



PHOTOS BY NICOLE HOOPER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Karla Truxton sits in a meeting concerning the dance.



Always get a friend's opinion: Kristal (right) consults with Georgia Alexander about her prospective pajama choices.

Large and in Charge

continued from Front
because I am too fat."

On television, large people are often stereotyped and depicted as happy fat goons or in other negative fashions. A recent example is Kirstie Alley, who has made a comeback based her abun-

dant size as the start of reality based show, "Fat Actress."

"She's making money on her fatness, but she is ashamed of what she is and that's sad," Karla said.

Like most confident people, the men and women joining groups for plus-sized people, make an

effort to look attractive. Diet, exercise and clothing are important to many large people.

Often there is a preconceived notion that fat people aren't concerned about health and that they just "let themselves go." The women that attend these events are very confident in their looks

but wish to be in a non-judgmental environment.

Georgia Alexander and Kristal are two local women excited about attending the pajama party. Finding the right thing to wear is important for their comfort and style.

"I think it's kind of cool. It's a place where people can feel ac-

cepted and not judged," said Kristal, 23.

Since there are large people of every demographic, the partygoers will come from all walks of life and are multicultural.

All night long, there will be dancing to R&B, Hip-hop and Slow Jams, the vibe is going to be

a relaxed and fun. "I don't think size should really matter, but this is a good idea where people can have fun and be casual," Alexander said.

Oregon BBW encourages singles to attend, but couples that just want to have a good time are also welcome.

"We view it as a date which makes it really fun," said Tom Truxton who has been married to Karla for over 20 years.

If the pajama party is successful, dances in Salem and perhaps Medford, Bend and Pendleton may be on the horizon.

"We truly want to make this an Oregon group," he said.

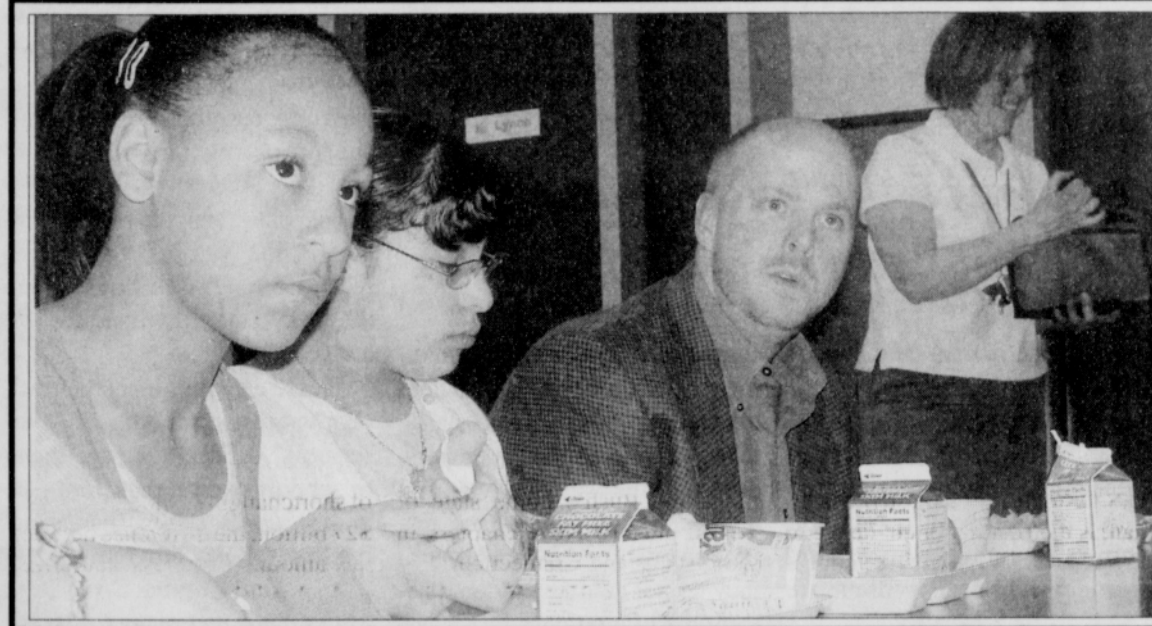
The couple is also looking for businesses to donate door prizes.

"It's important to big people to know that companies recognize that they exist," said

Karla.

The dance will take place at the Russellville Grange in northeast Portland. Tickets are \$20 or \$15 with a coupon on the website. This event will include a laser light show as well as a buffet.

For more information, go to the website at www.oregonbbw.com.



Lunching with a State Representative

State Rep. Chip Shields, who represents north and northeast Portland in the Legislature, sits in curiosity and listens to what children have to say during lunch at Martin Luther King Elementary. Shields was accompanied by his assistant, Marshall Jevning, during the Friday visit.

PHOTO BY ISAIAH BOUIE THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Leak Closes Local Pool

The indoor swimming pool at Buckman Elementary School in southeast Portland closed Friday due to a big leak that could pose danger to the building's foundation. Saving the pool for this year seems unlikely because it was already targeted to be shut down next year due to budget cuts by the Portland City Council.

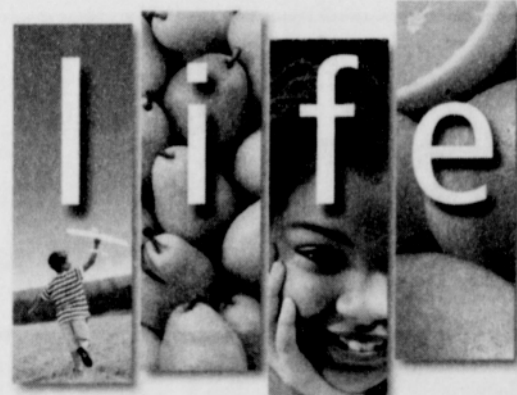
The pool, on the lower level of the 1921 school building at 320 S.E. 16th Ave., is owned and maintained by Portland Public Schools, but Portland Parks & Recreation pays for pool operations, including lifeguards and programming.

Over the last few weeks, staff have noticed a significant leak in the pool, with water levels dropping by two or three inches every day - or more than 3,000 gallons of water daily. If the problem is a crack in the pool shell, preliminary estimates are that it could cost up to \$100,000 to repair.

A leak of that magnitude would pose serious risks to the school building foundation, and also makes it impossible to safely regulate pool chemicals.

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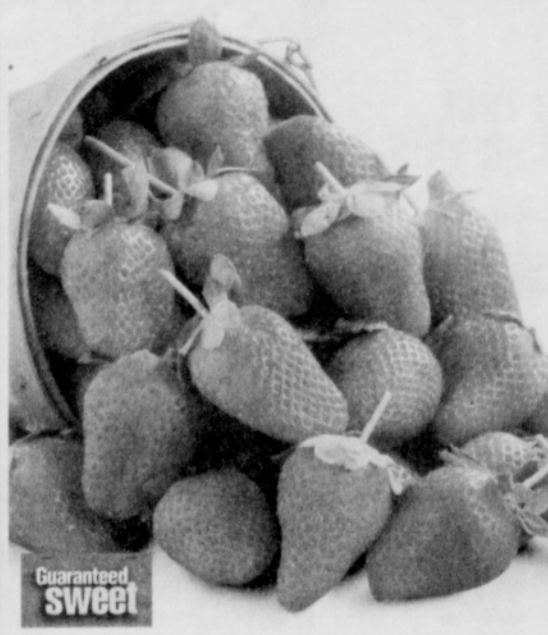
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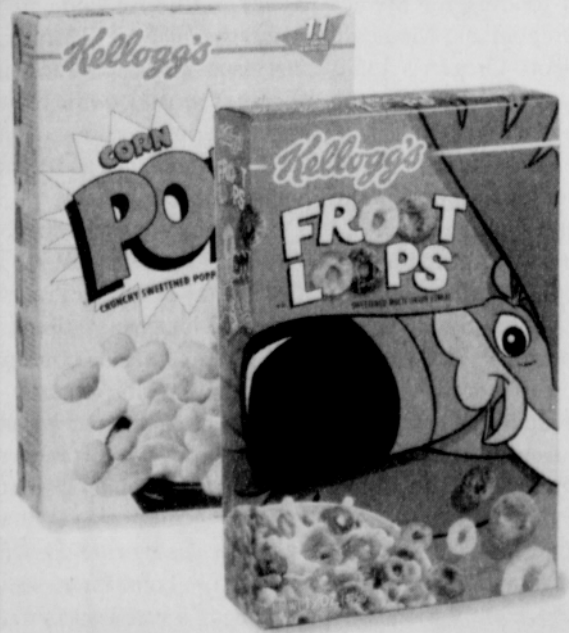
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