



The



# Portland Observer

'City of Roses'

Established in 1970

www.portlandobserver.com

Volume XXXII • Number 37

Committed to Cultural Diversity

Wednesday • September 18, 2002

## THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Life on Alberta 2002



Annual street fair embraces a Portland multicultural neighborhood. Bridget Smith, a 5<sup>th</sup> grade teacher at Boise Eliot Elementary, shows off some glass work at the Alberta Street Fair. This and other images can be found on page A3, inside.

### Calif. Family Leave Bill Awaits Governor's Decision

LOS ANGELES — California is one step from establishing the nation's most sweeping program to give workers paid time off to care for family members. Under the bill, California would create the first state insurance program to replace part of employees' wages when they stay home to nurture a baby or help a seriously ill child, parent, spouse or domestic partner.

### U.N.: Iraq Accepts Weapons Inspectors

UNITED NATIONS — Iraq agreed to allow the unconditional return of U.N. weapons inspectors, a reversal coming days after President Bush warned Baghdad to comply with U.N. resolutions or face military action. The White House dismissed the offer as a tactical move.

### Yemeni Identified as Daniel Pearl Killer

KARACHI, Pakistan — An al-Qaeda militant arrested with alleged Sept. 11 organizer Ramzi Bin al-Shibh has been identified as one of the killers of *Wall Street Journal* correspondent Daniel Pearl, a senior police official said.

### World's Oldest Person Greets Her 115th Birthday

TOKYO — Kamato Hongo, the world's oldest person according to the Guinness Book of Records, turned 115. Hongo slept through the morning of her birthday but planned to celebrate with her family in the afternoon, Japanese media reported.

### Jury Decides Death for Westerfield

SAN DIEGO — A jury decided that David Westerfield should die for killing 7-year-old neighbor Danielle van Dam, the little girl who vanished from her bedroom in the first of a string of high-profile child abductions across the country this year.

### Florida Anthrax May Have Spread Via Photocopier

BOCARATON, Fla. — FBI investigators believe photocopy machines were the reason anthrax spores were spread throughout an office building where a tainted letter was mailed in last year's attacks, according to a published report.

## Patton Home Change Brings Uncertainty

Historic building stops services to disabled and some elderly

BY WYNDE DYER  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

On Sept. 5, residents at the historic Patton Home were asked to pay their rent. On Sept. 6, they were told to find a new place to live.

The 63-unit residence on North Michigan Avenue will soon make the controversial switch from a residential care facility to an alcohol and drug-free single room occupancy unit for low-income single adults.

The decision of Patton Home officials to abruptly discontinue services as a residential care facility has left 57 low-income elderly residents, Patton staff and members of the Humboldt neighborhood in a state of uncertainty.

"It's so stressful for us," said lead medical aid Onny Descloux. "We really don't know how to handle it."

The notice of the closure of services was a surprise for everyone, she said. With the exception of the cook, all staff members will have to find new jobs.

Descloux drives 40 miles to work each day to distribute medicine and help with general nursing care at Patton Home. She would never have accepted the job had she known it would only last four months. But she said her main concern is for the displaced residents.

"This is the first stable place some of these people have been in years," Descloux said. "Without the supervision of our staff, some of them would be out in the streets or in jail. Others wouldn't eat for days on end."

In order to provide stability and supervision as a residential care facility, Patton Home must turn a profit. In almost two years of operation, Patton has seen losses of between \$10,000 and \$15,000 a month. Patton's current annual operation budget is roughly \$900,000, and as a single room occupancy unit, that number would drop to between \$250,000 and \$300,000.

According to Vassar Byrd, marketing and



Patton Home resident Herman Stevenson offers a piece of bread to Ally, the medical companion of a fellow resident. Since the home is switching from residential care to single room occupancy units for alcohol and drug free adults, Stevenson will have to find a new home. "I'm leaving as fast as I can," he said.

PHOTO BY WYNDE DYER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

program services director at Patton, the services just had to be dropped. She said housing people who require nursing care was just too costly.

"It is simply not sustainable to operate with those losses," Byrd said.

Patton Home has seen a lot of changes since its inception in 1890 as a "Home for the Aged and Friendless."

During the 50s, 60s and 70s, Patton provided traditional single-room occupancy for

low-income single adults. By the time the historical building was purchased in the early 90s by Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, the building was disintegrating. Time had taken its toll. After a \$6.1 million facelift and luxurious interior redesign, Patton Home reopened in late 2000 to serve the needs of low-income disabled and elderly people.

Byrd explained that a residential care facility is one step before assisted living. All residents receive medical attention from

nurses, medical aids and personal service assistants. But Patton Home was overly ambitious about the costs of the services it provided. Revenue projections assumed that 100 percent of Patton's residents would need Medicaid-paid services. In reality only two-thirds did.

"So we had to drop the services," Byrd said.

continued ▼ on page A6

## College Band Puts Spotlight on Vanport



North Carolina A&T's marching band, the Blue and Gold Marching Machine, performs at Pioneer Courthouse Square Friday as part of the Second Annual Vanport Invitational, a celebration of the rich history and diversity of the Portland community and a tribute to the unique past of Portland State University. Vanport, a largely African American city, and Vanport College were washed away in a devastating flood in 1948. However, the college lives on today in PSU and the people of the city are reflected in the culture and diversity of Portland.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

## Voting Debacle Smacks Florida Once Again

NAACP calls primary election for governor a travesty of justice; plans a second lawsuit

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People blasted Florida's poor voting system as the source for the remedy.

a sheer travesty of justice that many Florida voters were disenfranchised for the time in as many years," said Kweisi Mfume, NAACP president and chief executive officer. "Congress bears much of the blame for

not passing a federal bill that would institute minimum election standards for voting across the nation."

Mfume said the NAACP is planning to file another lawsuit against the Florida election officials amid reports that voters complained about polls opening late, election workers struggling with new touch screen voting machines, and voter confusion about polling places because of

new precinct boundaries.

In addition, some poll workers failed to show up; several polling places opened late; some voters were wrongly turned away for not showing a picture identification.

In response to complaints on election day, Sept. 10, Gov. Jeb Bush extended polling by two hours - but that led to yet more abuses: In Hollywood, Fla., workers at one precinct who

had not been told of the extension, held the door shut and cursed at voters.

"It is as if Florida officials totally ignored the election debacle of November 2000," Mfume said.

Just a week earlier, the NAACP settled a lawsuit against the state after many African American and other voters were disenfranchised during the presidential election on Nov. 7, 2000.

PRISORT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PORTLAND OR  
PERMIT  
NO. 1610

Right Library  
1299 University of Oregon  
Eugene, Oregon 97403