



High Tech Holds Green Lights for Buses

See story, Metro Section, inside.



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THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Northern Alliances Says Troops Near Mazar-e-Sharif

DUSHANBE, Tajikistan — The Northern Alliance reported that its troops are approaching Mazar-e-Sharif in northern Afghanistan, with some units only four miles from the key city. Mazar-e-Sharif has been held by the Taliban since 1998.

Jordan Foils Terrorist Attempts

AMMAN, Jordan — Jordanian and Lebanese security officials helped derail terrorist plots against U.S., British, Jordanian and other embassies in Lebanon. Officials declined to say who was behind the attempts, but suggested it was a group linked to Osama bin Laden.

Blair, Arafat Discuss Mideast Peace Process

LONDON — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat said that the present turmoil over terrorism and military action against Afghanistan was no reason to delay a resumption of peace talks with Israel. British Prime Minister Tony Blair said a Palestinian state is necessary for long-lasting peace.

DMVs Get Stricter on Licenses

Amid concerns that it's too easy to get legal identification, many states are tightening procedures over driver's licenses and IDs. Officials say it is unlikely the Sept. 11 attacks would have been stopped had hijackers been denied IDs, but as many as five of them did get such cards under false pretenses.

Deal Reached by Minn. Unions on Ending Strike

ST. PAUL, Minn. — Leaders from the two largest state employees unions agreed to accept contract deals reached with the state, ending a two-week walk-out by 23,000 government workers. The unions had struck over wage increases and changes to health benefits.

Indian Army Shells Pakistan

JAMMU, India — India's army shelled Pakistani military posts across the disputed cease-fire line in Kashmir after a 10-month border calm, destroying nearly a dozen posts. It comes a day before Sec. of State Colin Powell arrives in New Delhi to ease tensions between the rivals.

Phone Threat Prompts U.S.-Canada Border Closing

HIGHGATE, Vt. — A bomb threat made to a business near the U.S.-Canada border and a suspicious vehicle prompted federal officials to close two major border crossings. Officials were investigating the threat and could provide few details.

Report: Gotti Hospitalized for Blood Clot

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. — Former New York mob boss John Gotti was in stable condition at a hospital undergoing treatment for a blood clot, a family friend said.

Job Losses Slam Oregon Into a Recession

Economic effects from the terrorist attacks still wait to be measured



The difficulty in finding and maintaining employment was evident last week as a line of prospective workers attends a job opportunity fair, sponsored by the Oregon Employment Division on North Webster Street. The office has scheduled another job fair on Nov. 1.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

(AP) - The jobless rate nudged upward again last month, officially pushing Oregon into a recession.

The unemployment rate rose to 6.4 percent in September, its highest level in seven years, David Cooke, the state's labor economist, said Friday.

The jobless figure was a full percentage point above the U.S. rate, making Oregon's unemployment rate one of the highest in the nation.

Officials noted the figures were compiled before the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks in New York and Washington, D.C.

Economic effects resulting from the attacks will not be reflected until October figures are collected.

Manufacturing in Oregon was hit hard by layoffs in September, particularly high tech, which saw substantial losses compared with the prior month.

Construction continued to falter, losing 1,400 jobs at the end of summer, when a loss of 300 jobs would be normal for the time of year, Cooke said.

"In the last few months, several of our state economists and I have been debating whether Oregon's current economic downturn should be characterized as a recession," said Graham Slater, research director for the Oregon Employment Department.

But Slater said the September jobless figures and continued layoffs - including additional job cuts announced Friday at Freightliner in Portland - indicated "that Oregon is indeed in the midst of an economic recession."

Walnut Park Theater To Be Demolished



Demolition workers plan to save the old Walnut Park Theater sign so that it can be incorporated into a new development in the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard neighborhood.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

BY ARLENE GHOLSTON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The northeast Portland cultural landmark, the Walnut Park Theater, is slated to be torn down.

The Portland Development Commission is currently soliciting bids for the demolition of the approximately 70-year-old structure, which has been vacant for more than six years. Asbestos removal

will begin this week. Demolition is expected to begin the second week of November, taking about two weeks, according to project coordinator Lois Cortell.

The PDC purchased the theater last January. They worked with the building's former owner on feasibility studies to preserve the building, but a structural crack

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Freightliner Keeps Portland Headquarters



Freightliner has decided to close its parts manufacturing plant on Swan Island, but keep its corporate headquarters in Portland.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

(AP) — Freightliner, the largest manufacturer of heavy commercial trucks in North America, has announced a restructuring plan that will close most of its Canadian operation and a parts manufacturing plant in Portland.

The restructuring plan will also mean

the loss of 1,100 white-collar jobs in Portland, along with a company wide 5 percent pay cut. But it retains Portland as the corporate headquarters for the truck maker.

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Mailrooms Tighten Security After Anthrax Reports

(AP) — With anthrax-contaminated letters arriving in offices from Nevada to the nation's capital, mailrooms and delivery services across the country are putting new handling procedures in place.

Mailroom employees are being warned to check packages for misspellings in common names and words, to look for powdery substances and excessive or inad-

equately postage, and to contact authorities about any suspicious mail.

The Postal Service announced the creation of a task force to examine mail security and hazardous-material safeguards. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention issued guidelines for handling letters and packages. And private delivery companies are scrutinizing their own pro-

cedures.

At NBC, where one employee contracted the skin form of anthrax and another has shown symptoms, the network has stopped accepting mail from the Postal Service.

"Our entire mail system is being looked at by professionals," spokeswoman Kassie Canter said. "Our interim procedure for the

near-term future is that we're accepting UPS and FedEx, and they're being screened. Employees have the option not to accept anything."

In California, Gov. Gray Davis ordered state employees to stop handling letters and packages until they complete training

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