

METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

"Bridging Portland's Communities"

Community Calendar

One Day of Peace

The first official celebration of "One Day Of Peace," inspired by children and passed unanimously by the U.S. Congress, will happen on Tue., Jan. 1. Come listen to the music and see performers from around the city at the Chiles Center, Univ. of Portland campus, 5000 N. Willamette Blvd. Doors open at 11 a.m. and program begins at 12 noon. Call 293-3186 or go online to www.onedayofpeace.net.

Commemorating Roe vs. Wade

Radical Women will commemorate Roe vs. Wade, the landmark case that legalized abortion in the US, with a book review and discussion of "When Biology Became Destiny," "Women in Weimar" and "Nazi Germany." The free meeting will be at the Bread and Roses Center, 819 N. Killingsworth. Call 240-4462.

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.

Portland's Fix-It Fair

Hosted by the City of Portland's Office of Sustainable Development, the 15th annual Fix-It Fair is a free neighborhood event designed to connect Portland residents with public resources that save money, conserve resources and improve homes and neighborhoods. The first 150 attendees at the "Self-Help Weatherization" workshop will receive a free weatherization materials kit. For a schedule, call 823-7590. Childcare available.

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.

Improve Your Handwriting

Want to improve your handwriting? Learn how for free. Portland State University will be hosting National Handwriting Day with a Handwriting Improvement Workshop on Saturday, Jan. 26, from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at the Smith Memorial Center, located at 1825 SW Broadway, Smith Center Ballroom, Rm. 355. Call 725-4891 or 1-800-547-8887.

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.

Noon Time Rides

The Multnomah Bar Association is offering noon time bicycle rides, which are short, fast rides on hills. The group is to meet at the SW. corner of Pioneer Courthouse Square, between Yamhill and Broadway, noon to 12:10 p.m., Mondays and Thursdays. Call Ray Thomas at 228-5222.

Learn Tai Chi

Learn the slow, gentle movements of Tai Chi for increasing flexibility, balancing lung capacity, promote stress relief and other health benefits. The Peninsula Community Center, located at 700 N. Portland Blvd. is offering a Tai Chi class, from Thursdays, Jan. 17 - Feb. 7, from 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Call 823-3620 or go online to www.PortlandParks.org.

New Warehouse Boosts Food Bank Size



(AP) - After years of working out of rented warehouses, the Oregon Food Bank is finally in its big, new facility at 7900 N.E. 33rd Drive.

A new warehouse was opened in November, just in time for the arrival of 40,000 pounds of donated salmon fillets. The salmon was delivered to the site's 7,500-square-foot freezer, a donation from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

"It didn't put much of a dent in" the freezer space, said Rachel Bristol, execu-

tive director of Oregon Food Bank. "But it was one of the very first items that christened our new freezer."

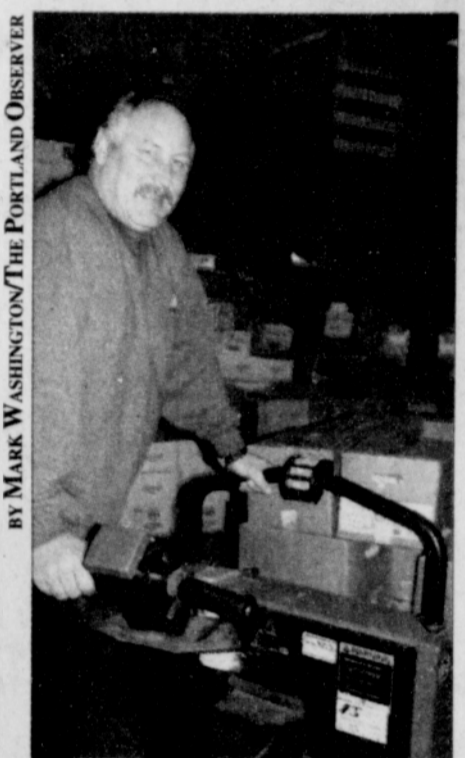
Opening the \$11 million office and warehouse will go far in helping the nearly 27-year-old agency respond to increasing demands as Oregon dips into a recession. The 108,000-square-foot building includes the 94,000-square-foot warehouse.

"We're pretty excited," Bristol said. "It's just going to mean so much in terms of improved efficiency, being able to stretch our annual fund donors' dollars

even farther."

She said leasing a comparable warehouse would cost about \$500,000 a year. For the past 13 years, Bristol said, the Food Bank operated from two leased warehouses with a combined 60,000 square feet in north and northeast Portland. She said the freezer capacity of both was roughly one-third less than the new freezer's.

Other amenities at the new site include a generous loading area and a large space where frozen foods can be packed by



A new warehouse directly behind Oregon Food Bank offices in northeast Portland brings improved efficiency to the hunger relief agency and stretches the dollars collected for food donations.

hundreds of volunteers in a climate-controlled room.

The search for a new site began roughly four years ago. In August 1999, a fund-raising effort was launched that raised \$11.5 million. The fund-raising is complete, but pledges are payable over five years.

The Food Bank network encompasses 20 regional food banks that serve 781 organizations in Oregon and Southwest Washington. It distributed 46 million pounds of food last year to approximately 652,000 people.

Holiday Express Brings a Thumbs Up!



A breakfast courtesy of IHOP gets a passing grade during the special Blazers Holiday Express community event for Albina Head Start students, seniors and local veterans. The Dec. 7 celebration was hosted by the Blazers Community Builders and drew the participation of Blazer players and employees. In addition, more than 800 holiday trees were distributed to the north and northeast community.

New Booster Seat Law Requires Proper Fit



An example of a properly installed high back booster seat.

Oregon's new booster seat law goes into effect Jan. 1.

The "booster seat" law, passed by the 2001 Legislature, requires drivers who transport children to use approved devices that elevate small children to make standard safety belts fit properly.

Violation of this law is a Class D traffic infraction carrying a \$77 penalty.

The new law will require drivers to use booster seats for children between the ages of 4 and 6 and for children who weigh between 40 and 60 pounds.

The law has not changed regarding children under four years and 40 pounds, who must still be secured in child restraint systems.

California and Washington have recently adopted similar laws which take effect January 1 and July 1, respectively.

Officials say lap and shoulder belt systems are 45 percent to 65 percent effective in preventing crash-related death or injury to adults. However, children who are 2 to 5 years old and restrained prematurely in adult belts are 3.5 times more likely to suffer significant crash injury than children restrained in child safety or booster seats.

Child safety systems reduce the risk of death by 71 percent for infants and 54 percent for toddlers.

continued ▼ on page B6

Neighbor Found Murdered Girl

Police Ask Parents of Wilshire Neighborhood to Stay Alert

(AP) — A northeast Portland couple found the body of a 14-year-old girl in their Wilshire neighborhood backyard Thursday morning.

Melissa Bittler, a student at the Metropolitan Learning Center in Northwest Portland, was found about 8 a.m. when the couple walked out to the garage and saw the girl through the window, said Sgt. Brian Schmutz, a Portland Police Bureau spokesman.

"They were just starting their day and looked over and saw the body," he said.

The couple called police and detectives quickly ruled the death a homicide.

The girl's parents lived across the street. Police determined she had been sexually assaulted.

Investigators said they did not have a suspect and did not know whether the killer knew Bittler. Police are suggesting that parents of children in the area stay alert.

Dr. Nikolas Hartshorne, a deputy state medical examiner, conducted an autopsy Thursday afternoon but declined to release the cause of death, saying only that Bittler died of "homicidal violence."

Officers cordoned off the house as police photographed the crime scene and detectives from the Police Bureau's homi-

cide division and sexual assault detail knocked on neighbors' doors seeking clues.

Bittler lived with her parents, Thomas J. Bittler, 45, and Mary M. Bittler, 42, and regularly walked with her sister, a Grant High School student, to catch a bus to school. Neighbor Margaret Cook said she remembered often watching the girls walk to and from an elementary school in the area when the girls were younger.

Neighbors said until now they have generally been most concerned about thefts and car prowls. Bittler's death marked the city's 24th homicide this year.