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'City of Roses'

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Week in The Review



**Pope Benedict XVI
Pope Reaches Out to Muslims**
A day after reaching out to other Christians and to Jews in his installation Mass, Pope Benedict XVI met Monday with members of the Muslim community, assuring them the Catholic church wanted to continue building "bridges of friendship" that he said could foster peace in the world.

Terrorism Tripled in 2004

The U.S. count of major world terrorist attacks more than tripled in 2004, a rise that may revive debate about whether the Bush administration is winning the war on terrorism, congressional aides said Tuesday.

Train Wreck Leaves 78 Dead

Rescuers pulled two survivors - but also more bodies - from the gnarled wreckage of Japan's worst train crash in decades Tuesday, and investigators raided the rail operator's offices for clues about why the train skidded off the tracks, killing at least 78 people.

Bush Urges Saudis Oil Boost

President Bush prodded Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Abdullah on Monday to help curb skyrocketing oil prices, and the White House expressed hope that the kingdom's plans would ease U.S. gasoline prices that have shot above \$2.20 a gallon.

Troops Leave Lebanon

Syria ended its 29-year military domination of Lebanon on Tuesday as soldiers flashing victory signs completed a withdrawal spurred by intense international pressure and massive Lebanese street protests against a force that once numbered 40,000.

Senators Begin Social Security Hearing

President Bush kicked off a national debate about Social Security in his State of the Union address in February. Now it is up to Congress to see if it results in any changes. The Senate Finance Committee opened a hearing Tuesday on the proposal.

Jackson Legal Team Splits

Michael Jackson's legal team said in a one-sentence notice that one of his attorneys was leaving the singer's child molestation trial. Departing attorney Brian Oxman had an animated conversation after court Monday with lead Jackson attorney Thomas Mesereau Jr.



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PHOTO BY NICOLE HOOPER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Georgia Alexander stops by the Lloyd Center Torrid plus-size store and finds a lime green baby doll outfit.

Large and in Charge

Couple plans big party fun in Portland

BY NICOLE HOOPER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Tom and Karla don't feel there is a reason to be ashamed of their size. There are many plus-sized people that feel the same way.

With media showing constant images of what is considered beautiful and a society that puts down or makes big people feel guilty, it's people like Tom and Karla Truxton that fight back.

The couple has founded Oregon BBW (Big Beautiful Woman), a safe haven for

those who feel scrutinized for their body size or are physically attracted to those of substance. But more than being activists, the goal of this group is to have fun.

On Saturday, April 30, a pajama party will be held for socializing, dancing and relaxing in an environment of plus-size people who look just like them or their admirers. The gathering will be the first of what is expected to be many Oregon BBW events.

Similar social affairs are held all over the world. New York's Club Curvz attracts over 300 people at their larger events, no pun intended. Not only are there dances, but also fat awareness rallies and fun cruises.

The Truxtons are fashioning their organization after BBW Northwest, a plus-size community group that's been active for eight years in Tacoma, Wash.

"The options are limited in Portland because nothing like that goes on here and some think it's too far away to drive up to

Tacoma every month," Karla Truxton said.

After a year of preparation and failed attempts by others to start a local group, the couple has committed a personal investment of over \$1,000 to make their dream a long-term reality. They've paid for the hall, food and deejay for Saturday's entertainment; started a website; and have a budget for promotion.

"We are not expecting to make a profit. We just hope to break even," said Tom Truxton.

Saturday's gathering is designed to help larger people feel comfortable and intimate, a major difference from regular clubs.

"There's not going to be that guy looking down on you saying, 'Fat people don't belong in a place like this,'" Karla Truxton said. "I have flat out been told that I don't belong in certain places

continued ▼ on page A3

Drug Free Zones Upheld

Despite minority over-representation

A Multnomah County Circuit Court judge has ruled against two local African Americans who claimed they were unfairly targeted by law enforcement under Portland's Drug Free Zones.

The lawsuit brought by the public defender's office claimed African Americans were targeted for exclusion in certain neighborhoods more often than whites.

One motion before Multnomah County Circuit Court Michael Marcus claimed that out of 800 cases where suspects were accused to violating exclusion orders, nearly 60 percent were African American.

Marcus said he did not have the authority to dismantle the drug free zones, but he did direct Portland to make adjustments in the way such cases are prosecuted, discussing the fine line between regulation of drug trafficking and kicking out poor, homeless and mentally ill citizens.

In a statement, Marcus scoffed at the lack of police enforcement against white citizens dressed up as professionals discreetly selling powder cocaine.

The judge said police officers only need a reasonable suspicion of drug activity to issue an exclusion citation, which can lead to sweeping judgments over who is really breaking the law.

He stated that this practice is similar to "totalitarian approaches to social control."

Located in the Beech neighborhood of northeast, downtown from northwest 23rd Avenue to the Willamette River, and from Portland State to Union Station, the drug-free ordinance has been in place since November 2002 with the idea of preventing drug trafficking in high drug crime areas.

When issued a citation, punishment can mean a few days of community service or a fine.

Although Marcus upheld the drug ordinance, lawyers representing those making the allegations don't see it as a total loss, noting his order directed officials to make adjustments in how cases should be handled to protect Constitutional rights.

Racial Lines Crossed with Art, Education

Police brutality study fuels college degree

It's not often that you come across a guy like Drew Shoals.

Without missing a beat, Shoals goes from being a drum virtuoso to writing poetry on Portland's race relations to forming the very first African American studies major at Washington's Whitman College.

He'll soon be honored for his work with Whitman associate professor of history Nina Lerman for "The Reality of Police Brutality: Poems about Agency and Activism in Portland, Oregon's, Black Community."

Shoals is the first African-American Studies major at Whitman whose senior project, the capstone to his individually planned studies, is a non-traditional performance piece that is a comparative analysis of race relations in Portland in the 1960s, early 1970s and today.

He specifically looks at the Black Panther Party for Self Defense's activism in the Civil Rights era and how that informs current black community activism against police brutality in the aftermath of problematic deaths of two African Americans in their 20s by white police officers during



PHOTO BY LENEL PARISH

Portland native Drew Shoals plays drums with many different projects, including touring with Botswana's best known jazz band-Ndingo Johwa. A student at Whitman College, he has become the school's first African-American studies major and is being honored for works on race relations in Portland.

traffic stops.

Although Shoals says he originally planned a more conventional major in economics or politics his interest in studying race, class and the African American experience grew.

"I realized these were the classes that pushed me. I felt something urgent about studying them and I found that there were more than enough courses to make up a major-my major is 46 credits, while the average is only 32."

Beyond academics, Shoals said he is most at home when playing music.

His liquid style and obvious enjoyment of the music he plays make him a staple of the

continued ▼ on page A6