



Enjoy Kwanzaa
and Happy New Year



The Portland Observer

"The City Of Roses"

Volume XXXI
Number 49

www.portlandobserver.com

Committed to Cultural Diversity
Established in 1970

Wednesday
December 26, 2001

50¢

Community Calendar

Train to be a Mediator

Become a volunteer mediator with The Neighborhood Mediation Center. Women and men of all ages, cultures, ethnicities and backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Mediation training is free in exchange for volunteering three hours a week for at least one year. Application deadline is Dec. 31. Call 823-3152.

Urban League's New Year's Party

The Urban League of Portland is hosting a New Year's Eve Party at the downtown Portland Embassy Suites Hotel. The extravaganza will be held at the downtown Portland Embassy Suites Hotel located at 319 SW Pine. The festivities start with a reception at 7:30 p.m. and will feature the light jazz of Michael Allen Harrison and dancing. For tickets, call Ticket Masters at 224-4400, Urban League at 280-2600 or the Embassy Suites at 279-9000.

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 the program begins at noon. Call 293-3186 or go online to www.onedayofpeace.net.

Weatherization Workshop

Don't let your heating bills take you hostage. Take action! The Community Energy Project will be having a free weatherization workshop on Thursday, Jan. 10, from 6-8 p.m. at the Lane Community School, 7200 SE. 60th Ave. Qualified participants receive a free kit of materials worth \$150. Call 284-6827.

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.

Volunteer Garden Guides Needed

Botanical gardens and specialty parks in the Portland area need volunteer guides to talk to visitors about the plantings. A recruitment fair for garden guides is scheduled for Saturday, Jan. 26. It will be held at Cheatham Hall in the World Forestry Center between 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. Call 823-3601.

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.

Saturday School Revived to Address Crisis

Trained volunteers to work with area students to narrow achievement gap

BY JOY RAMOS/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

For many parents, it's discouraging to hear that Portland's public educational system is in a state of crisis. A recent report by the Crisis Team, a local watchdog group that evaluates school system progress, calls for immediate changes to get low-income children to grade level.

Getting to the "root" of the problem, Oregon Sen. Avel Gordly, D-Portland, recently accepted the position of Project Coordinator of the Oregon Parents Center at Albina Head Start in northeast Portland.

The center's mission is to empower families with information so that their child can do well in school. To further that goal, Saturday School was revived, based on a program that was started in 1980.

Bringing back the Saturday School was also a direct response to the Crisis Team report on the obvious academic achievement disparities that exist when race, income and where children live are concerned.

The Crisis Team has targeted fourteen elementary and middle schools for the large number of underachieving students enrolled; all of them are located in north and northeast Portland.

Starting in January, parents and students can work with trained volunteers to address educational problems at the Saturday School, from 9:30 a.m. - noon. For the students, they can get homework help. Parents are advised on things like how to build connections with their child's school and teachers, and understanding their parental rights and responsibilities.

Available to all the participants for free will be 115 volunteers and educational materials donated for the program. Each volunteer undergoes training to tutor kids and provide administrative assistance.



Saturday School leaders, Sen. Avel Gordly (from left), Yugen Fardan Rashad and Tanya Stagray admire the centerpiece quilt of African proverbs at the Oregon Parents Center at Albina Head Start in northeast Portland.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Taking a holistic approach with the Saturday School, Gordly plans to bring in the involvement of the school districts, not just parents and students. Three more

Saturday Schools will open at The Highland United Church of Christ, YO! Center, and Self Enhancement, Inc.

For information on how to register a

student or volunteer at Saturday School, call 503-282-1975 or visit the Oregon Parent Information and Resource Center at 3417 N.E. 7th Ave.

Slavery Descendants Hear False Appeals

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A rash of scams and fraudulent schemes appear to be circulating through the Portland area this holiday season, prompting a warning by State Sen. Margaret Carter.

One example is a false promise that tells African American descendants of slavery to call a phone number to claim money for inheritance tax refunds.

"Congress has not passed a bill to pay all descendants back," Carter said. "No one is paying anyone through a fund called the Black Inheritance Tax Refund."

Carter, a Democrat, represents north and northeast Portland in state government. She also serves as executive director of the Urban League of Portland.

No one is paying anyone through a fund called the Black Inheritance Tax Refund.

—Sen. Margaret Carter

"I am very concerned that the elderly, folks living on fixed incomes or short budgets not be fooled, being taken by some flyer that plays upon the struggles and hopes of a people or community," Carter said.

Solicitations that use language like "word of mouth," or "your friend told you

and they heard from someone else," can be tell tale signs that the operation is not authorized to do business in the state.

Carter urges residents to be careful when someone wants you to send a check in the mail, asks for your credit card number, and is promising money at the end of some rainbow.

"We work too hard for our money to let it go," Carter said. "And nobody has ever left us an inheritance of anything of much consequence that I know of. If they did, we would all be living in big mansions on the hill already. Be careful."

Carter said those who see a questionable business practice should call the Oregon Attorney General's Consumer Protection Office in Portland at 503-229-5576.

Kwanzaa Saturday

Area residents will gather for the fifth annual Bridge Builders Kwanzaa Gala and Gentlemen's Ball, the community's most extravagant Kwanzaa celebration, Saturday, Dec. 29 at 7:30 p.m. at the Arlene Schnitzer Concert Hall.

The celebration will honor 17 young men who completed rites of passage and are scheduled to continue their academic careers by attending colleges and universities across the nation.

The mission of the Bridge Builders is to strengthen the African American community by administering African-centered rites of passage programs that promote spirituality, scholarship, entrepreneurship and community building.

Adidas Village Rises on Old Kaiser Site



Adidas is on schedule in the construction of two office buildings and a circular sports center for their new Adidas Village on North Greeley, the future American headquarters for the sports apparel company. The former Kaiser hospital on the other side of Greeley has been remodeled and will open to 700 Adidas employees next month and during February, officials said. The north Portland campus will serve another 200 Adidas employees when construction on the new buildings is completed next fall.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER



Bluff's Erosion Controls Take Hold

The effort to prevent erosion on north Portland's Willamette Bluffs appears to be working even with a deluge of fall rain. The hillside was seeded with grass and straw was strategically placed along the ground after a summer wildfire scorched some 37 acres of the bluff and threatened about 100 homes. The city budgeted \$290,000 for restoration expenses, but may spend less than that.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

PRINTED STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PORTLAND OR
PERMIT
NO. 1610

Knight Library
1299 University of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403-1205