

METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

"Bridging Portland's Communities"

Community Calendar

National Night Out Picnic

National Night Out, the first Tuesday in August, is celebrated throughout Portland and the entire nation. It is a time for neighbors to come together — on front porches, in streets or parks — to get to know each other better and become more active in their communities to help fight against crime. A picnic will be held on Tuesday, Aug. 6, from 6–9 p.m. at Oregon Park, on the corner of N.E. 30th and Oregon St. Call Vicki Scherer at 503-963-8121.

Oregon Humane Society

The Oregon Humane Society is hosting an adoption outreach event to bring companion pets who are ready for a new home into the community. Stop by at the Clackamas PetsMart on Sunday, August 4, 9450 S.E. 82nd Ave., from 11 a.m. – 3 p.m. Go online to www.oregonhumane.org or call 503-285-7722.

BikeSummer

BikeSummer is a celebration of bicycling, community and creativity — a World's Fair of bicycling. This year, it will be held in Portland, where thousands of people will participate in pro-cycling events throughout the month of August. Events will include performances, rides, a film festival, educational workshops and more. For more information, go online to www.bikesummer.org.

Singles Retreat

The Piedmont Church of Christ is holding a Singles Retreat on Aug. 3, from 9 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. at 5338 N. Borthwick St. The keynote speaker is Minister Jacobs from Phoenix, Arizona. Other talks will be given by ministers and elders. Cost is \$35 at the door or a donation can be given. For more information, call Minister Michael Vinton at 503-285-2956.

Neighborhood Walking Tour

Portland is well known for its walkable, livable streets. Participants can tour the southeast area on Aug. 17, starting at the Crossroads Plaza on S.E. 92nd and Foster. Take a walk around the Lents neighborhood that's growing and changing. Explore the many new developments and walking amenities in the area. Go online to www.portlandtransportation.org or call 503-823-5266.

Portland Farmer's Market

The Northwest's best artisan bakers gather to celebrate the beloved craft of bread baking and local artisan food during the annual Summer Loaf at Portland Farmer's Market on Saturday, Aug. 3, from 8 a.m. – 2 p.m. at Portland State University's South Park Blocks. Techniques and recipes shared by the area's renowned bakers are all part of the fun. For more information, go online to www.portlandfarmersmarket.org.

Summer Jazz Concert

A free summer jazz concert will be held on Sunday, Aug. 18, from 3–5 p.m. at Patton Park, adjacent to the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, 5340 N. Interstate Ave. Guest performers are Ron Steen on drums, Dan Balmer, bass, Shirley Nanette, vocals. Opening act will be the Portland Community College's Jazz Band.

Blue Lake Park

Wednesdays are special this summer at Metro's Blue Lake Regional Park when Naturally for Kids offers young visitors lots of things to do. Kids can learn how to make animal masks on Aug. 7, from 10–11 a.m. at the Clatsop picnic shelter. For more information, call 503-797-1850. The park is between Marine Dr. and Sandy Blvd., off N.E. 223rd Ave.

Local Standout Eyes Harvard

Dyan Watson promotes teaching for people of color

BY DAVID PLECHL

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

When Dyan Watson was three years old, she didn't play house, or doctor, like other kids, she played school.

"Ever since I can remember, I've wanted to become a teacher," says Watson, now 29 and on her way to the Harvard School of Education's doctoral program this fall.

Statistically, Watson shouldn't have made it.

She grew up poor in a single parent household. She attended schools "people had forgotten about."

"It's my faith in God that has brought me this far," Watson says.

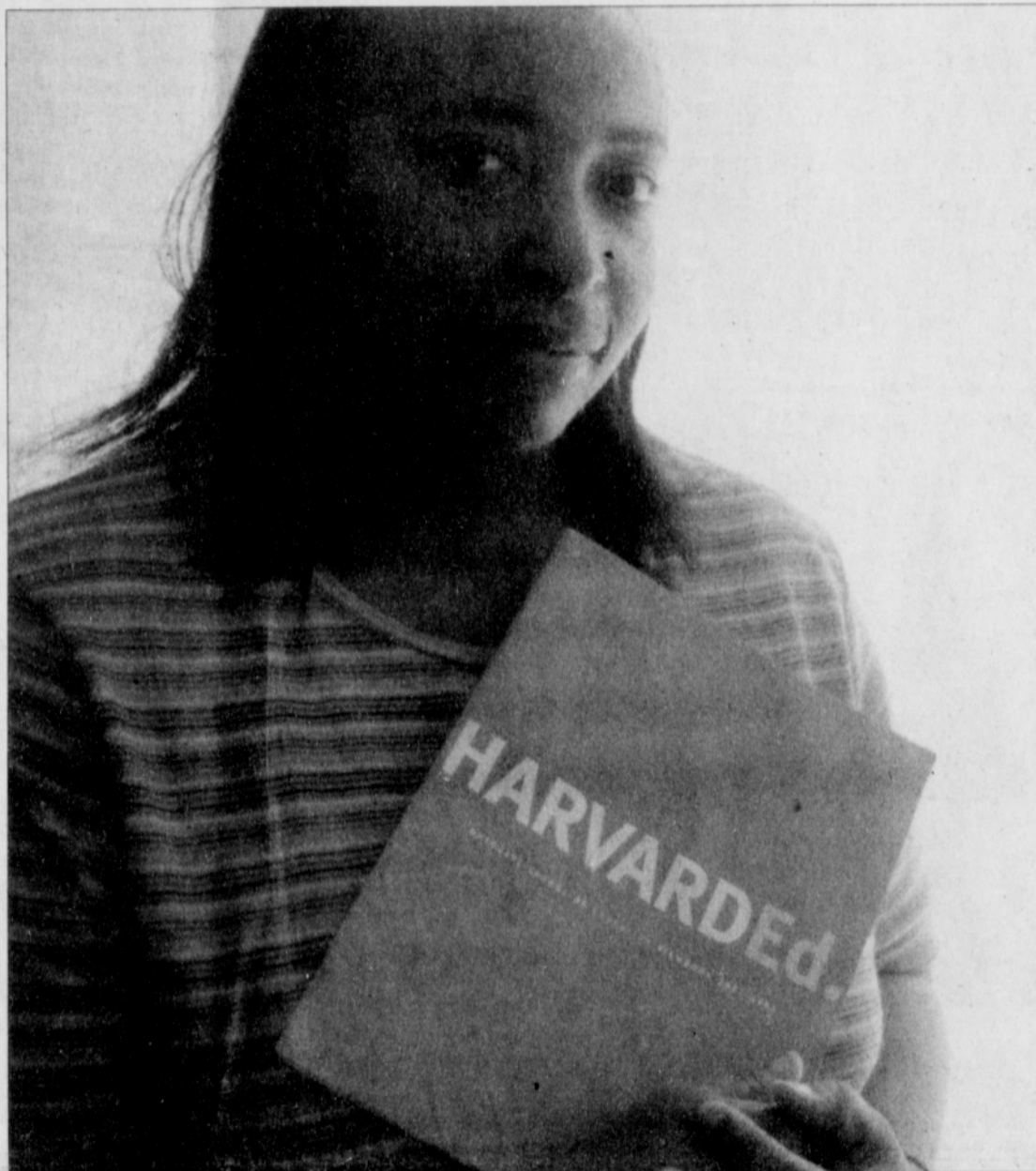
Despite financial and family setbacks, Watson graduated from Jefferson High as valedictorian in 1991. She graduated cum laude from Willamette University in 1995 and earned her master's degree the next year, boasting a 3.98 GPA.

Watson has been teaching at Sunset High School for the last 5 years. She is credited with starting the first ever African American credited course there.

"The opportunity to shape thousands of kids' lives is incredible. It is also daunting and scary, but awesome," Watson explains. "The notion that I will touch a future leader just makes me feel good," she says, "and its fun."

She's looking forward to absorbing knowledge at the Harvard School of Education, widely considered to be one of the best in the nation. The program takes most students 4-7 years to complete.

"If it's possible, I'd like to do it in three," Watson says.



Dyan Watson is a former graduate from Jefferson High School who is marching toward a doctorate in education.

PHOTO BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The opportunity to shape thousands of kids' lives is incredible. It is also daunting and scary, but awesome.

— Dyan Watson

When she gets back from Harvard, she wants to be a professor of Education at PSU or Lewis and Clark.

"I want to come back to Portland and work with people that want to become teachers," says Watson who lives in northeast Portland. "I want to reach out to the schools, talk to 6th graders, ask them if they've ever considered teaching."

Right now, Watson sees "a crisis in

education."

"There is a lack of role models," she says, "at one time, it meant something to be a teacher. The profession attracted the best and the brightest."

Nowadays, Watson says, "top notch" teachers often opt out within a couple years for better paying professions.

Despite the unfavorable numbers, Watson also wants to encourage more

people of color to teach.

"We have a huge shortage of black men in teaching," she says.

Watson has also led effective diversity workshops in Gresham and Beaverton. She thinks all teachers could stand to be a little bit better at dealing with ethnicity. "You don't have to be black, to be good with inner city kids."

She touts an interactive approach to teaching.

"They don't remember what you tell them but what you do," Watson says.

Watson's merit scholarship covers tuition and fees for a year, but is non-renewable. After the first year she'll have to raise the money herself, or take out loans.

The Urban Church of Portland is asking the community to help out with the \$45,000 a year tuition cost of the

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Junior Golf Nurtures Young Champions

Leisure Hour kids learn good sportsmanship and citizenship



With golf bags in tow, young members of the Leisure Hour Golf Club march during last month's "Good in the Hood" parade.

By JOY RAMOS

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

With the influence of Tiger Woods dominating the golf scene, interest in the sport has exploded. Portland is nurturing its own Tiger wannabes through the Leisure Hour Golf Club in northeast Portland.

The long-time program has received wide acclaim for mentoring minority youths to be good sportsmen and citi-

zens. This very commitment to youth development earned the club last month, a two-year grant of \$40,000 from the Western States Golf Association. The monies will be used for transportation, lessons, green fees, range balls and equipment.

Since its beginnings half a century ago, the club was started for the purpose of getting men and women together who loved to play golf and bridge. It evolved

differently in 1943 by promoting an interest in golf among minority youths.

Founder Vernon Gaskin, along with his wife, and J. Cullen Fentress, went on to spearhead the Western States Golf Assoc., a group that has grown considerably in size to 32 clubs with 1,600 members.

Currently, the Leisure Hour Golf Club in Portland has 65 junior golfers between the age of 7 to 18-years-old and 20 mentors.

As part of the program, junior golfers are immersed in classroom instruction, clinics, on-course instruction with mentors, and community service.

Many disciplines are required of the kids in the program to learn responsibility, on and off the golf course; Even parent involvement is expected.

Jaimee Mayfield, a 15-year-old Benson High School student praised the club by saying, "I didn't understand or know anything about golf until I joined this program. I have grown as an individual and now have the knowledge to go even further in life playing golf and being a better person."

This year, the young golfers volunteered their time at several church sites, dressed in black and white.

"Our program has so much to offer to our youths - not only to learn the game of golf, but we also strive to develop the whole person with love, discipline and

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Firefighter's Civil Rights Claim Settled

(AP)—The city will pay \$100,000 to settle a civil rights claim by a black firefighter who was subjected to derogatory racial comments and demeaning pornographic pranks while on the job.

The negotiated settlement with Rick Fizer, 32, was reached in a mediation session this month.

Fizer, who was out of work on a stress-related disability for six months while his complaints were investigated, is back on the job.

"I'm happy about being back, and I'm pleased with the settlement," Fizer said Monday. "Some much-needed changes are being made."

The Portland Fire Bureau has hired an outside consultant to assess the bureau's culture through a 100-question survey, interviews, station visits and a review of bureau policies. The consultants will report in September whether changes in bureau policies or training are needed.

A five-month bureau internal investigation into Fizer's complaints corroborated allegations that Fizer was subjected to racist comments about "cotton picking in Mississippi," negative comments about the north Portland neighborhoods the firefighters served and pornographic pranks.

Five Portland firefighters were disciplined last year for their actions. Two — including a battalion chief — were demoted, two were suspended without pay and the fifth received a letter of reprimand.