

# METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

## Community Calendar

### Don't Lego of the Fun

Lego master builder visits Portland to challenge kids and learn tips and tricks with Legos. Help build the Portland skyline with Legos from 3 to 7 p.m. Oct. 3, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Oct. 4 and noon to 5 p.m. Oct. 5 at Pioneer Courthouse Square, 715 SW Morrison St. For more information, call 800-422-5346.

### Black Poetry Week

Celebrate Black Poetry Week with the Northwest African-American Writers Workshop at 1 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 4 and join the new book discussion group featuring fiction by African American at 1 p.m. Oct. 12 and the second Sunday of every month at Barnes & Noble, Lloyd Center, 1317 Lloyd Center.

### Chimps Gone Wild

Jane Goodall brings enthusiasts closer to nature with "Wild Chimpanzees," from Oct. 17 through May at the Omnimax Theater, 1945 Se Water Ave. Tickets are \$8.50. For more information, visit [www.wildchimpanzees.org](http://www.wildchimpanzees.org).

### Doors of Creativity

Northwest Medical Teams sponsors the multi-media exhibit "Windows of Need, Doors of Hope" from Nov. 12 through 18 at the Doubletree Inn, Lloyd Center. For more information, visit [www.nwmmedicalteams.org](http://www.nwmmedicalteams.org) or call 503-624-1000.

### Spin-doctors Unspun

Radical Women hosts a workshop discussing the Bush administration's latest call for funding in the war on terrorism, and the strain it will put on working women, at 7 p.m. Oct. 8, 819 N. Killingsworth. For more information, call 503-240-4462.

### High Energy

The Community Energy Project holds a series of free workshops to help make consumers energy conscious. Workshops on water conservation are at 12:30 p.m. Oct. 3 and 10 a.m. Oct. 6 at OHSU, 3181 SW Sam Jackson Park Rd., and at 6:30 p.m. at Peninsula Park Community Center, 700 N. Portland Blvd. The project also includes weatherizing workshops throughout September and October. For more information, call 503-284-6827.

### Green Walks

Discover Portland's green space from 10 to 11 a.m. Saturdays with guided tours by park volunteers. On Oct. 4, meet at the Global Garden at Harold Oliver School's parking lot. On Oct. 11, meet at Peninsula Park, next to sunken rose garden. On Nov. 1, meet at the Whitaker Ponds visitor center.

### Pounding Pavement

Fitness fanatics will lace up their tennis for the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual Portland Marathon on Sunday, Oct. 5 at 7 a.m. The event starts in front of City Hall, 1221 SW 4<sup>th</sup> Ave. and finishes at the Justice Center, 1120 SW 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. Registration is \$125. For more information, call 503-226-1111 or visit [www.portlandmarathon.org](http://www.portlandmarathon.org).

### Moving Moments

The IFCC offers Life Movement dance classes and workshops. Our Breathing Body is on Oct. 11 and Touch Stones is on Nov. 1 and 8. All workshops are between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. at the dance studio, 5340 N. Interstate Ave. Workshop prices range between \$45 and \$60. To register, call 503-284-1908.



Lakita Logan (left) and Terenie Fairson are ROOTS organizers, working to build unity between people of color.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

## Common Threads

### People of color build unity through shared experiences

BY JAYMEE R. CUTI  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Amid a racially charged climate, with gentrification, racial profiling and bias on the tongues of many community leaders, cries for unity echo throughout the city.

And while many organizations are meant to bring people of color together, one distinctly identifies that minorities are divided by different backgrounds.

"People assume because we're people of color, we're unified, and that's a misconception," said Lakita Logan, director of Reclaim-

ing Our Origins Through Struggle (ROOTS). "To build a strong movement, we need to address what has separated us."

ROOTS, which celebrated its one-year anniversary in July, is a community based organization that aims to bring together people of color to learn about each others' diverse backgrounds, discuss factors that divide minority communities and build unity through the common experience of being Americans of color.

The group of 50 members is laying the groundwork for a campaign addressing gentrification and forced displacement. Volunteers gather information by hitting the streets of north and northeast Portland neighborhoods, surveying residents about police presence, rising housing costs, and experiences within a neighborhood affected

by gentrification.

"If we don't lobby to keep people in this community, one community will be forced out, a new community will be here to replace them and the community that once existed here will be gone," said Logan, speaking about rising housing costs in the northeast. This displacement, Logan said, primarily affects elderly people of color that have lived in north and northeast Portland for decades.

ROOTS members have successfully lobbied the city for \$150,000 to help residents stay in their homes. The contract extends through January, and money is still available, Logan said.

ROOTS is also creating an arts education program, beginning with a film series. The first viewing is "All Power to the People" on

Tuesday, Oct. 14.

"We're exposing people to history of communities of color and how movements have been built in this country," Logan said.

Educated in Portland, and a graduate of Roosevelt High School, Logan says she had very little exposure to American civil rights movements and the history of American minorities.

ROOTS organizers are recruiting volunteers and collaborating with charter schools and alternative education programs to identify the kind of material lacking in public education. Their plan is to build a curriculum, supplementing public education, which educates kids about their backgrounds and connects them with their roots.

For more information, or to volunteer, call 503-288-4021.

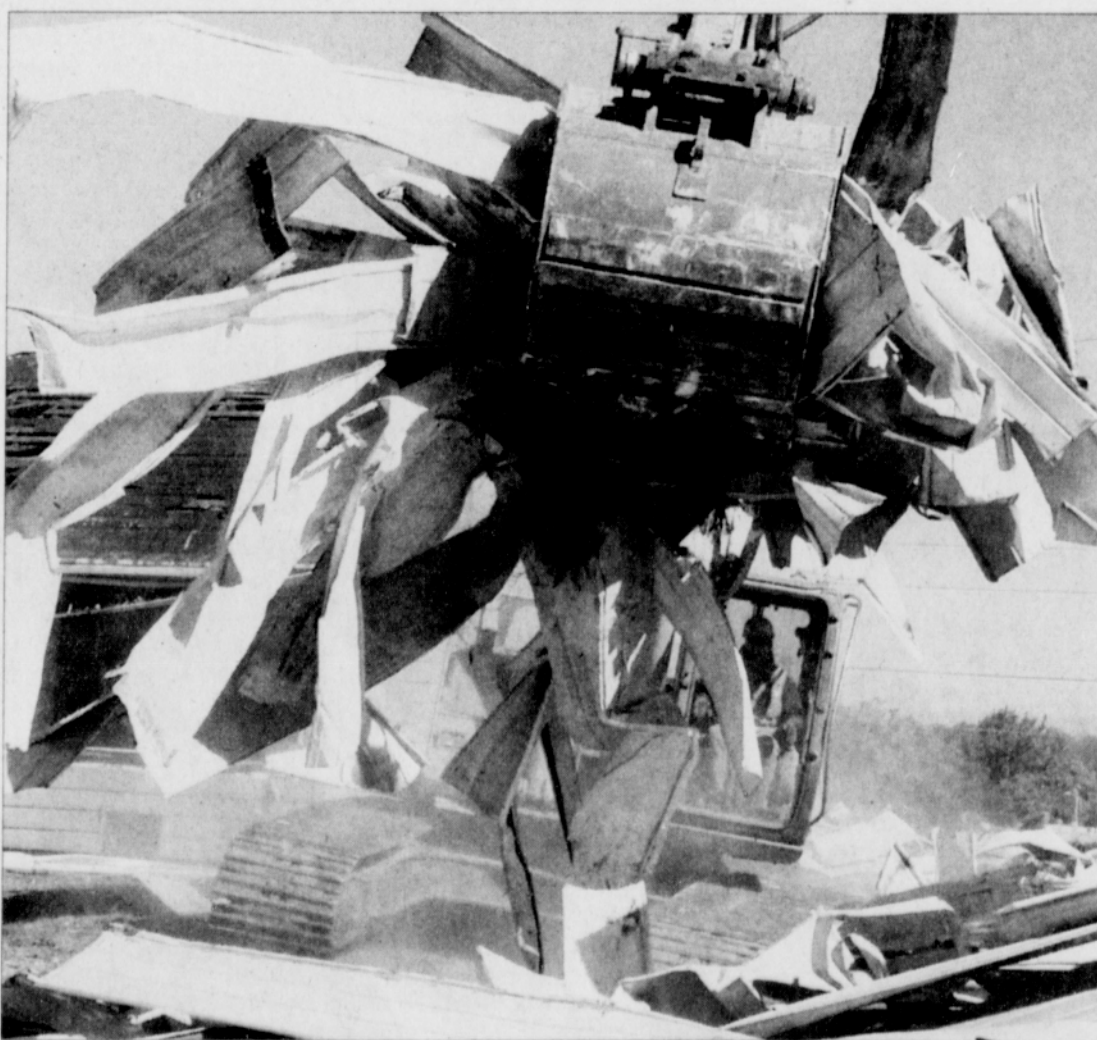


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

### Villa Homes Come Crashing Down

In one of the biggest rehabilitation projects of its kind, demolition work begins at Columbia Villa in north Portland. The Housing Authority of Portland is tearing down 462 units of World War II era housing to make room for New Columbia, a full-service neighborhood that's being built from the ground up. Current and recent Villa families are guaranteed first access to the new subsidized housing that will be built on the site over the next two years. New Columbia will also feature owner-occupied homes.

### Natural Gas Bills Go Up Impact Hurts Most as Winter Approaches

Customers of Northwest Natural Gas, serving the Portland area, will experience higher natural gas bills in the coming months due to more expensive wholesale natural gas prices.

The Oregon Public Utility Commission approved the new rates last week to take effect Oct. 1. The commission adjusts rates once a year to reflect changes in the wholesale price of natural gas. The company makes no additional profit from these rate adjustments, officials said.

"We know that any increase can be difficult for households and businesses to absorb. However, although wholesale prices are higher due to variety of market forces, fortunately they are not as high as we previously expected," Commission Chairman Lee Beyer said.

The monthly bill for a typical residential customer who uses 61.5 therms will increase by 4.5 percent. The typical customer's bill will go from \$60.04 to \$62.71, an increase of \$2.67.

In January, a typical residential customer's consumption of 131 therms would result in a billing increase from \$121.11 to \$126.80. Commercial and industrial customers will see an increase of between 4.9 to 5.6 percent.

The boost in prices is on top of a 1.1 percent general rate increase Northwest Natural received just four weeks ago.

Beyer said there are things customers can do to reduce the impact of these increases, especially during the upcoming winter months, when the effect on their bills will be more noticeable.

Residents can set up an equal payment plan to spread high winter bills over a 12-month period, turn the thermostat down, install a programmable thermostat that automatically reduce heat at night or while the house is unoccupied, and ask for an energy audit.

Utilities are required to provide free energy audits. They also provide incentives such as rebates or loans for recommended conservation measures.

For example, sealing cracks, gaps and other places where air leaks can generally result in a 10 percent heating and cooling savings, and fully insulating a residence generally results in up to 30 percent savings on a heating bill.