

METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

"Bridging Portland's Communities"

Community Calendar

Mothers Against Drunk Driving

Beginning on Friday, Dec. 21 until New Year's Eve, Mothers Against Drunk Driving will be hosting the MADD Cab program. This is a free service intended to provide a safe, sober ride home to anyone who may have had too much to drink and drive. It will operate nightly from 7:30 p.m. - 2 a.m. For more info., call 503-284-MADD (6233) and ask for Marie Brown.

Healthy Solutions for Loneliness

The Oregon Health & Science University will be giving an educational talk on "Healthy Solutions for Loneliness." During the talk, the speaker will offer some helpful solutions on how to approach feelings of loneliness and isolation that we all experience at different times in our lives. The event will be at the King City Town Hall, located at 15245 SW 116th Ave., from 10-11 a.m. Call 503-494-0060.

Haircuts for Kids

It's holiday cheer with all the trimmings. North and Northeast Portland's children will receive free haircuts just in time for the holidays thanks to the generosity of 25 local hairstylists. The haircuts will be given on Monday, Dec. 24, from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. at The Salvation Army Moore Street Corps and Community Center, located at 5325 N. Williams Ave.

The Women & Money Workshop

The Women & Money workshop is a free event that provides basic financial planning education for women. This is a one-day workshop designed to help women take control of their financial future. The workshop will be held on Saturday, Dec. 15, from 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. at the Black United Fund of Oregon, located at 2828 NE. Alberta. Call 503-282-7973.

Water Conservation Workshop

The Community Energy Project will be holding a free workshop on Water Conservation. Learn how to take control of your water and sewer bills. This workshop provides information on how to detect and repair leaks, water conservation ideas in and around your home, plus details on Portland's incredible water system. The workshop will be at 422 NE. Alberta St. on Thursday, Dec. 13, from 6-7:30 p.m. Call 503-284-6827.

Hollywood Senior Center

Celebrate the Christmas holiday with the Hollywood Senior Center as they venture up the Columbia Gorge to have a fantastic dinner at the Columbia Gorge Hotel in Hood River. There is also the opportunity to shop at Deck the Halls Christmas shop, which is close by. The event will be on Thursday, Dec. 2, from 3 p.m. - 8 p.m. Call 503-288-8303.

Salvation Army Gift Giving

Volunteer elves for the Salvation Army will sort, stock and distribute thousands of donated toys, clothing and food at the Christmas distribution center on Friday, Dec. 21 and Saturday, Dec. 22 at 1625 NE. Sandy.

Southwest Washington Humane Society

The Home 4 the Holidays pet adoption campaign is still going on to place orphaned animals with loving families and individuals during the holiday season. Hundreds of pets are available to adopt until Sunday, Jan. 6 at the Southwest Washington Humane Society, located at 2121 St. Francis Lane in Vancouver. Call 360-693-4746.

Schools May Overhaul Desegregation Policy

A two-decades old policy fails to balance schools, close achievement gap

(AP) — A voluntary desegregation plan for inner city schools has failed to increase the racial mix or close an achievement gap between minority and white students, officials say.

More than 20 years after the plan went into effect, Portland schools are more segregated than they were in 1980, said Deputy Superintendent Pat Burk, the school district's senior academic officer.

"I think it would be an appropriate time to evaluate the effectiveness of what we're doing," Burk said.

The 1980 desegregation plan emphasized voluntary busing, enrichment programs to overcome the effects of poverty on achievement, and magnet schools to draw white students into predominately black neighborhoods of north and northeast Portland.

The city has spent tens of millions of dollars to carry out the plan. But 11 of the 12 largely African American schools receiving money for desegregation still have a higher proportion of minority students

than in 1980, officials say.

In addition, gaps in reading and math scores between white and black students are nearly as wide as they were two decades ago despite an increase in overall achievement for students of all ethnic backgrounds.

Burk is pushing the school board to

There is nothing magic about being white, but it's those schools that have better teachers, a better academic climate and kids who are all expected to go to college,

— Gary Orfield of the Harvard Civil Rights Project.

overhaul the plan before state funding expires in 2005.

In 1997, Portland persuaded the Legislature to pick up the bulk of the funding for desegregation, now about \$7 million. The 54,000-student district — the only one in Oregon compensated for integration efforts — convinced lawmakers that it carried a burden other districts didn't have to

face.

The plan was adopted in 1980 after federal courts began to reject mandatory busing to integrate schools. Portland was among many large urban school districts to switch to voluntary integration programs, even as more white families moved to the suburbs.

white, but it's those schools that have better teachers, a better academic climate and kids who are all expected to go to college," Orfield said.

He said research also shows that minority students in integrated schools do better on achievement tests and perform better in college.

Portland test results this year show that both white and black fifth-graders have made gains in reading. But white students had higher average scores, and the average test score gap between the two ethnic groups had closed by only one point from 1998 and 2001.

"We clearly have not eliminated the achievement gap," Burk said.

Steve Buel, who helped write Portland's desegregation plan as a school board member in 1980, said the board was heavily criticized for putting money into schools in minority neighborhoods to achieve equity.

"That's not a popular thing in this city," he said.



Huge flood lights installed by the National Electrical Contractors Association and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48 and other volunteers make the historic Sternwheeler 'Portland' an evening attraction.

PHOTO BY HAROLD HUTCHINSON FOR ACKROYD PHOTOGRAPHY

Historic Tug Made Into Evening Attraction

A new glow sparkles each evening from the downtown waterfront, placing a piece of Portland history in spectacular view.

The recent lighting of the sternwheeler 'Portland,' was made possible thanks to the National Electrical Contractors Association and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 48 and other volunteers.

"When we were approached with the idea it was an exciting opportunity to use our professional contractors to help with something everyone who drives by downtown at night can enjoy," said Bill Ellis of McCoy Electric and NECA contractor. "The Sternwheeler Portland is so large and visible that it reaches out to you and says, 'This is a part of Portland's history'."

The 'Portland' was built in 1947 and is a classic Columbia River sternwheeler design, unique to the Columbia River system. She worked for the port for 31 years as a ship-assist tug before retiring.

The Oregon Maritime Center and Museum has worked hard to restore the vessel and keep it in mint condition. Tak-

ing the next step and fully lighting the vessel was only a dream of the museum. A generous donation of nearly \$50,000 in volunteer time, supplies and equipment made it happen.

The floodlights will be automatically controlled to minimize energy usage and maximize the efficiency of the state of the art lighting fixtures that offer the latest in energy saving technology.

Home Weatherizing Combats Rise in Energy Costs



A volunteer from Portland General Electric fastens weather stripping to the door of a southeast Portland home as part of a campaign to help senior and disabled residents lower their energy costs.

PHOTO BY JOHNNY HUFF/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Armed with caulk guns and rolls of heavy-duty vinyl, 60 volunteers from Portland General Electric scattered through Portland Dec. 1 to weatherize homes of senior and disabled residents.

The event marked the completion of a yearlong effort between the utility and the Community Energy Project to weatherize nearly 60 homes in Portland neighborhoods.

In light of the recent increase in energy prices, PGE has bolstered its participation in the project, which helps customers who need assistance trim their monthly electric bills by installing energy efficiency measures.

"Many of these folks are on fixed incomes, so the savings they realize

can be used for food, housing and other living costs. It's a win-win situation — residents benefit and PGE employees benefit by being involved in their community," said Bob Chaples, executive director of the Community Energy Project, headquartered on Alberta Street in northeast Portland.

The volunteers add window insulation; simple frames with heavy duty clear vinyl that fit over existing windows. They caulk around windows, add foundation covers and take other simple steps to help keep the heat in and the winter chill out.

"This is a project that really touches the heart," said Vickie Rocker, PGE community affairs representative.