

Locally Owned Market Gives Back



Concordia New Seasons Market employee Shannon Liedtke greets customers with cake and ice cream Saturday during the store's fourth anniversary celebration. Since opening its first New Seasons Market in the Raleigh Hills neighborhood in 2000, New Seasons has demonstrated its commitment to giving back to the community by supporting local growers, hiring within the community and donating to nonprofits. In 2003, New Seasons was awarded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Medal of Honor for Social and Economic Justice by northeast Portland's St. Andrew Catholic Church.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/ THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Seattle NAACP Files \$10 Million Lawsuit

School security accused of undue force, abuse

(AP)—The NAACP filed a \$10 million claim against a suburban school district Monday alleging discrimination against black students by security guards at two schools south of Seattle.

The claim was filed on behalf of three female students and their families who contend they were "violated and humiliated with undue use of force, handcuffing and physical and mental abuse."

The families each are asking for more than \$3.3 million in damages, arguing that their children's civil rights were violated.

Two girls, students at Meeker Junior High, allegedly were mistreated by a white security guard at the school, said Carl Mack, president of the Seattle chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

A third student allegedly suffered similar treatment at Kent Meridian High School.

"Clearly we're appalled. When you start handcuffing children and throwing them up against lockers you've reached an all new low with us," Mack said before delivering the complaint Monday morning to

Margaret Whitney, the district's assistant superintendent.

The district has 60 days to respond to the claim; after that the group can file a lawsuit.

The NAACP learned of the alleged incidents late last year when a parent, Shuloney Williams, complained that on several occasions a security guard at the junior high

students, Ebony Smith and Shetoia Ellis.

Smith, 15, alleges that in spring 2003, she was handcuffed by Mengino, as well as pepper sprayed.

The complaint alleges that Ellis suffered back injuries as a result of her treatment Oct. 3 by two guards at Kent Meridian. Ellis also said she



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school had assaulted her 15-year-old daughter, Shuvonyeh Veasley.

On March 15, Veasley was arguing with another student at the school when guard Gayle Mengino "came up from behind Shuvonyeh, grabbed her by the hair, threw her into the lockers and then to the ground," handcuffing the child, the complaint said.

In September, Veasley was again handcuffed by Mengino "for not sitting down" while in the vice principal's office, according to the claim.

The three-page claim includes similar complaints from two other

tried defending herself, resulting in the district filing a fourth-degree assault charge.

Mack said he tried negotiating with the district in mid-December, asking school officials to place the guards on administrative leave and investigate the matter.

He contends the abuse would not have happened if the students had been white.

"Two of the girls were handcuffed by the same security guard who tends to show the same pattern toward our children," Mack said. "What this is showing is an incredible amount of cultural insensitivity."

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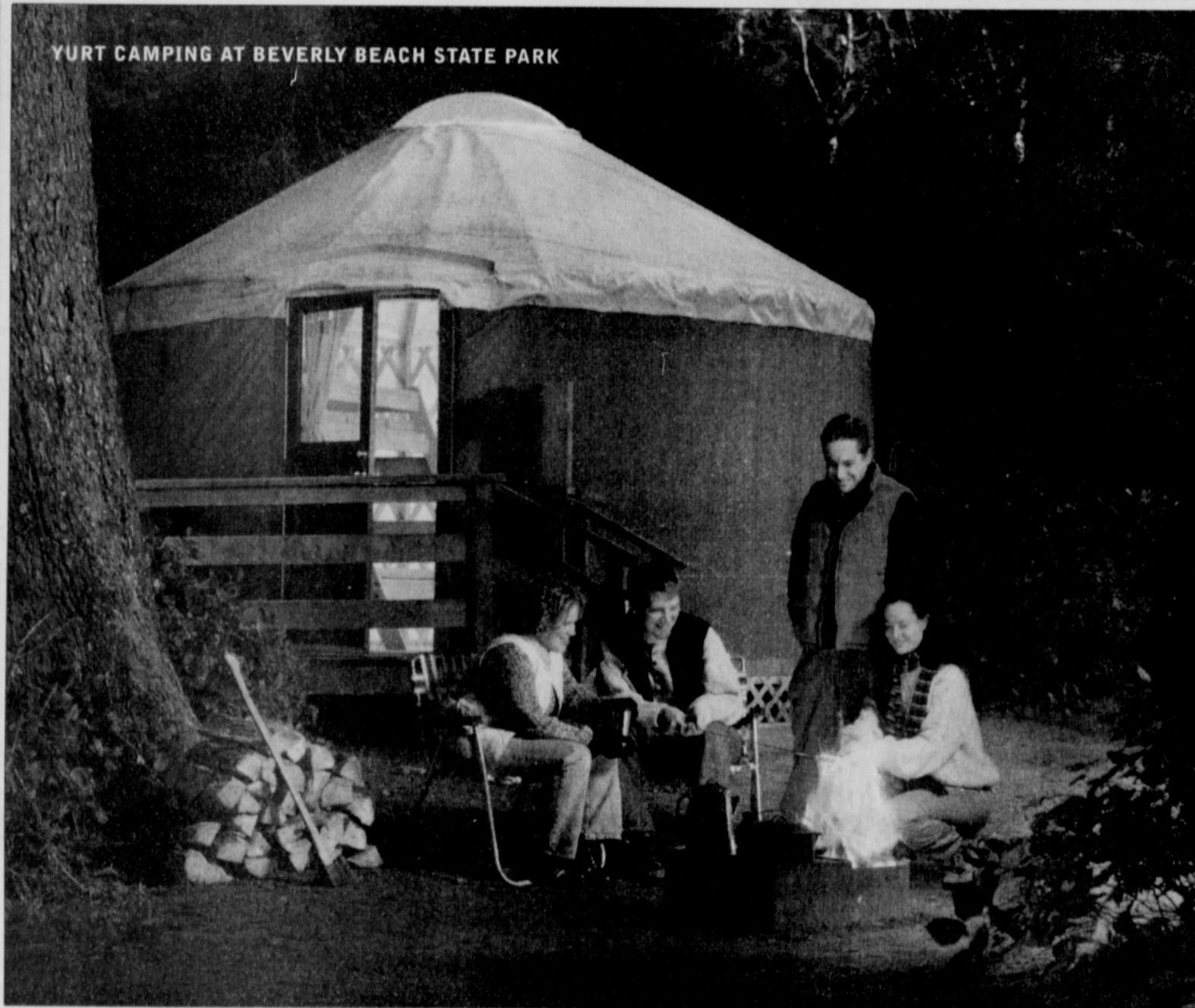
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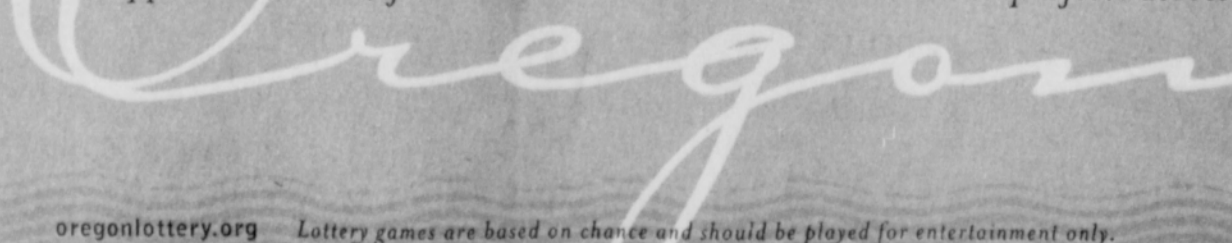
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