

# Metro/Religion

#### Local radio jockey to be featured picnic series

FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Local radio personality Georgene Rice will be featured in an outdoor picnic series, Saturday Nights on the Green, at Beaverton Christian Church, Saturday, July 29, 6:00 p.m. Georgene has just released her second compact disk with a premiere concert at Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall. Georgene's husband Dan joins her in this emphasis for young married adults and families. The evening is part of a seven week picnic series, Saturday Nights on the Green. Guests are encouraged to pack a picnic lunch or purchase a pizza picnic pack at the event for a nominal fee. The series is free to the public, and nursery and childcare will be provided. An offering will be received at the end of the evening.

#### 'Seeds of Change' helps refugee women run home-based businesses

FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A new opportunity provided by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's refugee and immigration ministries, Seeds of Change, helps refugee women establish businesses in their homes. It also helps the women develop the skills they need to improve self-esteem and "navigate the community," said Kristin Eccles,

who directs Seeds of Change. The program pairs refugee women with established businesswomen who volunteer to work with the refugees for a year, assisting them in business development. Seeds of Change also offers classes in basic business skills and self-esteem. So

far ten women have enrolled in the program, which is open to refugees receiving non-cash public assistance who have lived in the United States a year or more.

Seeds of Change has been especially helpful for women who manage large families. For some, paying for daycare services so they can work at a minimum wage job outside the home is not only unprofitable but also conflicts with their religious and/or cultural practices or beliefs.

The women enrolled in Seeds of Change now operate businesses in day care, bookkeeping services, sewing, cake decorating, and selling nutritional supplements and environmentally friendly cleaning supplies. Most have come to Portland

from the former Soviet Union, though some come from Bosnia and Rwanda. The businesswomen offering them mentoring assistance also come from diverse countries, including Uganda, Rwanda and Japan.

Seeds of Change operates through Sponsors Organized to Assist Refugees (SOAR), a part of EMO's refugee and immigration ministries. Located at 5404 NE Alameda Drive in Portland, SOAR resettles between 800 and 1,000 refugees a year. EMO is a statewide association of Christian denominations including Protestant. Catholic and Orthodox bodies that work together to improve the lives of Oregonians. For more information about Seeds of Change, call Kristin Eccles at (503) 284-3002.

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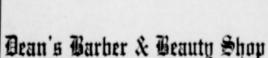
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