

# METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

"Bridging Portland's Communities"

## Community Calendar

### Race for the Roses

Support Oregon's future by participating in the Fourth Annual "Race for the Roses," Portland's only half-marathon and a 5K Run/Walk on Sunday, April 21. The event begins at the Oregon Square Courtyard near the Lloyd Center at 7 a.m. followed by the 5K Run/Walk at 7:30 a.m. To register, call AA Sports at 503-331-3140 or go online to [www.race4theroses.org](http://www.race4theroses.org).

### Oregon Spring Beach Cleanup

The 18th annual Great Oregon Spring Beach Cleanup will be held on Saturday, April 6. Thousands of volunteers are needed to help clean Oregon's beaches, from the Washington to the California borders, between 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Call SOLV at 800-322-3326 or go online to [www.solv.org](http://www.solv.org).

### Community Energy Project

Learn how to take control of your water and sewer bills. The Water Conservation workshop provides information on how to detect and repair leaks, water conservation areas in and around your home, plus details on Portland's incredible water system. It will be held on Wednesday, April 10, 10 a.m. at 422 NE. Alberta. To register, call the Community Energy Project at 503-284-6827.

### Portland Farmer's Market

Portland Farmer's Market will teach anyone interested in how to grow like a professional gardener on Saturday, May 11, at PSU's campus grounds on SW. Montgomery and Harrison St. Gardening speakers will offer free talks each hour and kids' activities will keep little sprouts busy with take-home projects inspired by nature. For more market information, go online to [www.portlandfarmersmarket.org](http://www.portlandfarmersmarket.org).

### Earth Day Celebration

Portland is celebrating Earth Day with an event called Procession of the Species. The parade is a way for many to connect to the natural world using the media of art, dance and music. Join the procession on Sunday, April 28 by wearing a handmade costume of an endangered species or playing music to promote environmental awareness. For more information, call 503-452-4483.

### Oregon's Daffodil Show

For the second year in a row, The Oregon Garden will host the Oregon Daffodil Society's Daffodil Show on April 6 and 7 in the J. Frank Schmidt, Jr. Pavilion. Enjoy 10,000 daffodils that were planted at the garden last fall by volunteers. The show will run from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 6 and 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Sunday, April 7. Call 503-874-8264 or go online to [www.oregongarden.org](http://www.oregongarden.org).

## Giving Spirit Thrives at Auction



Providence Health Plan employees wave their numbers to grab the attention of an auctioneer at a recent charity event. A total of 268 products were auctioned off to raise more than \$32,000 for three local organizations: the Community Transitional School for homeless children; Providence Child Center that provides child care to the medically-fragile children; and the Women's and Children's Center dedicated to providing food and supplies to homeless mothers and their children.

PHOTO BY DAVE LAWTON

## Reading Works at Inner City Church Classes

New classes will be starting at the Reading Works, a local organization dedicated to improving the reading skills of the north and northeast Portland community. They will begin on April 22 at the Portland Metro Assembly of God Church, located at N.E. 6<sup>th</sup> and Alberta.

Adults and school age children can enroll. The program is individualized for each student, regardless of grade level.

Reading Works is lead by two experienced teachers, Katy Libke and Connie Meyer. They specialize in employing the Blended Sound and Sight method along with the Spaulding method as teaching methods.

Within the center is an upbeat and colorful environment that's conducive to learning. There's a bright "Sound City" board across one wall and classical music that's played in the background.

Classes are held every Monday and Wednesday, from 6-7 p.m. The cost is \$3.50 per class with a discount offered if a student brings in a new member.

If you are interested in signing up for Reading Works or would like to volunteer your time to help others learn to read, call Katy Libke at 503-281-8121.



Eric Boldt (from left), Shaudle Hutchison, Raheem Clayton and Ra'eesah Clayton become better readers with the help of Auntie Jean Brown of Reading Works.

## Welfare Worker Cleared in Child's Death

Prosecutors examine whether state custody system is to blame

(AP) — After a five-month review, prosecutors have decided not to file charges against a child-welfare worker who supervised a fatal visit between a toddler and her mother.

Dale A. Kraft did not know that Sharon Weston "posed a danger to physically harm her child" when he supervised a visit that ended in the child's strangulation, prosecutors said Wednesday after reviewing 3,600 pages of documents.

Prosecutors instead blamed a system failure on the part of the Department of Human Services' State Office for Services to Children and Families in the death of 20-month-old Alexis last July.

Alexis was taken into state custody in October 2000 after Weston threatened to

kill or injure herself and the girl.

"The inconsistent procedure, practice and lack of communication in this case led to a failure on the part of the system to protect this child," Kate Lieber, a Multnomah County deputy district attorney, wrote in a memo Monday.

During a supervised visit July 11, Kraft allowed Weston and Alexis to stroll out of his sight at Gresham's Main City Park.

Weston took the toddler to a remote area and allegedly strangled her with a cord from her jacket. She took the body to a nearby funeral home, where employees called police.

Officers found Kraft reading a newspaper in a state-owned car more than 45 minutes later.

Kraft was fired a month after the killing.

Weston has pleaded innocent to two counts of aggravated murder and one count of attempted aggravated murder and is being held for trial.

The state considered a variety of criminal charges against Kraft, including murder, manslaughter, criminal mistreatment, child neglect and official misconduct.

"We looked at every conceivable charge," said Multnomah County District Attorney Michael Schunk. "Something went terribly wrong. We found that directions were unclear, expectations were unclear. We're hopeful there will be clarification and good strong protocols set up on visitation. This is a wake-up call for

continued on page B6

## Transportation Department Hiring Youths

The Department of Transportation has summer jobs available for young people who want to work in the outdoors and help keep Oregon clean.

Each year the transportation department hires about 300 youths statewide to clean up litter along state highways as part of the Youth Litter Patrol program. While the crews primarily pick up litter, other duties may also include graffiti removal and general landscape maintenance. A typical crew includes a crew leader and two or more crew members.

Those interested in serving the Youth Litter Patrol program can register anytime up until July 19 with the nearest local Employment

Department office. Interviews for selected applicants may begin as early as May 2002. Depending on the area, Youth Litter Patrols may work up to 12 weeks this summer.

Youth Litter Patrol workers are paid on a per hour basis starting at \$7.27 for crew members and \$7.85 for crew leaders. Crew leaders must be at least 18 years old with a valid driver's license and good driving record. Crew members must be 16 through 20 years old.

The Youth Litter Patrol program was founded in 1971 to help in cleaning up highway rights of way and is funded through the sale of custom license plates available through Driver and Motor Vehicles Services.