

# METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

## Community Calendar

### Holiday Meal

St. Andrew Catholic Church offers free Thanksgiving dinners from noon to 3 p.m. on Thanksgiving day, Thursday, Nov. 27. Dinner is served at the St. Andrews Community Center, on northeast Alberta Street between 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> avenues. For more information, call 971-244-0339.

### Home Improvement

The Community Energy Project holds free workshops on water conservation and weatherization. A workshop on weatherization is from 6 to 8 p.m. on Nov. 20 at Parkrose High School, 12203 N.E. Shaver St. and from 1 to 3 p.m. on Nov. 22 at Buckman Elementary School, 320 S.E. 16<sup>th</sup> Ave.

### Turkey Trot

Get ready for Thanksgiving dinner by joining the Oregon Road Runners Club on a four-mile run/walk through Washington Park and the Oregon Zoo. For more information, call or visit [www.oregonzoo.com](http://www.oregonzoo.com).

### Samba Class

The World Dance Office presents an 8-week fall samba workshop with live music from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays through Nov. 25. Classes are at the Peter Stott Center, Room 207. \$6. For more information, call 503-725-5670.

### Chimps Gone Wild

Jane Goodall brings enthusiasts closer to nature with "Wild Chimpanzees," through May at the Omnimax Theater, 1945 S.E. 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" through 18 at the Doubletree Inn, Lloyd Center. For more information, visit [www.nwmedicalteams.org](http://www.nwmedicalteams.org) or call 503-624-1000.

### Get in Shape

Providence Health Systems offers Westside fitness classes at 4015 SW Mercantile Drive, Lake Oswego. Classes include step, ball and bar, cardio mix, cardio step, gentle-paced fitness, group strength training and Tai chi, to name a few. For a full schedule, call 503-574-6595 or visit [www.providence.org/classes](http://www.providence.org/classes).

### Friends with Corduroy

Celebrate Children's Book Week at the library with lovable Corduroy, one of children's literature's favorite characters. The event is from 7 to 7:30 p.m. Nov. 20. 3605 NE 15<sup>th</sup> Ave.

### Wild Oats Wellness

Wild Oats Wellness Center presents free workshops at 3535 N.E. 15th Ave. (at Fremont) in Studio A, upstairs. A talk on "Loving What is" will be held from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Dec. 3. A class on Healing Depression and Anxiety is from 7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Dec. 10 and a class on the benefits of cloth diapering is from 3 to 5 p.m. Dec. 13. Pre-register at 503-281-3262.

### A Healing Song

Sankofaa Health Institute offers a free diabetes support group from 6 to 7:30 p.m. every third Thursday at Alberta Simmons Plaza, 611 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. For more information, call 503-285-2484.

The coalition provides resources for people to gather data, assess and solves their problems.

—Lila Wickham, the county's environmental health manager



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Noelle Dobson, Charles Bishop and Kevin Odell survey unsightly property in the Humboldt neighborhood of north Portland for air quality, trash dumping and overall livability.

## Community Livability Begins At Home

### Environmental health surveyed

BY JAYMEE R. CUTI  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Health consciousness is a sign of the times. The public is bombarded with messages about lowering cholesterol, increasing exercise and reducing the waistline. But building a healthy community takes hard

work and changes as well.

A coalition was formed to identify north and northeast Portland's environmental health inside homes and throughout the neighborhood. The team is backed by the Multnomah County Health Department, the Albina Community Development Corp., the Department of Environmental Quality, North/Northeast Neighborhood Coalition, Portland State University and other community groups and leaders.

They call themselves PACE-EH, the Pro-

cedure for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health.

The group has identified five neighborhoods—Humboldt, Vernon, Eliot, King and Boise—as pilot communities electing to make strides in environmental assessment.

According to Lila Wickham, the county's environmental health manager, the coalition provides support for a neighborhood to identify and solve its own problems.

"The coalition provides resources for people to gather data, assess and solves

their problems," said Wickham. "We're a backbone for them; we provide resources."

PACE officials are meeting with community leaders and the public to help identify problems such as lead paint, moldy walls, pest infestations, contaminated brown fields, rotting leaves and trash, and other problems that degrade a neighborhood's health.

Joyce Taylor, community services director for Albina Community Development

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## African American Coalition Honored

The African American Health Coalition was honored with the Crystal Award for spending well and creating goodwill in the community.

The Willamette Valley Development Officers, a nonprofit resource group for development professionals, is the largest group in Oregon to recognize excellence in the nonprofit fund development field.

The AAHC was recognized at a reception at the Oregon Convention Center earlier this month for its efficient spending in programs directed at reducing cardiovascular risk factors among African Americans in the Portland metro-area.



Keith Dempsey, Corliss McKeever, Lou Radja, Collaine Faddis, Kamesha Robinson and Marsha Jordan, staff at the African American Health Coalition, are awarded the Crystal Award at the Oregon Convention Center.

## Whooping Cough Burgeons in Portland

Whooping cough has been masquerading around the state as the common cold. With symptoms such as coughing, sneezing, runny nose and low-grade fever, it's easy to mistake a cold for something more serious.

Oregon Health Dept. officials report that an 11-week-old baby died of whooping cough earlier this year, and reported cases of the condition are up significantly from last year.

Oregon Health and Science University has seen 10 cases of whooping cough, called pertussis, this

season and several other cases were reported around the Portland metro area.

Infants are at greatest risk with half of Oregon's infants being hospitalized and one in every 1,000 children younger than 1 more likely to suffer severe complications from the disease.

"The fact that we are seeing more cases of pertussis underscores the need for childhood immunization," said Dr. Paul Cieslak, manager of communicable disease programs in the Oregon Department of Human Services.

## Ambitious Agenda Meets Reality

Affordable health care advocates set new priorities

BY JAYMEE R. CUTI/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The goals of Oregonians for Health Security have changed drastically since the group's inception a year ago.

Before some lawmakers put the Oregon Health Plan on the chopping block last January, the organization had inspired plans for bringing prescription drug coverage to Oregon seniors, expanding health care access to kids, getting more workers enrolled in health insurance plans and regulating gifts from pharmacy managers to doctors.

"We started with quite an ambitious agenda . . . then the session starts and reality hits you over the head like a big stick," said Maribeth Healey, the group's executive director.

Staff and volunteers began organizing for what they saw as a threat to the foundation of health care access to all, especially when several of their expanded access bills were not even getting a hearing.

"Because everyone thought the health plan was dead, we couldn't let that happen because you can't look at any kind of expansion if the whole basis of the health plan is decimated," she said. "We worked to save the Oregon Health Plan and pass the prescription drug purchasing pool bill," Healey said.

The approach was to put a human face on the health care struggle. Healey and her colleagues gave legislators a "daily dose" of reality by profiling the medically needy and dropping off the stories and photos in legislators' mailboxes.

To a limited capacity, the Oregon Health Plan still functions, although 85,000 Oregonians are still at risk of losing OHP benefits if a plan that raised taxes to balance the state budget is overturned in a potential referendum election.

The group's current struggle is blocking anti-tax advocates from collecting enough signatures by a Nov. 25 deadline to put the budget package on the ballot in February.

"When Oregonians know what's at stake and they value the Oregon Health Plan, they will think first before signing the petition and will vote to support the revenue referrals," Healey said.