

# METRO Life

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

## Community Calendar

### Street of Dreams

The 27<sup>th</sup> annual NW Natural Street of Dreams will continue to build on its reputation for showcasing uniquely designed homes, unveiling its 2002 houses daily through Monday, Sept. 2, followed by an "encore weekend" Sept. 6, 7 and 8. Each home's design incorporates the latest trends in electronic technology, energy-efficiency, landscaping, consumer products, furnishings and décor. The tour begins in Atherton Heights in Lake Oswego on the corner of Rosemont and Stafford, from 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

### Portland BikeSummer

Dust off your unicycle, dig out your clown noses, and pedal on down to Portland BikeSummer's much anticipated "Full Moon Treasure Hunt Cycle Circus and Pedal-Powered Bike-In Movie." The event will be held on Thursday, Aug. 22, 8 p.m. at the Alberta Co-operative grocery parking lot on N.E. 15<sup>th</sup> and Alberta Street.

### Elders in Action

The Elders in Action Commission would like to invite you to join a special group of community leaders in becoming a member of the next "Elder Friendly Challenge Team" to be held from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. on Monday, Aug. 26. This lively event will be held at the Elders in Action office, located at 501 S.W. Washington St. Lunch will be served.

### 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. Spend the day at the park beginning with nature crafts from 10 - 11 a.m. at the Clatsop picnic shelter. On Aug. 14, kids can learn about the dazzling dance and music of Mexico, Brazil and Cuba. For more information, go online to [www.metro-region.org](http://www.metro-region.org).

## Fiesta Honors Neighborhood Diversity

A northeast neighborhood will host a back-to-school fiesta on Friday, Aug. 23, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at 5600 N.E. 42nd Ave. and Killingsworth.

The outdoor event will feature children's activities, family and community resources, health and education service providers, school readiness tips, treats and fun surprises.

Live performances by Mariachi Viva Mexico, Ballet Folklorico De Woodburn, and Capoeira Regional Do Brasil are scheduled.

The fiesta was put together as a way of celebrating the diversity of the neighborhood's residents and everyone is invited to enjoy the fun.

Event sponsors include the 42nd Avenue Target Area-Central Northeast Neighbors Inc., Hacienda CDC, Portland Community College, St. Charles Parish, Whitaker Middle School, and others.

## Free Concert Kicks Off Music Series

Portland's Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center will host a free jazz concert on Sunday, Aug. 18 from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. at Patton Park, adjacent to center at 5340 N. Interstate Ave.

Headlining the concert is the Augustana Quartet with jazz greats Ron Steen (drums), George Mitchell (keyboard), Phil Baker (bass) and Shirley Nanette (vocals). The Quartet has been performing locally for almost 10 years.

The event will also feature the 25-member Portland Community College Jazz Band under the direction of Frank Leuck. This popular group recently ap-

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Anne Mason eyes a Great Blue Heron through a spotting scope in north Portland's own backyard during Metro's Twilight Tuesday tours at Smith and Bybee lakes.

BY DAVID PLECHL

### THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

James Davis has been giving educational tours through Portland's parks and green spaces for four years.

Employed as a naturalist for the regional government, Metro, Davis says he never understood people who worked in one career for their whole lives, until he found his current job.

A former resident of Los Angeles and San Francisco, Davis says he only truly felt at home when he discovered Portland and its bounty of outdoor opportunities.

Davis teaches area residents the best techniques for watching wildlife.

"We want to be as still as we can," Davis whispers, leading a handful of curious Portlanders on Metro's Twilight Tuesday tour at Smith and Bybee Lakes in north Portland. "What we're trying to be is invisible."

Davis' knowledge of the outdoors and enthusiasm for "livability" fits perfectly with Metro's priorities for protecting natural spaces within and outside the urban boundaries of 24 cities in the Portland area.

Through education and instructional tours, Davis hopes people will begin to understand their connection to the natural world and the reasons for keeping it in tact.

"Metro has an incredible vision for parks and green spaces in the urban area," Davis says.

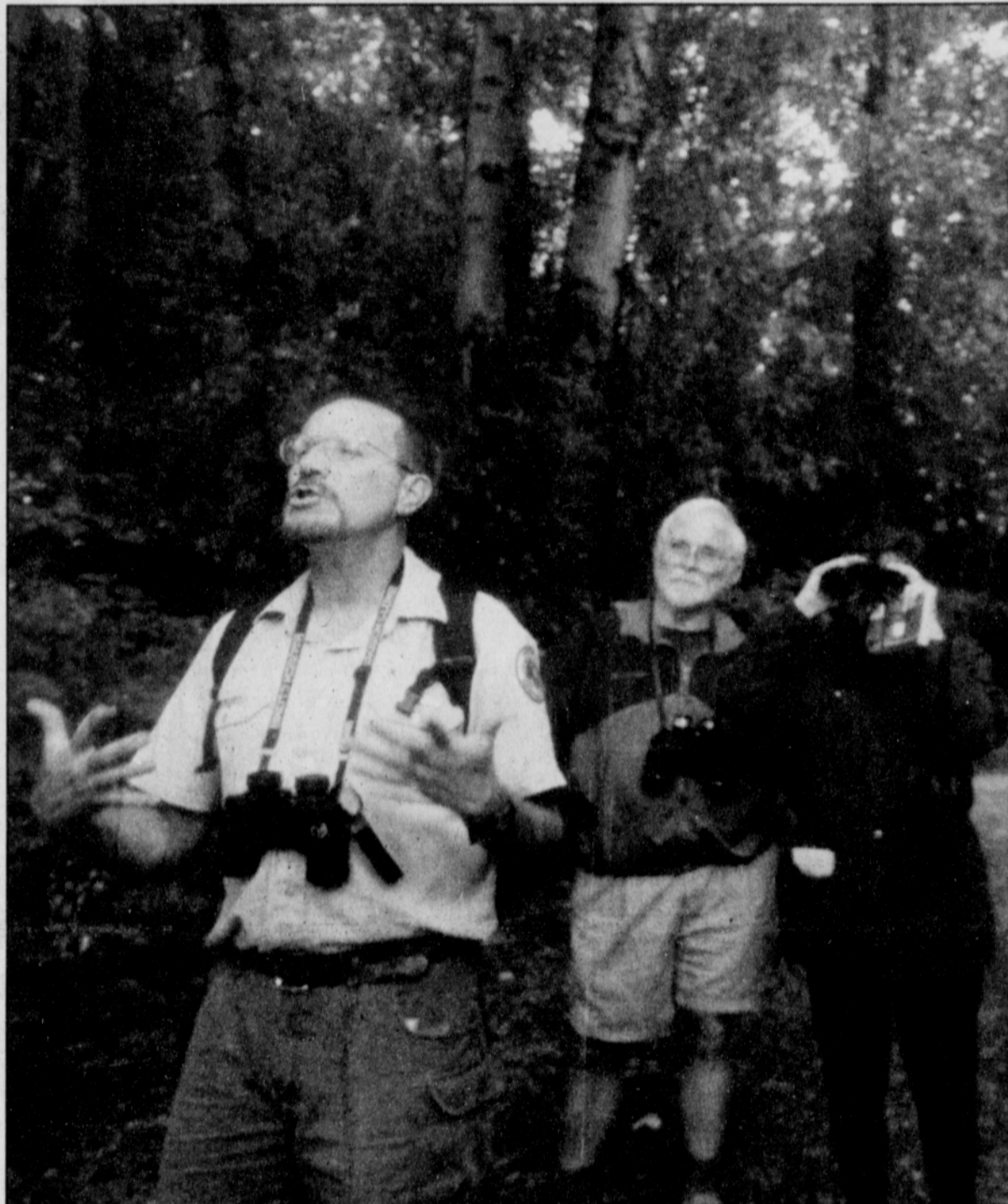
But the government's commitment to the preservation of Portland's high quality of life extends well beyond nature walks and twilight tours. It also provides a forum where cities, counties, and private citizens can collectively resolve issues related to growth.

Metro has the responsibility of providing long-range growth management and transportation planning within the tri-county metropolitan area.

While local governments carry out local planning functions such as zoning and neighborhood design, Metro's job is to assure that local planning is coordinated throughout the metropolitan area in order to protect air quality, alleviate traffic congestion, and protect farm and

## Metro Governs Green

Local tours help people connect to the natural world



James Davis (left) of the regional government Metro, leads sightseers on a tour of Smith and Bybee Lakes in north Portland. The area is an environmental treasure for wildlife and is the largest urban freshwater wetland in the nation.

PHOTOS BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

forest lands outside the urban growth boundary.

Metro also owns and operates the Oregon Zoo, Oregon Convention Center, and Expo Center. It is responsible for handling recycling efforts, solid waste transfer stations and hazardous waste facilities.

The Twilight Tuesday tours are part of the Metro's Regional Parks and Greenspaces Department's effort to introduce more people to nature and educate them on the importance of conservation.

Davis helps point out the birds, bugs, rabbits, ducks and turtles that call the wetland home.

He says few people realize that the Smith and Bybee Lakes area is the largest urban freshwater wetland in the nation. Davis thinks the people of north and northeast Portland should come out to explore this treasure in their own backyard.

"We want people to bond with nature," Davis explains. "This is their wetland."

## Nike Court Finished, Others in Line



A new surface made from recycled shoes is spread Thursday across the basketball courts at Irving Park in northeast Portland. Nike is paying for the costs as part of a \$2 million donation to resurface 35 basketball courts in the city. PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER



Local kids test out a new basketball court during dedication ceremonies Thursday at Kenton Park in north Portland. Nike donated the materials and labor to resurface the playing surface with material made from recycled shoes. PHOTO BY STEVE DIPAOLO