

KWANZAA COMES ALIVE

continued ▲ from Front

The tradition of Kwanzaa was created by Professor Maulana Ron Karenga in the 60s to renew and remind all Americans of their connection to Africa and the great spiritual gifts of the continent.

The word Kwanzaa is derived from a Swahili phrase "Matunda Ya Kwanza," meaning fresh fruits and suggests a theme of thanks and celebration.

Many of the pieces in the show are richly colorful, while some draw from the deep hues of the earth itself. Many reflect an African heritage.

Paintings by 'Astraal' are intensely colorful and imbued with undulating patterns that seem to move on the surface of the canvas. Her work integrates modern themes of war, childbirth and renewal within an African context.

In her 'Ride Through the Storm', the burning, swirling, orange of the African desert is tempered by the cool blue robe of a rider on a camel. To 'Astraal', the juxtaposition of the piece indicates the resolve of many Americans in the aftermath of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks.

"Color speaks to me," she said. "It is symbolic of the very richness of life."

The themes of Kwanzaa, she said, continually inspire her work.



A tiny sculpture represents one of seven principles of Kwanzaa.

Other works in the show that will run through January, include photography by Stanley Marston, showing candid, everyday rural scenes from his home in Jamaica.

"I try to show there is a lot more to Jamaica than just the tourist areas," Marston said.

Cleveland Smith shows colorful, intricately squared cotton quilts in complimentary colors that crisscross and form a rhythmic in-

terplay.

A breathtaking collection of metalwork based on nature and tribal gods is shown by Nigerian born Mufu Ahmed.

James E. Dunbar shows traditional African tribal scenes rendered in pencil on paper.

Other artists include, Lana Centeno, Samuel Jones, Dick Bogle, Zion Benay, Richard Brown, Ray Eaglin and Charles Rex-Gunnell.

The Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center is a non-profit, community based performing arts center in partnership with Portland Parks and Recreation. Its mission is to create an environment in which people of every ethnic and cultural background can come together as artists and audience to explore, preserve and honor their diversity.

The Kwanzaa show will run Tuesday through Friday from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m., concluding Dec. 31 with a Kwanzaa celebration.



Bookies Entertainment for Everyone

The little bar on the corner of North Albina and Lombard is not so little, with three pool tables a stage and a full lounge, Bookies Sports Bar makes the most of its square footage.

continued ▲ from Front

Tired and Hungry? Come in Thursday for some corn fried catfish or smothered beef brisquets with red beans and hush puppies. Soak up melodies by the Black Notes and be inspired by inventive spoken word by some of Portland's most talented artists.

Bookies manages to pull off a neighborhood atmosphere with the upbeat vibe of a music venue while giving sports fans their fix with big screens blasting the biggest games.

With three pool tables, a dining area, an atmospheric lounge and stage, and plenty of strategically placed TVs, Bookies has a little something for everyone.

Wednesday night is ladies night. Thursday, it's "Soul Food," featuring delectable selections from the Bookies kitchen. On the weekend, things really get rolling with up to 250 people swinging to the live tunes.

Friendly service meets a diverse clientele as Bookies caters to a more mature audience. On Friday and Saturday nights, admittance is 25 years or older only.

Bookies creators have managed to nail down that hometown feel without being boring. Inspired, laid back, and totally cool. Bookies is the place.



A featured poet makes it real at Bookies, a new multicultural venue for entertainment in north Portland. The nightspot also features live music each Friday and Saturday nights.

PHOTOS BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

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Committed to Neighborhood Diversity

Southeast Uplift bridges cultural and language barriers to serve local residents

BY LEE PERLMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

For years, people have charged that Portland's neighborhood associations are not truly representative of the communities they speak for, especially in regard to people of color and immigrants.

Elizabeth Kennedy and her Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program is trying to do something about that.

Southeast Uplift is the largest of Portland's seven neighborhood offices that serve and funnel city services to volunteer neighborhood groups.

The non-profit corporation serves southeast Portland and is run by a board made up of representatives from its neighborhoods.

For the past year, Kennedy, and her staff have been working on connecting the group to the city's diverse populations.

"We got back 1,200 pieces of paper," Kennedy said. "Over and over, people said, 'Outreach is important, and we don't do it very well.'"

In their own defense, neighborhood associations say that their meetings are publicized and open to everyone in the community. However, Kennedy said publication and an open invitation to the community is not always enough.

"If your meeting announcements are written in Greek and the meetings are conducted in Greek, not many people who don't speak that language will come," Kennedy said. "If they do come, they won't stay long."

She likens that to the gap between neighborhood associations and their constituencies.

"I don't think it's intentional, I don't think neighborhood associations are con-



If your meeting announcements are written in Greek and the meetings are conducted in Greek, not many people who don't speak that language will come. If they do come, they won't stay long.

—Elizabeth Kennedy, executive director of Southeast Uplift Neighborhood Program

sciously saying, 'We only want to be us,'" she said. "But neighborhood associations can do things differently."

To begin with, Southeast Uplift often

sends out written materials in Spanish, Russian or Vietnamese, and not by accident, have staff members who speak these languages.

The group is seeking funding grants to provide dinner and childcare at large meetings. Currently, if they know of someone who wants to get involved but has difficulty getting to a meeting, they will attempt to provide transportation.

"It's a matter of overcoming the barriers to participation and making it easier," Kennedy said. "If you're a single parent and you have to prepare an early dinner and get a baby sitter in order to go to a meeting, the chances are you won't do it. That's a lot of work."

"We're telling them that neighborhood associations are there and participation is open," Kennedy said.

Another Southeast Uplift staffer, Amy Dudley, works with a Diversity and Representation Committee.

"All people should be engaged in the decisions that affect their lives," Dudley said. "When you get people into a room there are cultural barriers that make it difficult for some people to express themselves and feel welcome. This challenges us to look at issues that haven't necessarily been in the forefront of our agendas."

Committee co-chair Linda Nettekoven agrees.

"We're trying to create a place at the table for people who have not traditionally been involved," Nettekoven said. "The United States is probably the most diverse society in human history, and we're trying to preserve what people have brought with them here. We're trying to integrate people, not force them to assimilate. We want to create a bouquet, not a stew in which everything is mushed together."

No Call List Hits Unwanted Solicitors

Oregonians who want to stop most telemarketing calls to their homes and cell phones have until Sunday, Dec. 15 to register for the latest update of the Oregon No Call List.

The No Call Law, enacted by the Oregon Legislature in 1999, gives residential and cellular phone customers the opportunity to get on the "No Call List" and get off

telemarketers' lists. Companies that call homes on the No Call list are subject to fines of up to \$25,000. To date, Oregon Attorney General Hardy Myers has fined 120 companies more than \$450,000 for violating the No Call Law.

The Oregon No Call list is updated quarterly and is distributed to more than 1,000 telemarketers in 49 states and two foreign countries. People who miss the December

deadline for the January list will be still be able to register for the April 2003 list. Annual No Call List subscriptions cost \$6.50 for the first year and \$3 each year thereafter.

Phone customers may subscribe or receive additional information about the service by calling 1-877-700-6622 or through the Internet at www.ornocall.com.