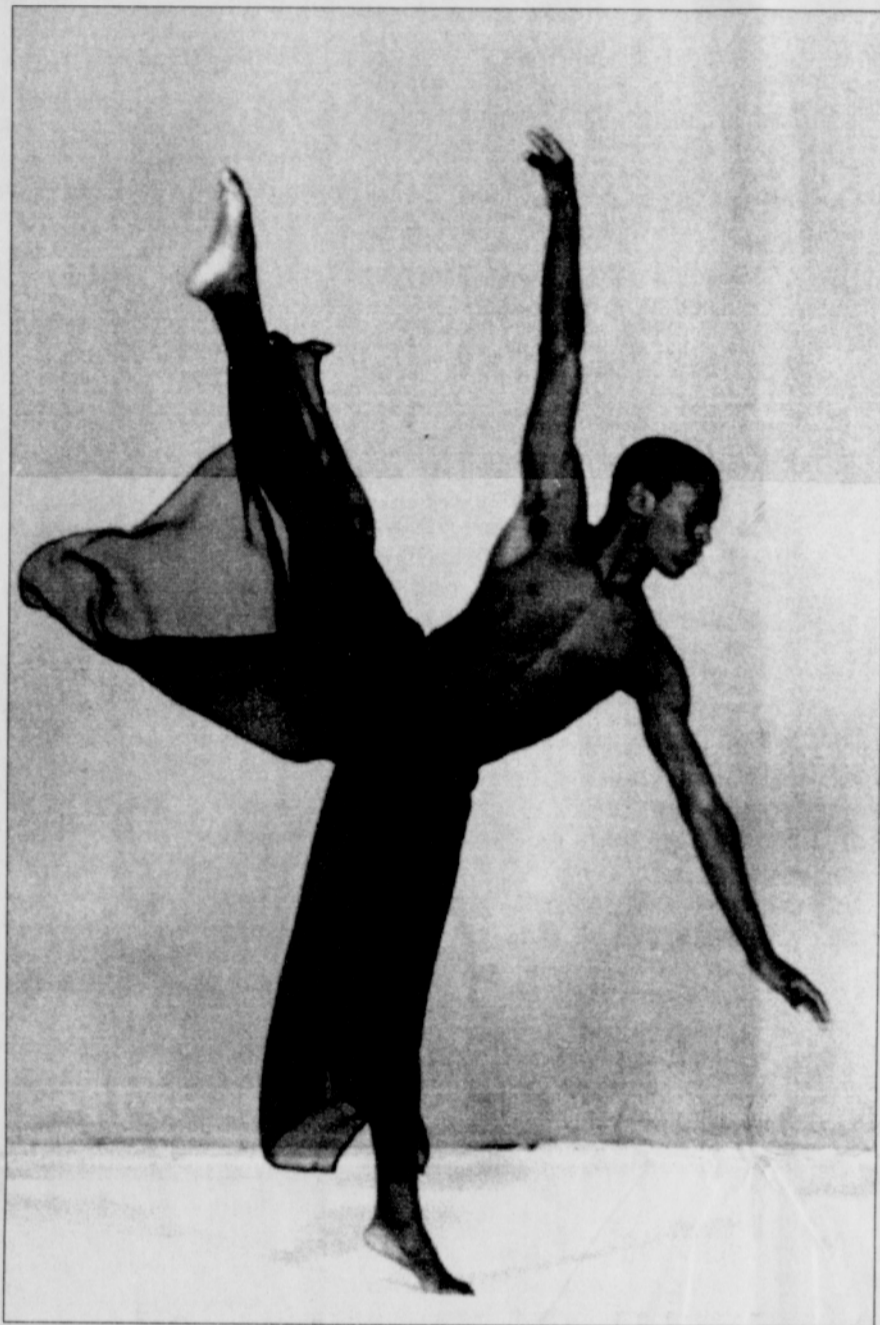
Rabbit Romp

Rabbit Romp is a celebration of spring for children 3 to 10. Egg hunts occur every 20 minutes in every age group. Games, crafts, petting zoo, puppets, whimsical displays and more. Co-sponsored by WB32, Sweet Tomatoes and Z100. The event will be held on April 22, 2000 at the Oregon Zoo (4001 SW Canyon Road) from 9 am. - 3 pm.

Procession of the Species

Now through April 20, *Community Art Workshops* for the Procession of the Species will be held at 49 SE Clay (near OMSI), Itisness Studio at 3016 NE Killingsworth and other locations around the Portland-Metro area. Learn about ecological issues and other interesting species facts, while you get help creating your favorite species for the Procession. For the schedule and registration information, call 503/244-2602 or visit www.earthandspirit.org/earthday2000 and click on Art Workshops.

Jefferson Dancers shine in California



CONTRIBUTOR STORY FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Jefferson Dancers starred in their appearance at the by-invitation-only 5th National High School Dance Festival held at California State University, Long Beach last month. The 14-member troupe received an instant standing ovation when they closed the sold-out Gala Concert with RHYTHM IS THE KEY, showcasing the choreography of Artistic Director, Steve Gonzales. RHYTHM IS THE KEY was chosen from 168 pieces submitted by 67 schools across the nation,

Canada and Australia.

Of his experience dancer BoJohn Disciple said, "It opened my mind to a lot of dance styles and techniques - and gave me inspiration to see new things I hadn't seen before."

The Gala Concert capped two-and-a-half-days of performances by the 1,000 student participants, master classes taught by some of the nation's finest dance instructors, and auditions for college scholarships. Jefferson Dancers who won scholarships for their dancing excellence are BoJohn Disciple (\$4,000 for one year of study, California State



University, Long Beach; full scholarships to Alabama State University and American Dance Festival) and Jonte Moaning (Scholarships to Nashville Ballet; Bates College, ME; Temple University and Pointe Park, PA) Accepted to Jacob's Pillow Summer Dance Festival in Lee, MA, were Kasia Whilhelmi and Johnny Sorensen-Jolink. Other Jefferson students have been invited for additional auditions. "I love the nervous, excited energy and joy they bring to the world," said Gonzales, former Jefferson Dancer in his first year as Artistic Director.

Gonzales is taking the dance program to new heights of cutting-edge choreography and excellence.

In the fifteen years since his graduation from Jefferson, Gonzales has performed and taught master classes around the world. Area resident can see the nationally acclaimed Jefferson Dancers at their annual performances on May 4, 5 and 6 at the Newmark Theatre, 1111 SW Broadway in downtown Portland. Tickets ranging in price from \$10.50 to \$16.50 and are now available at all FASTIX ticket centers.

Portland youth featured in national teen suicide prevention campaign

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ngozi Olemgbe noticed that her childhood friend started to isolate herself. "She said sometimes, 'I just wish I'd get hit by a car' or 'I just wish I was never born,'" said Olemgbe, a 17-year-old student at Benson High School in Portland.

"I didn't know how to react to it. I was like, 'No, don't say that. There are people that care about you.'"

Olemgbe's mom advised her to talk to her friend and encourage her to get help.

"It was kind of scary for me," said Olemgbe, whose friend eventually saw a therapist and now takes antidepressants. "I didn't want her to be angry with me. But you have to think, gosh, what if she went through with it? How would I feel then?"

Olemgbe is one of 12 metro-area youths featured in a national teen suicide prevention campaign launched Monday in Portland by the nonprofit American Foundation for Suicide Prevention.

The campaign, "Suicide Shouldn't Be a Secret," includes three documentary-style television spots, two radio broadcasts, and print and transit ads that urge teens to intervene on behalf of a friend who is depressed or suicidal.

Produced by a Portland ad agency and paid for by Ronald McDonald House Charities, the ads were filmed in late January in Portland. All can be seen locally by the month's end. "We need to break this code of silence around

suicide," said Nancy Johnson, who founded the Northwest affiliate of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention after her son killed himself in 1997. "If you hear somebody talking about killing themselves, don't laugh it off. Seventy-five percent of kids who kill themselves had told someone." Most often, it's another young person.

Nationwide, more teens die from suicide than any natural cause, and in the Northwest, it's the second-leading cause of death among young people. Oregon and Washington rank in the top 20 states with the highest teen suicide rates.

For the past decade, an average of 75 Oregon youths between the ages of 10 and 24 have killed themselves each year. Each day, about two youths between the ages of 10 and 17 are treated in an Oregon emergency room for a suicide attempt.

Nationally, about 90 percent of adolescent suicide victims had at least one diagnosable mental disorder when they died, according to data from the suicide prevention foundation. And the mental health problems that precede suicide often are treatable, especially if detected early, said U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher, who was in Portland on Monday to kick off the campaign.

"There's still this stigma and shame and blame surrounding mental illness," Satcher said. "I will tell you in no uncertain terms that just as things go wrong with the heart, liver and lungs, things go wrong with the brain. They

(Please see 'Portland' page B4)

Urban League selects Jim Francesconi for board

CONTRIBUTOR STORY FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Urban League of Portland has selected Jim Francesconi to serve on their board of directors. He was previously on the board from 1991 to 1995 and has strong ties in the African-American community the Urban League serves.

Francesconi will use his time on the board of directors as another opportunity to work to strengthen education and employment opportunities for low income and minority youth. "We have to take the guns out of our kid's hands and replace them with paychecks" he said. "All kids deserve equal access to a good education and the chance to work hard towards a bright future."

"During this economic boom, the Urban League wants to make sure that no one is left behind and that the citizens of NE, especially African-Americans, can share in the wealth creation that is occurring in the city and region," said Francesconi. "I am proud and pleased to participate."

