



Family Living

Foster homes one solution for teen violence

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Terri Barnett, Associate Director at The Boys & Girls Aid Society of Oregon, announced an immediate need for more short-term foster homes in the Portland metropolitan area to address issues causing teen violence. "Recent discussion in the U.S. Congress and a survey done by the Attorney General throughout the United States, cite the following causes as contributing to teen violence: a lack of nurturing at home, shortage of adults to confide in, lack of early intervention, and tormenting by peers," Barnett stated. The Boys & Girls Aid Society of Oregon is a leader of Oregon in

addressing these root causes of teen violence in its short-term foster care program. The Society is receiving consistently more requests from Oregon counties and the state for short-term foster care, especially for teens aged 10 to 17, and for teen mothers. Teens fostered through the agency may be experiencing a family crisis, having difficulty in school, dealing with an unplanned pregnancy, beginning to run away or get into trouble. The goal for most teens is to be able to return home safely or to move to a longer teen placement. Foster parents can help to make a positive change in the life of a teen in of their community, whether they are

single or married own their home or rent an apartment. Foster homes are certified by the agency, receive 24-hour support, training and reimbursement for care. Founded in 1885, The Boys & Girls Aid Society of Oregon is one of the largest and oldest private, non-profit agencies dedicated to helping Oregon's children and youth. Agency services include adoption, foster care, counseling, family mediation and pregnancy prevention. Barnett urges adults interested in finding out more about becoming foster parents with The Boys & Girls Aid Society to contact 503.222.9662, extension 137.

One Million donated grocery bags and one million pounds of food in one day

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Oregon was recently rated worst in the nation for the prevalence of hunger. Vancouver carriers, food banks and state residents did something about it on May 13th. With the help of one million plastic bags printed by retailer Grocery Outlet, Oregon Food Bank and National Association of Letter Carriers are asked residents to donate one million pounds of food in a state-wide effort the day before

Mother's Day. "If each household donates at least one can of food, we can collect enough for 750,000 meals," says Oregon Food Bank's Event Coordinator Dwight Adkins. "Almost half of those meals will go to children." Vancouver Letter Carriers will also participate in the nationwide drive, with bags donated by Parr Lumber. All food will stay in the communities where it is collected. Last year, residents of Portland and surrounding areas donated 500,000 pounds of food for the one-day drive,

tripling the previous year's totals. This year, communities around the state will receive donated bags to help boost their collections. Residents are asked to fill the bags with donations of canned and boxed foods. Most wanted foods include canned meats and meals like chicken, tuna, soups, stews and chili; boxed rice and pasta meals; canned fruits and vegetables; peanut butter, pasta, rice and beans of all kinds. The food bank cannot accept glass jars or home processed foods.

Family Briefs

Washington Park Shuttle reopens May 27th

Tri-Met takes you to all the park's features for one low price. The popular Washington Park Shuttle will begin running again Memorial Day weekend, offering riders across to all the park's attractions. The shuttle tallied more than 11,000 rides a month during its first summer last year. Because of this success, service will be extended until the end of September. Beginning May 27 through September 30, the shuttle will run every 15 minutes, every day, between 10 AM and 7 PM. It's simple to ride. Just show the driver your Tri-Met bus transfer or validated MAX tickets from that day and ride without any extra charge. Without it, just pay regular adult fare of \$1.15 per person (85 cents if under 18). See popular attractions. Ride the shuttle to get to these popular spots: Oregon Zoo, International Rose Test Garden, Japanese Garden, Hoyt Arboretum, Hiking trails, World Forestry Center, Vietnam Veterans Living Memorial, Rose Garden Children's Play Park. "Tri-Met makes it easy to get around the Washington Park attractions and

avoid the traffic headaches and parking hassles," said Fred Hansen, Tri-Met General Manager.

N/NE Portland Trail Blazers Community Fair

"A Day at the Fair" Saturday, June 3, 2000 10 am - 2 pm
Matt Dishman Community Center (77 NE Knott, Portland, Oregon)
Sponsored by: Albina Ministerial Alliance, Black United Fund of Oregon, Center for Community Mental Health, Morrison Center, and the Urban League. Entertainment, Refreshments and Face Painting
Participating Community Benefit Agencies: Albina Ministerial Alliance, Black United Fund of Oregon, CCMH, Morrison Center, Urban League, Hispanic Access Center, African American Health Coalition, Portland House of Umoja, Pregnancy Resource Center, Albina Headstart, TLC-TNT, Chess For Success, MESA, Portland Home Garden Project, Habitat For Humanity Youth Employment Institute, Institute of Nonprofit Management, OMSI, Portland Taiko, Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives
For more information or interested in volunteering please call Adrienne at

Veterans get much needed attention

Portland, Ore. - Six major state, federal and public services will pool efforts to help veterans at an outreach May 20 at the Oregon Convention Center. The event, which will offer veterans the chance to increase their benefits, enroll for VA health care and file for disability or survivor's benefits, will be from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. in rooms A107 to A109. The center is located at 777 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The Oregon Department of Veterans Affairs, the Portland VA Medical Center, Vet Centers, Veterans Services Organizations, the Willamette National Cemetery, and the Veterans Benefits Administration will have staff on site to help veterans and survivors file and process claims. The Portland VA Medical Center will offer free cholesterol and blood pressure screenings to veterans. Veterans will get a chance to file for education benefits, get help with housing, and get counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder and other veterans' issues. Veterans who can't attend the event, but who wish to enroll for VA healthcare, can call the enrollment hotline at 273-5289. Outside the Portland Metro area, call the toll-free hotline at 1-800-949-1004.

YWCA purchase shelter for homeless families

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The YWCA of Greater Portland announced that it has purchased the former Blessed Sacrament Convent and Rectory from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Portland to give its shelter for homeless families a permanent home. The facility is located in the 4600 block of North Maryland Street in Portland. Had the Archdiocese not made it possible for the YWCA to purchase the facility, this resource for homeless families in Portland may have been lost. In July 1999, the Archdiocese of Portland notified the YWCA that it needed to sell the Convent that the YWCA had been using as a shelter for homeless families since October 1998. Once again, this YWCA shelter for homeless families faced homelessness. In the spring of 1998, the Pioneer United Methodist Church that had housed and sponsored the Homeless Family Shelter

with the YWCA since 1987, announced that the shelter could not remain in the Pioneer Methodist Church building as space was needed for other programs. The YWCA spent months searching for another building, located the Blessed Sacrament Convent, and began leasing the facility from the Roman Catholic Archdiocese. When the Archdiocese decided that it needed to sell the Convent as part of the sale of a number of church properties, the Archdiocese also made it possible for the YWCA to purchase the facility rather than have this resource be lost. The YWCA joined with the Housing Development Center of Portland to raise the funds necessary to purchase the property and give the shelter a permanent home. The Archdiocese agreed to sell the property to the YWCA at a price that was affordable and in August 1999, the YWCA began the process of raising the necessary funds. With the purchase of the Blessed Sacrament Convent and Rectory, the YWCA is very hopeful that the Safe Haven Shelter for Homeless Families will never face homelessness again.

Unemployment rate ticks down to near-record low

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In April, Oregon's unemployment rate followed the national trend, declining to 4.6 percent. This was Oregon's lowest seasonally adjusted unemployment rate since April 1995. In March 1995 Oregon's unemployment rate reached 4.4 percent. Other than one month, Oregon's jobless rate has not been lower since 1969. Similarly, the U.S.

unemployment rate dropped from 4.1 percent in March to 3.9 percent in April, marking the nation's lowest rate since January 1970. Based on recent information, Oregon's economy can be characterized as stable, with low unemployment rates coupled with slow employment growth. In April, total nonfarm payroll employment grew by 8,500 jobs, which was 3,200 jobs more than would have been predicted by normal seasonal movements. Since April 1999, these

wage and salary jobs have grown by 23,000, good for a growth rate of 1.5 percent. This growth rate is about the same as the 1.2-percent growth rate between 1998 and 1999, and below the rapid growth rates of 1995, 1996, and 1997, when Oregon's employment was growing by approximately four percent per year. In April, three major industry sectors posted higher employment counts than expected for the time of year, while all other sectors performed close to their normal seasonal trend.

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