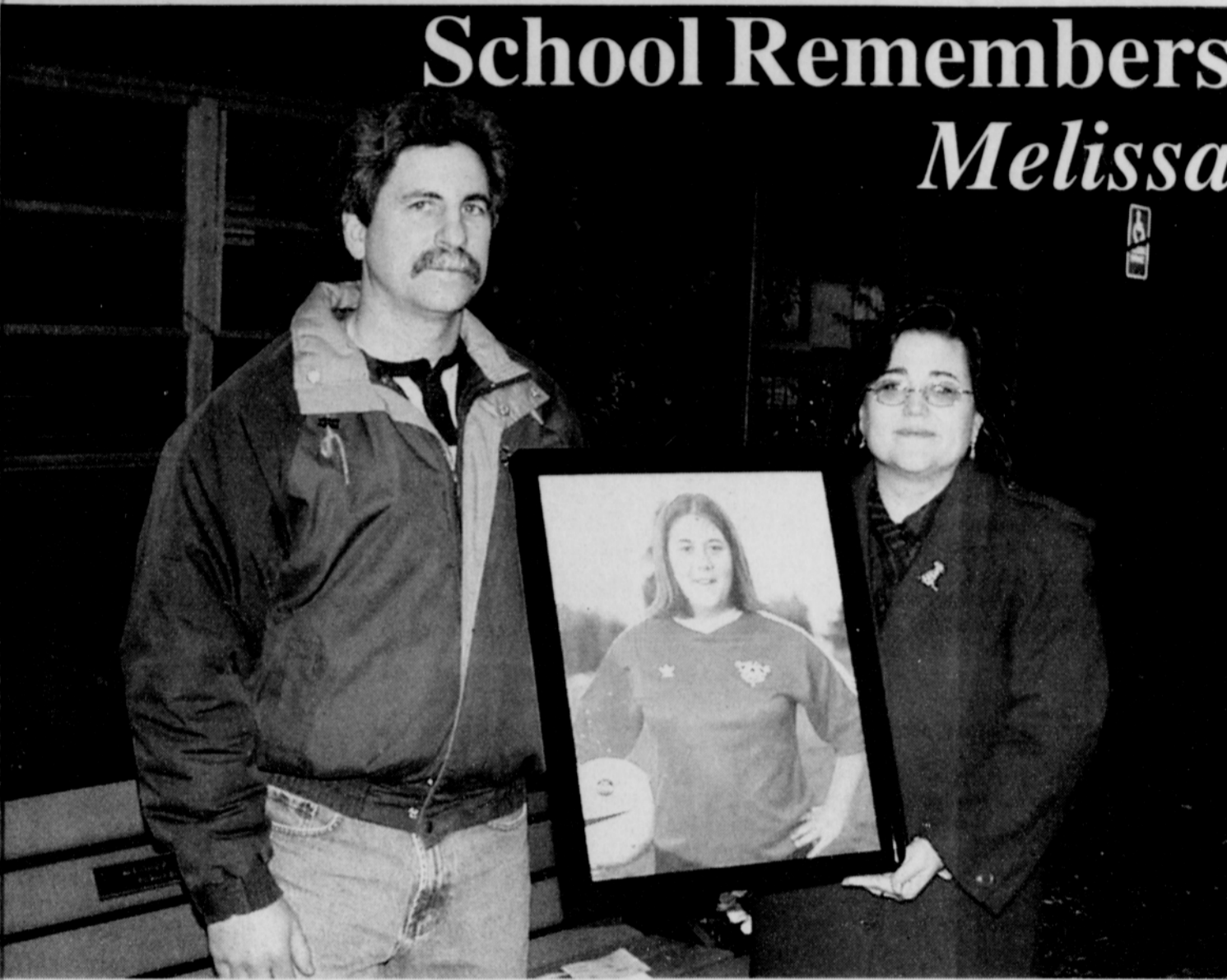


# School Remembers Melissa Bittler



Tom and Mary Bittler hold a picture of their beloved daughter Melissa, at Meek School in northeast Portland last week after a ceremony dedicating a school bench in Melissa's honor. A former Meek student, Melissa was murdered on Dec. 13 as she headed to school from her northeast Portland home. Trial for the accused killer in the case, Landon Andre Stephens, 33, is pending.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

## Week in The Review

continued ▲ from Front

### Rat Olympics Return

2002 is an Olympic year, if you're a rat. Next week, the Rat Olympics return to the Lincoln campus of Nebraska Wesleyan. The rodents will be competing for the big cheese in all sorts of Olympic events like track, weight lifting and long jump. Trainers and their rats will be vying for gold, silver and bronze medals. Psychology Professor Spencer Morrison says training rats is a great way for students to study animal behavior. Morrison adds the spectators will be amazed by the rats' ability and agility.

### Berliners tire of swingers'

A group of weary Berliners has gone to court to close down a swingers' club on the ground floor of their building because the moans of pleasure and screams of delight are keeping them awake. Although they get a reduction on their rent, a lawyer who lives on the first floor says his wife has to use earplugs every night because the sounds of sexual intercourse can be heard throughout the building.

### Friends claim boy was swallowed by snake

A young South African boy is missing, his friends say he was swallowed by an African rock python and a snake expert says he believes them. Snake park owner said judging by a big flattened grass path and snake tracks by a nearby river, the group of boys, aged between five and eight, are probably telling the truth.

### Breast-Feeding Prompts Court Action

A judge in Urbana, Ill., gave the state legal guardianship Friday of an 8-year-old boy whose mother was breast-feeding him as recently as last year. Lynn Stuckey, 34, will retain custody of the boy. Judge John DeLaMar said she had not abused the boy in any way, but made bad decisions that could cause him long-term emotional harm.

### Wanted: Heads of Cajun country rodents

Nutria—furry, swamp-dwelling rodents that look like 10-pound rats with webbed feet—are largely regarded as a nuisance in Louisiana's Cajun country. Starting Wednesday, the state of Louisiana will pay a \$4-a-tail bounty in hopes of wiping out 400,000 nutria this winter. The payment is part of an effort to save Louisiana's coast.

## Vancouver Transit Hurting



### Sales tax boost considered

Clark County transit officials agreed in a 7-1 vote that in the next year or two Clark County voters should be asked to approve a proposal to raise the sales tax for C-Tran, the county's public transit system. After several months of research, calculations and discussions, the majority of the C-Tran Board agreed that the transit agency's finances will be so depleted in several years that the only choice is to substantially cut the service or seek additional funding to even remain at the same services levels operated currently. C-Tran presently levies three-tenths of one percent sales tax, imposed after a countywide vote in 1980. In 1999, with the pas-

sage of Initiative 695, C-Tran lost the matching motor vehicle excise tax contribution, resulting in a \$12 million revenue loss. Subsequently, C-tran cut or saved nearly \$16 million in expenses over the last two years and shored up the remaining loss by using reserve funds that had been set aside for capital facilities projects. That fund is expected to be exhausted in 2005. C-Tran staff will now work on recommendations for an election date, along with the development of extensive public education, outreach and citizen participation to address the issue. C-Tran operates 28 routes in Clark County, with commuter service to Portland.

## PSU Expands for Minorities

### DePreist professorship to support education in the arts

Portland State University will pay tribute to Oregon Symphony conductor James DePreist with a new professorship that will expand educational opportunities in Arts to students from traditionally underrepresented background. The new professorship not only provides outstanding instruction in the visual arts but also provides outreach and mentoring that will help these students in the PSU Department of Art continue through to completion of their degrees. The new James DePreist Visiting

Professorship in Ethnic Art has been created and named through a \$100,000 gift from the Harold and Arlene Schnitzer CARE Foundation. The professorship is a natural outgrowth of Portland State University's commitment to diversity, evidenced by President Daniel O. Bernstein's University-wide Diversity initiative, and by PSU's position as that most diverse campus in Oregon. This professorship will help grow that diversity in PSU Department of Art. "We are pleased to join Harold

and Arlene Schnitzer in honoring James DePreist with this new professorship," said Robert Sylvester, dean of PSU School of Fine and Performing Arts. "Jimmy is a mentor and a teacher, it is fitting that this professorship be in his name. In his 23 years with the Oregon Symphony, Jimmy's influence is felt throughout the region's cultural life. DePreist is completing 23 years as Oregon Symphony music director; he is changing his role with the orchestra through 2008.

## SEI OPTIONS Supporting Families

Self Enhancement, Inc. will disperse holiday food boxes to families in need on Wednesday, Nov. 27 at noon. Over 200 families are expected to benefit from the giveaway at the Center for Self Enhancement, 3920

N. Kerby Ave. SEI has conducted the giveaway for years, but this year, they've seen a marked increase in the number of families requesting boxes. "Normally we give out 100 boxes" says Tony Hopson, President and

CEO of SEI. "But this year we're doubling that to 200 boxes because the need in our community is just so great". For more information, please call Lisa Manning at Self Enhancement Inc., 503-249-1721, extension 241.



Closing Thanksgiving Day Early at 4:00 pm. Opening Friday 6:00 am.

# Happy Thanksgiving

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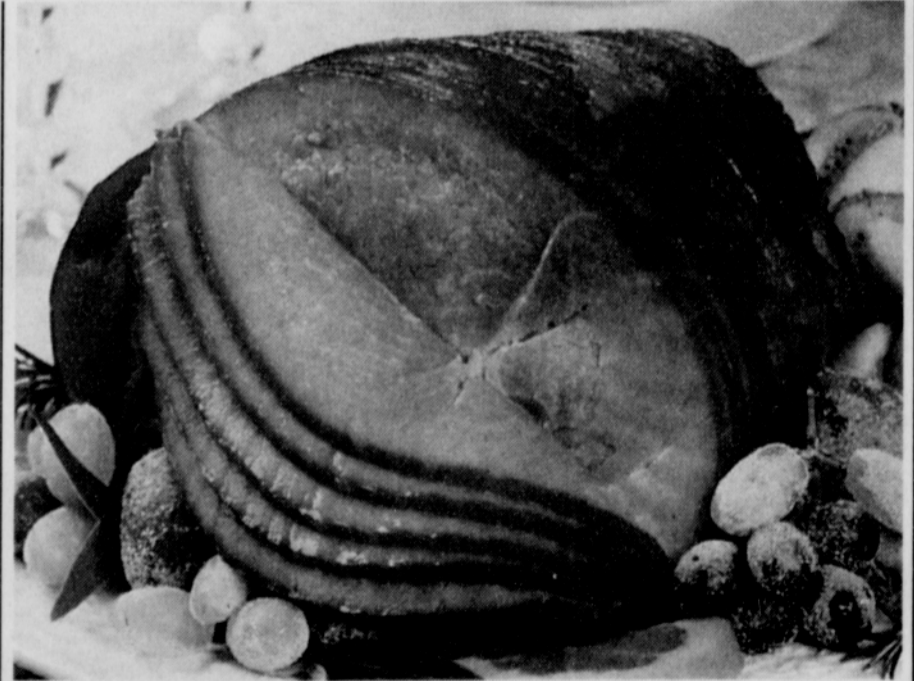
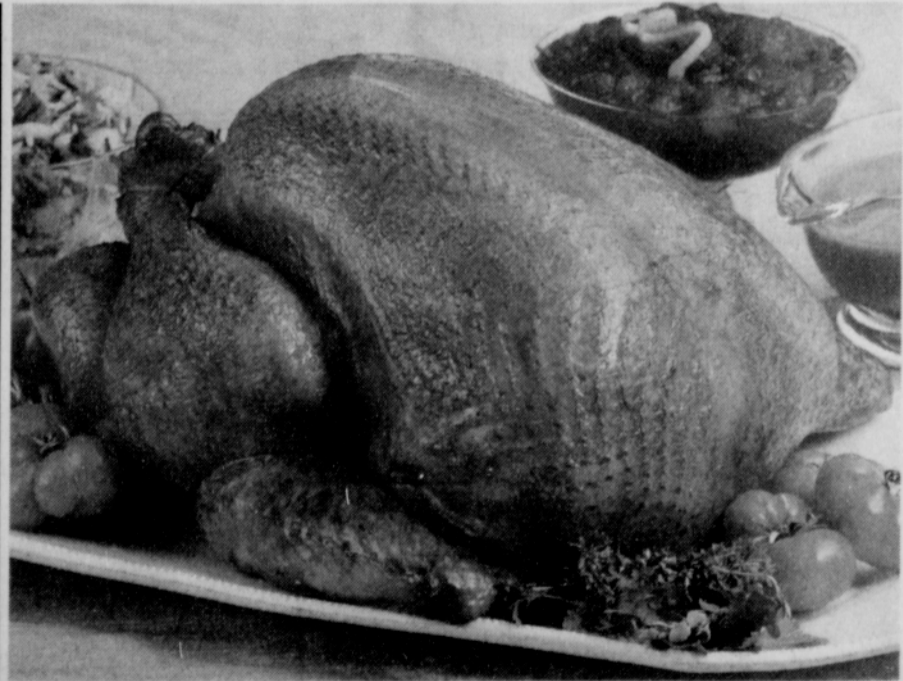
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