

Town Hall Will Address Issues

Representatives from northeast and southeast Portland in the Oregon Legislature are inviting area residents to a town hall discussion aimed at brining down the walls between lawmakers and the public.

Sen. Avel Gordly, Rep. Jackie Dingfelder and Rep.

Steve March are sponsoring the session on Saturday, May 10 from 10 a.m. to noon at the YMCA Arts Education Center, 6036 S.E. Foster Road.

Gordly, an African American lawmaker, will focus on revenue.

"The Measure 28 vote demonstrated that 46 percent of voters are willing to pay for the services that Oregonians need and deserve," Gordly said. "Many of those who voted against M28 would change their vote today. We need to build from that base for the good of all Oregonians. My message is tax reform and tax restructuring—

now." Dingfelder said it's more important now than ever to hear from her constituents because of the state's money troubles.

March said town halls enable him to shed light on complex issues and get public feedback to base his decisions in Salem.

"This is the best way for our bosses to tell us what they want done," March said.

The legislators will answer questions about the state budget, education, civil rights and any other subject the constituents bring to their attention.

Commissioner Enlists Local Business Leader

Entrepreneur named liaison to development commission

Portland City Commissioner Randy Leonard has appointed Roy Jay to act as his representative and liaison to the Portland Development Commission.

Jay, 55, owns various business entities in Portland and has been a small business owner and entrepreneur for over 30 years. He was the original founder of Oregon Business Network, Oregon's first statewide organization representing small business owners.

He is currently President of the African American Chamber of Commerce and Oregon



Roy Jay

Business Network.

"He was the first person that came to mind when I decided I needed a liaison," Leonard said. "I wanted someone that under-

stood the challenges of business owners and who had actively promoted their concerns."

Jay has served the Regional Investment Board by Multnomah County to represent all business within the county. He served on the Mayor's Blue Ribbon panel on economic development. He has also served on a number of boards including Self Enhancement, Inc., the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Washington County and the Portland Oregon Visitors Association.

As liaison for Leonard, Jay will attend various Portland Development Commission meetings and events, making necessary inquiries of staff and providing Commissioner Leonard with PDC activity updates and small business recommendations.

Grant Targets Better Schools

Low-income and minority communities will be encouraged to apply for money from a major grant aimed at raising high school student achievement.

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation and the Meyer Memorial Trust announced plans last week to spend \$25 million to start small high schools and transform large ones across Oregon.

The investment is intended to close the state's growing achievement gap and better prepare to students for today's economy. The effort will target low-income and minority communities.

"In our economy, education equals opportunity," Tom Vander Ark, executive director of the Gates Foundation's education programs, said in a statement. "Young people who attend smaller schools that provide a rigorous, personalized education and enable close relationships with adults are more likely to graduate and continue their education."

The plan is to create 10 to 12 new small high schools and transform 18 to 20 existing large schools — defined as more than 800 students — into smaller ones.

"This program helps those stu-

dents that are discouraged or unmotivated in traditional classroom settings to make learning their passion and stay in school," said Doug Stamm, executive director for the Meyer trust.

This summer, communities throughout Oregon will get information about how to apply for the project. The grants will be awarded in spring 2004.

Outside agencies will determine if the new schools are doing a good job, basing their assessments on attendance, student achievement, graduation rates and the number of students who go on to college.

Material Witness Charged with Waging War

(AP) — Maher "Mike" Hawash, the seventh Portland-area resident charged with plotting to aid al-Qaida and Taliban forces fighting U.S. soldiers in Afghanistan following the 2001 terrorist attacks, appeared in court Tuesday.

Hawash, 39, was charged Monday of conspiring to wage war against the United States with other terrorism suspects who had been previously

charged — the so-called "Portland Six."

Hawash has been held in federal custody as a material witness since March 20 without being formally charged.

Judge Robert E. Jones scheduled a preliminary hearing or arraignment hearing for Hawash on Monday, to be followed by a detention hearing May 8.

At a rally outside the hearing,

about 50 of Hawash's friends and co-workers gathered to protest what they called the unfair charges against him.

Daniel Moss, a former design engineer at Intel held a sign that read: "Mike, We believe in your innocence."

He said the public hearing didn't erase the fact that Hawash was held for five weeks in solitary confinement without being charged with a crime.

Interest Grows for Salvaged Theater Seats

A north Portland security guard is getting lots of calls about his 382 historic theater seats, but he wants people to know they're not free.

Herb Jenkins, a security guard for the Falcon Apartments, salvaged the seats from the former Colonial Theatre, a landmark building that stood in the way of the expansion of the Portland Community College Cascade Campus.

A story in last week's edition said Jenkins was looking for a future use for the seats. But anyone interested in obtaining them will have to make an offer. Jenkins said he paid a crew to remove the seats and haul them to storage.

He's looking to recover the cost for the public good or profit.

So far, inquiries about the seats have come from several individuals, a children's theater group and a county recreation district.

Jenkins can be reached at 503-515-4037.

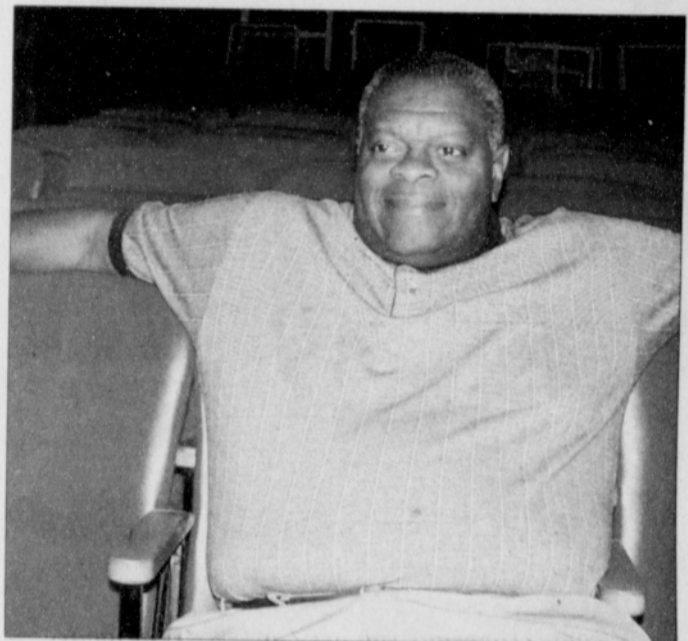


PHOTO BY RON WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Herb Jenkins is looking for a buyer for his salvaged theater seats from the old Colonial Theatre on North Albina.



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