

Life TURNAROUND

continued ▲ from Front

She decided to find hope in a higher power and work to change her life. Laurie heard about the Women In Community Service's (WICS) Lifeskills program offered at Columbia River Correctional Facility.

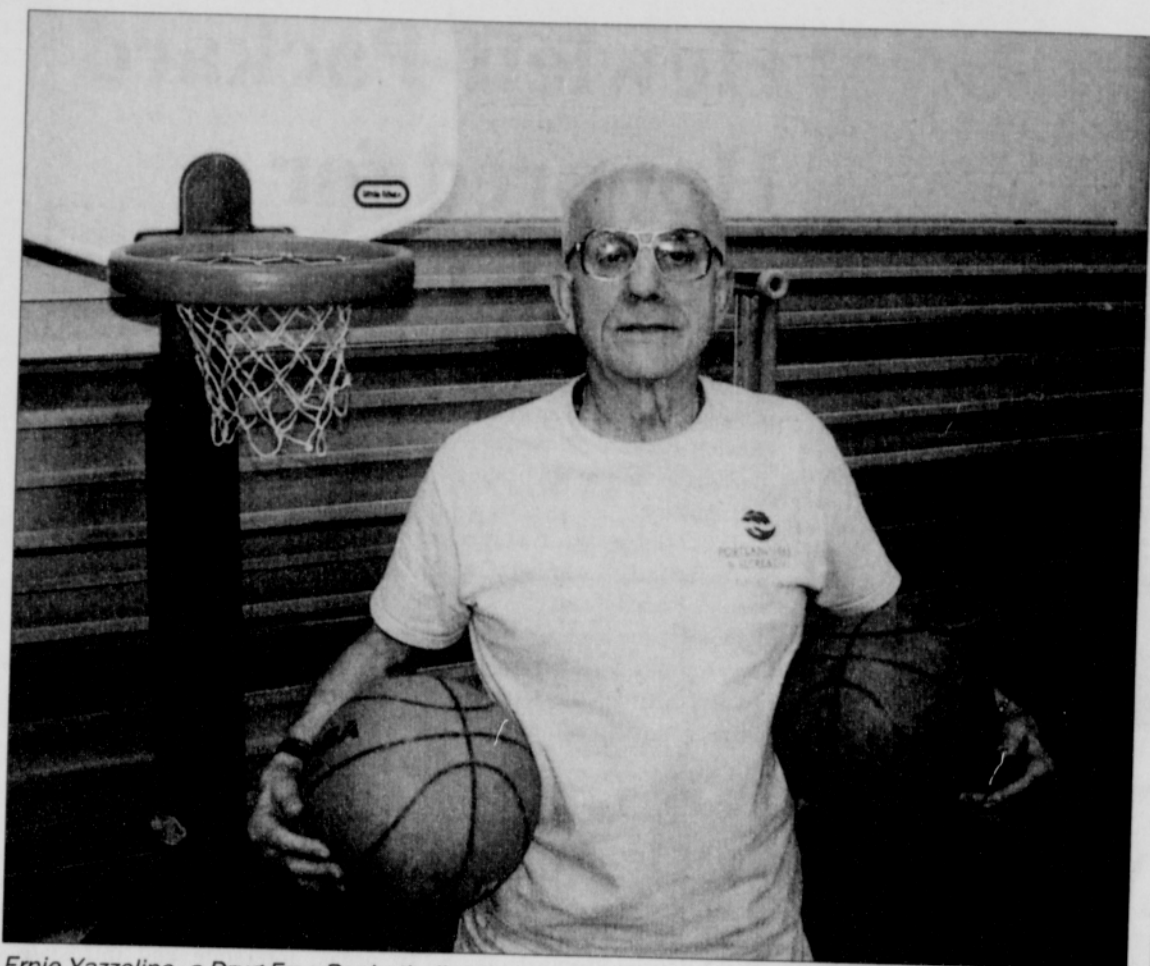
Shortly after her release from prison, Palmer regained custody of her children and custody of her youngest sister, who was also in the care of the state.

"I didn't have the skills that it took to live life in a healthy way and WICS taught me how to do that," she said. "I owe this (my life) to WICS, my strong motivation and my belief in God. Through these things, I was able to overcome the things in life that were holding me back such as drugs and alcohol."

Palmer said she was dedicated to prove "everybody wrong that thought I wouldn't make it and not one time did I think I couldn't make it. This was because I had made up my mind and I began to think like a winner and through that I was able to overcome my past obstacles."



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Laurie Palmer is a drug and alcohol intervention specialist at the Old Town Clinic.



Ernie Yazzolino, a Drug Free Basketball volunteer at the Mt. Scott Community Center

Passion for the Game

continued ▲ from Front

For him, this is a chance to have a moment with young people and teach an important lesson about life.

His teams pledges before every game to be drug and alcohol free, to exhibit good sportsman-

ship and fair play, to work hard to be their best, to respect the officials, the rules of the league and themselves, and to thank their families for the opportunity to play.

"If they don't take the pledge, we blow the whistle and stop the game," said Yazzolino.

Not only is Drug Free Basketball a boon for kids often without after school programs and supervision, but Yazzolino says the games bring the community together.

"It helps kids to get together with other kids and parents and have a good time," he said. "It's all in fun, for kids' sakes."

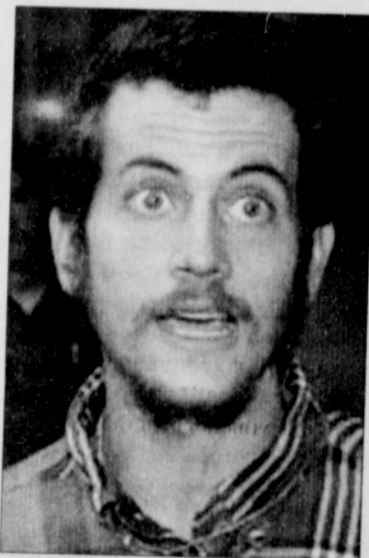
Tre Arrow Arrested in Canada

Alleged eco-terrorist caught shoplifting

(AP)—A fugitive radical environmentalist wanted in Oregon for setting fire to logging and cement trucks in 2001 was captured in Canada while shoplifting, the FBI said Monday.

Michael Scarpitti—also known as Tre Arrow—was arrested by police in Victoria, British Columbia on Saturday, said Robert Jordan, the FBI's special agent in charge in Portland.

Scarpitti—who has been on the FBI's most-wanted list since disappearing two years ago—has been connected by federal officials to the Earth Liberation Front, a shadowy group that has



Michael Scarpitti, also known as Tre Arrow

claimed responsibility for dozens of crimes over the past several years.

Scarpitti was arrested at a store

in Victoria as he was trying to shoplift some bolt cutters, Jordan said. Police realized he was a fugitive when his fingerprints were run through a database, Jordan said.

The FBI is working with Canadian authorities on Scarpitti's extradition to Oregon.

Scarpitti is among four activists charged with setting logging trucks on fire on June 1, 2001 to protest logging on the slopes of Mount Hood.

He first gained notoriety in July 2000 when he scaled a U.S. Forest Service building in downtown Portland and lived on a ledge for 11 days to protest timber policies.

In October 2001, he suffered several broken bones when he fell 60 feet from a hemlock tree where he had perched to protest a logging sale in Tillamook County.

Fresno Man Accused of Slaying Family

Victims pulled from home in wooden coffins

(AP)—Police carried 12 wooden coffins out of a home as they searched for evidence to explain why a man allegedly killed nine people believed to be his children, some possibly the product of incest.

Investigators removed the coffins and several large paper bags out of Marcus Wesson's house Monday night and a tow truck pulled away a yellow school bus, which had been a fixture in the driveway.

An antique store owner has said Wesson bought hand-carved, mahogany coffins about five years ago, saying he planned to use the wood to repair a houseboat.

All nine victims had been shot to death, according to the coroner's office. Investigators were still working to determine the relationships among the victims, who were found tangled in a pile of clothes when police went to the house Friday about a child custody dispute.



Police officers escort Marcus Wesson to the Fresno County Jail. (AP photo)

Wesson walked out of the house covered in blood and was booked on suspicion of nine counts of murder. Authorities said Wesson, 57, may have been involved in polygamy and is thought to have fathered children with at least six women, including two of his own daughters.

The victims, who had six different mothers, showed no signs of physical or sexual abuse, said coroner Lorelee Cervantes.

Wesson has cooperated with the investigation, police said, but no motive had been determined.

Authorities expect to release the names of the victims by Friday, a 24-year-old woman and eight children ranging in age from 1 to 17.

The family moved several times

in recent years, from a small boat anchored off Santa Cruz to the mountains outside Watsonville, before settling in Fresno.

Wesson was jailed briefly after being convicted of welfare fraud, the Santa Cruz Sentinel reported.

Wesson and his family were violating city codes by living in the building where the shootings occurred, which was zoned for commercial use, the Fresno Bee reported Tuesday. They were given a citation March 1, calling for a \$100 fine and ordered to leave the building or acquire a special permit.

"The day of the murder was the day they had to comply with the administrative order," Fresno Planning Director Nick Yovino told the newspaper.



JoAnn Bowman

Candidates Via for Vacant House Seat

(AP)—The Democratic Party of Oregon selected three people as candidates to fill a vacancy left by Rep. Deborah Kafoury in House District 43, serving north and northeast Portland.

The Multnomah County Commission will choose from between JoAnn Bowman, Tom Markgraf and Joe Smith to fill the nearly 10 months remaining on Kafoury's term. The Democrat and former House Minority Leader resigned on Feb. 27 after moving out of the district.

Bowman is a former legislator who now works for Oregon Action, coordinating voter registration drives. Markgraf is a policy analyst for Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore. Smith is a retired prosecutor from Pendleton and former chairman of the Oregon Democratic Party.

There are four candidates in the May 18 primary seeking the District 43 seat: Democrats Chip Shields and Tina Kotek, and Republicans Shirley Whitehead Freeman and Mitch Lee France.

Committee members did not choose either of the two Democratic candidates running in the May primary because they didn't want to give one an advantage, said Jim Robison, chairman of the Democratic Party of Multnomah County.

C-Tran Tax Hike Wanted

Vancouver and Clark County voters will be asked to increase taxes for public transportation after the C-Tran Board of Directors unanimously agreed to put a 0.3 percent sales tax increase before voters this fall.

Passage of the ballot measure would stave off a significant downsizing of transit services.

To operate from a balanced budget by 2006, C-Tran must either

reduce services by approximately 40 percent or restore its previous funding levels by increasing the amount of sales tax it collects, agency officials said.

In 1980, Clark County residents approved the countywide transit system to be funded with a 0.3 percent local sales tax matched with an equal amount of motor vehicle excise tax. An increase in tax revenue has not occurred since that

time.

In 1999, when Initiative 695 passed, C-Tran lost 40 percent of its annual revenue. Officials said services have been maintained by drawing on reserve funds, making some service reductions, raising fares and creating operational efficiencies, but at the current rate of spending, the agency will exhaust its available reserves in 2005.

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Keynote Speakers



Madame Jehan Sadat, world-renowned peace and civil-rights activist and widow of the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat



Judy Shepard, champion of hate-crime legislation in memory of her slain son Matthew Shepard

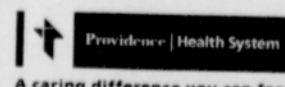


Mark Williams, author of the highly acclaimed book *10 Lenses: Your Guide to Living and Working in a Multicultural World*

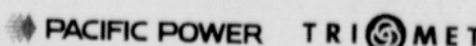


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