

The Portland Observer

City of Roses

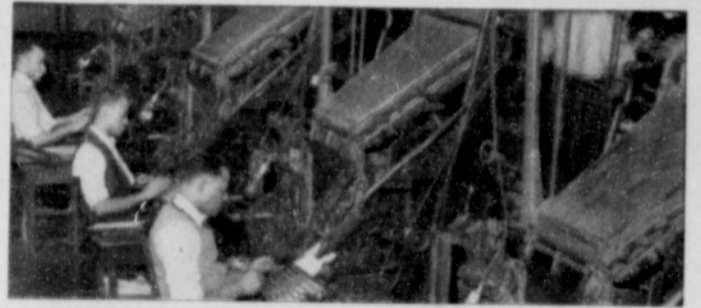
Established in 1970

www.portlandobserver.com

Volume XXXIII • Number 6

Committed to Cultural Diversity

Wednesday • February 05, 2003



Week in The Review

Breast milk meals

A new craze has hit restaurant tables in China - meals cooked with human breast milk. The dishes are being offered at a restaurant in Changsha, capital of southern Hunan province, with plans to expand to the boomtown of Shenzhen across the border from Hong Kong. The *Beijing Times* says the milk came from six peasant women who were still breast-feeding their children.

Accidental action hero

A teenager in Kansas City, Mo., was catapulted at least 25 feet in the air during an auto accident but grabbed onto overhead utility wires like an action hero and dangled for about 20 minutes before a rescue crew brought him down by ladder. Joe R. Thompson III, 18, was treated for bruises and scratches at a hospital and was released.

Dumb as a donkey

On Sunday a man and woman in Fairport Harbor, Ohio, who vandalized a baby Jesus statue in a church's outdoor nativity marched through town with a donkey borrowed from a petting zoo and a sign that said, "Sorry for the jackass offense." Jessica Lange and Brian Patrick, both 19, were ordered by a judge to make Sunday's march through town after they admitted defacing a statue at St. Anthony Roman Catholic Church on Christmas Eve.

Bush budgets for aliens

Proof that life exists outside the boundaries of Earth continues to elude scientists, but President Bush's budget suggests that "space aliens" may be out there. And it could just be a matter of time before they are discovered. In a brief passage titled "Where Are the Real Space Aliens?" Bush's budget document released Monday says several important scientific discoveries in the past decade indicate that "habitable worlds" in outer space may be much more prevalent than once thought.

War games in parliament

A Norwegian member of parliament apologized on Thursday for playing a war game on his pocket computer while legislators around him debated the possibility of a real war in Iraq. Trond Helleland, a member of the ruling Conservative Party, was caught on a national television camera playing the game during Wednesday's debate about whether Norway would take part in any US-led military action against Iraq.

How to hide an elephant

A German circus director is on the run with his elephant after breaking a local authority ban on moving the deeply distressed animal. Officials had ordered the director not to move the elephant, Kenia, because she was upset by the death of Rani, the circus's only other elephant. Police said the man and beast have disappeared without trace. "It's easier to hide an elephant than you might think," a police spokesman said.



Astronauts Remembered

Four of the Columbia's crew members pose for a photo on Jan. 27 just five days before the space shuttle broke apart in flames over Texas. NASA indicates that Saturday's crash may be related to shuttle tiles damaged in liftoff, but hasn't determined a cause. See related story and photo on page B4, inside.

City Contracts Wanted

Better days ahead promised to minority firms

BY DAVID PLECHL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Portland City Council is scheduled to approve a plan this week to increase the use of women and minority contractors.

The action, scheduled for a vote on Wednesday, is the city's response to studies showing that access to the city's professional and technical contracts has proved difficult for women and minority-owned businesses.

Firms considered disadvantaged held contracts for just 6 percent of the \$84.8 million the city spends for contract services over a two-year period. African Americans took home just 1 percent.

"Professional service contractors were saying it was difficult to do business with the city," said Sue Klobertanz, the city's director of the Bureau of Purchases.

Klobertanz said one problem was that city administrators who can hire their own contractors had dismal records of making contacts with minority firms - something they are required to do.

Additionally, she said bureaus were hiring the same contractors repeatedly without contacting other firms. Sole-source contracts represented 60 percent of all city contracts.

"We don't know who's been bidding and who's been shut out," Klobertanz said.

The proposal calls for more centralized oversight, better data collection and increased out-

continued ▼ on page A8

MURAL MOTIVATES HEALTHY LIVING

Art encourages African Americans to take charge of health issues

BY DAVID PLECHL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The African American Health Coalition unveiled a huge, build-ing-size mural Saturday as a life-saving message to the north and northeast Portland community.

Located on Northeast 15th and Alberta on the outside wall of Alberta Cooperative Grocery, the mural honors Black History Month and encourages African American's to take charge of the health issues affecting their lives.

The mural shows Portlanders living healthy lives at locations around the city and encourages those who read it to - eat right, exercise and get tested for high

blood pressure.

"We want our community to realize that we have the power to make changes and live healthier, happier lives," said Corliss McKeever, president of the African American Health Coalition. "The mural is a symbol of the coalition's commitment to eliminating the health disparity between African Americans and other communities in Oregon."

Cardiovascular Disease is the number one killer of African Americans in Oregon with the minority population twice as likely as white Americans to die from a stroke and almost one and a half times as likely to die from a heart attack. The major

risk factors for cardiovascular disease are obesity, physical inactivity, smoking, high blood pressure and diabetes.

"When I heard about the mural I just had to get involved," said Sharon Gerachi, the African American artist who found inspiration for the mural in her own family's health history.

"My mom and dad suffer from heart disease and diabetes and I considered this to be a message all of this community needs to know," she said. "Individuals can take control of their lives and become healthy regardless of the circumstances that they are in by making life style changes."

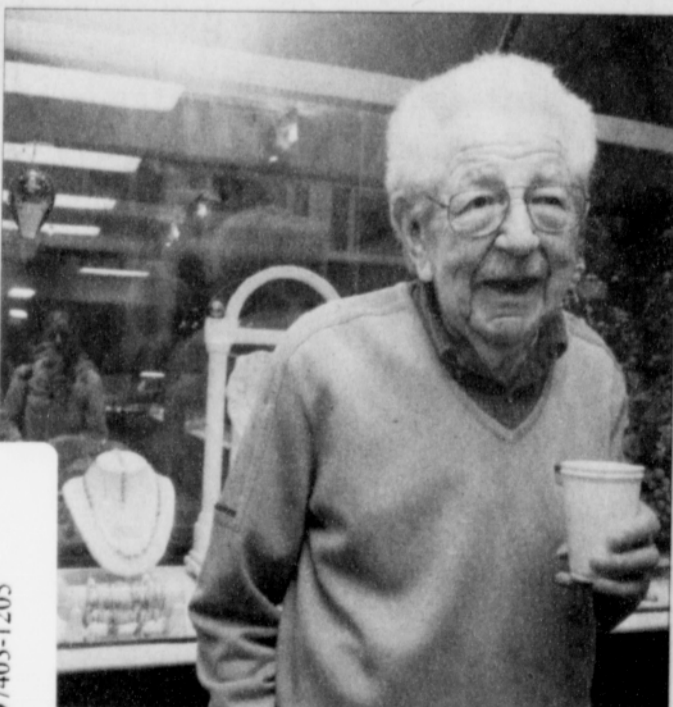


PHOTOS BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Sharon Gerachi waits for the ceremony to begin as a mural she designed for the African American Health Coalition is unveiled at the Alberta Cooperative Grocery. Gerachi's own family history with heart disease and diabetes inspired her to paint the outdoor mural which reminds African Americans to live healthy lives.



Neighbors admire the new mural on the side of the Alberta Cooperative Grocery on the corner of 15th and Alberta.



PHOTOS BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVERS
"Toby" Tobin stands in front of H&B Jewelry & Loan Co., the he opened along Southwest 3rd Avenue over 50 years ago. ened a second store, H&B Too, on Martin Luther King Jr. last year.

It's easy. There's no magic to it. You treat the customer with respect, dignity and empathy and they'll keep coming back.

—Lou 'Toby' Tobin, H&B Loan Co. owner

The Dealmaker

H & B Jewelry founder brings love of life to burgeoning business

BY DAVID PLECHL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Lou "Toby" Tobin has been around the block a few times, but Southwest Third Avenue will always be his home. He opened H & B Jewelry and Loan Co. there in 1948. It ranks among Portland's oldest family-owned businesses.

Over the years, Tobin's familiar silver gray hair, unmistakable smile and propensity for honesty and fairness have become his trade-

mark for good business.

"It's easy. There's no magic to it. You treat the customer with respect, dignity and empathy and they'll keep coming back," Tobin said.

The philosophy works. The company's success has transferred to the north and northeast community with a new H&B on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard just south of Alberta.

It's not uncommon to see Tobin sitting at the jewelry counter at his downtown store with a cup of coffee in his hand, greeting customers as they check out bargains in the showcase.

"I still make a sell every now and then," he said.

Tobin's hobby is golf.

After spending his younger years as a caddie, Tobin started developing his golf game. He quickly became one of the best amateur golfers on the scene.

He squared off with some of the city's best every Sunday for years and years at Tualatin Country Club, the only private course that would allow Jewish members.

"I was golf crazy," he said.

One afternoon the club pro called him up and told him he had someone there that he wanted Tobin to play a round with. That somebody happened to be boxing great Joe

continued ▼ on page A6



PRIORITY STD
US POSTAGE
PAID
PORTLAND OR
PERMIT
NO. 1610

Newspaper Bureau
Knight Library
1299 University of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403-1205