

# METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

## Community Calendar

### 3rd Annual Race for the Roses

Volunteers are needed for the 3rd Annual Race for the Roses, April 22 at OMSI. This half-marathon, 5K race/walk and 1/2 mile kids' dash, "Bridging the Gap for Kids in Crisis," benefits Albertina Kerr Centers and The Boys & Girls Aid Society of Oregon. Food, fun and t-shirts provided! Call Carol Hardwick at 503/222-9661.

### Spring Fashion Fundraiser

Sheba, House of Elegance will host "An Evening of Elegance" spring fashion show as a fundraiser to benefit the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center on Saturday, March 31. The event begins at 7 p.m. and follows with Billy Reed's catered reception, which will be held at the IFCC, 5340 N. Interstate Ave. Call 503/823-4322.

### Joints in Motion Marathon Team

Join the Joints in Motion marathon team for an evening of good food for a good cause. This group of women is participating in the Vancouver, B.C. marathon on May 6th, and needs your support! There will be a silent bid auction as well. The event will be at the Augustana Lutheran Church, located at 2710 NE. 14th, on Saturday, April 7, from 5 p.m. - 8 p.m. Call 503/282-6925.

### Motivation Wednesday

Tired of being overwhelmed by seminars and not practicing what was taught to you? Oda Research International has found a new approach. Each week, Dr. John Oda will focus on one ideal that can take your personal and professional life to the next level. The program is for 12 weeks, beginning on Wednesday, April 11 at the Wells Fargo Center. After completing the course, you will have more confidence, self esteem and better communication skills. Call 503/471-2954.

### Family Fun Night

Families that play together, stay together. A variety of activities, arts and crafts, riding toys, balls and games. Children must be accompanied by an adult on Fridays, April 12 - May 25, from 6:30 - 8 p.m. at the Peninsula Park Community Center, located at 700 N. Portland Blvd. Call 503/823-3620.

### Procession of the Species Parade

Celebrate Mother Earth! Gain respect for the environment while developing your creative abilities. Learn basic drills and strut your stuff in the Procession of the Species parade on Saturday, April 28. Workshop takes place on Thursday, April 26, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. The event is free to all ages. Call Peninsula Park Community Center at 503/823-3620.

### Weekend Green Tour Guides

Portland Parks & Recreation needs dedicated people to lead weekend plant walks in city parks between April 1 and November 1. These guides will be trained to talk about the various plants - from trees to small flowers - in Laurelhurst, Mt. Tabor, Sellwood, Duniway, Grant, Peninsula, South Waterfront, and Forest Parks and at Hoyt Arboretum. All tours will be held on Saturdays at 10 a.m. - noon. Training is offered. Call 503/823-3601.

### Turn Your Teen Around

Learn the seven habits of highly effective teens in a seven-week course held by John Oda, Ph.D. Your teenager will learn such things as turning fear into motivation and action; take control of their emotions; develop a plan of action that supports their outcome, and much more. The sessions will be held at Wells Fargo Center in Portland, starting on Tuesday, April 10, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. Call 503/471-2954.

### Health & Human Rights Discussion Series

Once a month at Portland State University, expert panelists will address issues relating to health and human rights. On Thursday, April 19, the topic of discussion will be "International Health Issues: Perspectives of 2 Portland Organizations." Hear opinions on health and human rights from two Portland-based international aid organizations. The talk will be given at PSU's Urban Center, 2nd Floor Gallery, SW. Mill between 5th and 6th. Call Hessie Schmidgall at 503/236-3269.

## Women of Courage and Vision

*Editor's note: The following local women, whose lives and work exemplify both courage and vision, share the special quality of fearless tenacity, which has made them role models for all of us. We highlight their achievements during March, National Women's History Month.*

BY FELICIA SLIDER  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

As President Bill Clinton said when he proclaimed March as Women's History Month in 1996: "It is impossible to fully appreciate America's proud history without recognizing the extraordinary contributions that women have made to our country since its founding. Women's History Month provides an opportunity to celebrate the countless women who have enriched our Nation and to ensure that their achievements — in homes and businesses, schools and hospitals, courtrooms and state-



Jeanne LaFrance, works with kids as part of the Act for Action organization, a theater group dedicated to social change.



Staci Cotler, founder and director of Open Hand Self-Defense Center, 2926 N.E. Alberta, gives women and children the tools to feel stronger and safer.

houses — will always be remembered."

With this theme in mind, the Portland Observer has the joy of recognizing five local women and their accomplishments. We thank these women and all women whose courage, strength and vision set standards for themselves, along with providing a beacon of inspiration for future generations.

### Staci Cotler

**Organization:** Founder and Director of Open Hand Self-Defense Center, 2926 N.E. Alberta, 503-493-1000.

**Mission:** Open Hand is a school that teaches physical, verbal, internal/emotional and community self-defense with an emphasis on conflict resolution and leadership development. Their mission is to provide these skills and resources to the under served and those who feel undeserved women. Staci has been teaching self-defense for 14 years, and created Open Hands in Sept. 1999.

**Quote from Staci:** "Self-defense keeps me

connected to the real issues that keep people down, while it also gives me the inspiration to keep fighting for change. I have trained with so many brave and amazing women and children! Self-defense is such a revolutionary process; when individual women and children have the tools to feel stronger and safer, we are so much more capable of making positive changes in our lives and communities. I always feel so lucky that I get to be part of such amazing work."

### Bridgette Fahnbulleh

**Organization:** Executive Director of African-American Providers Network, 2808 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr., Suite 21, Portland OR 97212, 503-493-8623.

**Biography:** Fahnbulleh is a nationally recognized expert and educator on the issues of domestic and family violence. She is on the Board of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence, serves as a domestic violence public educator and is a former emergency service director for Womenspace in Eugene. This experience has helped her provide links to service providers by developing and maintaining domestic/family violence networks in diverse communities. Bridgette, along with her staff and volunteers have deep roots in the northeast Portland community.

**Mission:** The African American Providers Network provides a strong, unified voice, dedicated to the reduction of domestic/family violence through an intensive program of education, networking, consultation, training, technical assistance and referrals. The

network also offers conflict resolution, crisis intervention, and outreach to families enduring domestic violence.

**Quote from Bridgette:** "My Faith (Bahai) teaches me that women and men are like two wings of a bird. If one wing is weak the bird cannot fly. Humanity is like that bird. Women must become equal with men in order for humanity to succeed. I believe, as it takes a village to raise a child, it will take the village of Portland to end domestic violence."

### Jeannie LaFrance

**Organization:** Founding director of Act for Action, P.O. Box 14162, Portland OR, 97293, 503-287-9628, extension 2, [actforaction@hotmail.com](mailto:actforaction@hotmail.com)

**Mission:** Act for Action is a social change theater group dedicated to anti-violence and anti-bias work. It embraces theater as a tool for education, community building and social justice.

**Quote from Jeannie:** "I love the work that I do. What stays with me the most is what people tell me after a theater project. Women have left abusive relationships. A group of young women started an eating disorder support group. Students began open dialogues about racism and oppression, and how to address those problems, when we developed an anti-violence performance at a local high school. I also work with women in prison and we work on role-plays where they get to rehearse making positive choices in their lives. It's amazing to witness the amount of creativity that comes from people who have so often been told they aren't smart, they aren't creative - it's like helping to open a whole new world."

### Sonie's the One and Only!

**Sonie's Playground:** Radio jockey/jockette member of Jammin 95.5 FM's 5:30 a.m. - 10 a.m. radio show.

**Mission:** As the only female member of a testosterone drenched morning program, Sonie has her work cut out for her. When she's not telling the other members of the

PlayHouse to 'shut the hell up', she can sometimes be heard to say 'You guys are idiots', and even on occasion 'You better not be talking to me, you damn fool.' When possible, she also works in traffic and weather for the morning commute.

**Biography:** Sonie's entire radio career has been spent at Jammin 95.5. She began on the Street Team, moved to on-air work, and graduated (or was punished) to working on the PlayHouse. Sonie is the only member of the show who doesn't think P.K. is Lance from N-Sync. 'That guys a frickin' idiot too,' adds Sonie.

**Quote from Sonie:** "I have been at Jammin 95.5 since April of '99. I was originally hired as a Hummer maintenance technician, and sticker applicator. I was fortunate to move up from there. My favorite part of being a Jammin jockey/jockette is the crazy stuff that we get away with on a daily basis"

### Rochell D. Hart

**Biography:** Rochell, 24, is a local author and spoken word artist and poet, represented by Highbridge Press, Tupper Lake, NY, <http://www.rochellhart.com>

She asked her parents for her first typewriter when she was 3 years old (and she still has it). Rochell has been seriously writing since the age of 12. She began performance poetry in 1998. In 1999, she was the first black woman from Oregon to represent the city and state at the 10th Annual National Poetry Slam in Chicago.

**Mission:** Through her poetry, Rochell gives a voice to a generation of women overlooked by contemporary America.

**Quote from Rochell:** "By speaking about the lives of women, I am able to give the younger generation of black women, a voice, in a time when we are continually overlooked or misrepresented. Although I speak on a variety of subjects, my focus/ emphasis is on domestic violence programs. In



Through her poetry, Rochell Hart gives a voice to a generation of women overlooked by contemporary America.

2000, I was the keynote speaker for the Women of Color Caucus with the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

The Spring Valley (NY) Domestic Violence Institute is bringing me to town for an event geared at young women and men with the purpose of keeping them out of abusive relationships."

## Game Supports Scholarship Fund

Billy Moore (from left) and Charles Washington Publisher of the Portland Observer join Jammin' 95.5's DJ Mario Devoe and Julian Massenburg at the microphone during the 2nd Annual Joyce Washington Memorial Scholarship game. The March 17 event was held to assist minority high school students transitioning from high school to college with an interest in Business, English, Journalism or Athletics.

(SEE MORE PHOTOS AND COVERAGE, PAGE B8)

