

First Step Sports Academy Coach EJ Penn talks to local youth about playing basketball during a recent clinic held at Irving Park. Family Fun Days are integrated into inexpensive basketball clinics to offer area residents helpful information on subjects like housing, health and community services. PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Family Fun Days Promote Positive Unity

Portland Parks and Recreation, Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Inc., First Step Sports Academy and other organizations have partnered together to establish four community fairs, or Family Fun Days, to promote a stronger, healthier community.

The goal of these partnerships is to educate, advocate and empower so that people of the north and northeast communities can make positive lifestyle changes,

promote family unity and feel comfortable once again in their neighborhood park.

There will be food and entertainment at each event, as well as the opportunity to forge stronger relationships with local community organizations.

The topic of health will be covered on Friday, July 15 and Aug. 5. Free games, a dental van, basic health screenings, chiropractors, local businesses and more will be featured among the youth basketball

games run by First Step Sports Academy.

Housing will be discussed on Friday, July 22 and community services will be explored on Friday, July 29.

All Family Fun Days will be held at Irving Park on 7th and Fremont Streets from 4 to 7 p.m.

A pre-screening for the health services is necessary. Please RSVP by Wednesday, July 13 at 503-604-1718 or e-mail firststepsports@comcast.net.

If we don't control it, then it's going to take control of us.

— Cherrell Edwards, spokesperson for the HIV Stops With Me Campaign



Symposium to Educate Community on HIV/AIDS

Fighting a battle against one of the most deadly and rapidly growing diseases of our time, the third annual African American Community Symposium on HIV/AIDS will be held on Friday, July 15 from 6 to 9 p.m. and Saturday, July 16 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Self Enhancement, Inc. at 3920 N. Kerby Ave.

Through free guest speakers, educational workshops and entertainment, the symposium is meant to teach the local minority community about the disease and how to prevent it. This year's theme is to "educate, empower and embrace."

"If we don't control it, then it's going to take control of us," said Cherrell Edwards, spokesperson for the HIV Stops With Me Campaign.

Edwards noted that while African Americans don't make up the majority of those living with HIV in the United States, the rate at which they contract

the disease has been growing more rapidly than any other community.

The workshops all target a specific demographic, including seniors.

"We need people to know that it does not just affect young adults. It affects all of us," Edwards said. "We want to eliminate barriers, stigmas and fears. One infection affects our whole community. It's not something we can't control."

Free on-site and confidential HIV testing will be available both days, and vouchers for free testing at a later date will also be available.

Speakers will include Ron Herdon, Dr. Wilbert Jordan and former Portland Trail Blazer Greg Smith. Entertainment will be provided by youth dancers, and free food will be available to snack on.

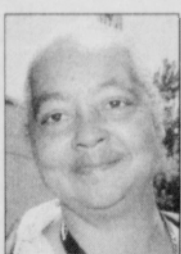
"There's something for everyone. It's really to just get people to talk about it," Edwards said.

For more information, call Christy Hauff at 503-249-1721, ext. 259.

In the Neighborhood How do you think the recent decision to legalize gay marriage in Spain will affect policies in the United States?



I hope that it will allow unions between anyone that wants it in the United States, whether you call it a union or marriage. People should be able to do what they want to do to. It's not hurting anybody. -- Rick Ogletree



I don't have an opinion about it. I have friends that are gay. I haven't thought about it that much. They will probably make some progress in this area. Things have become more liberal lately. -- Brenda Stewart



I hope that we open our dialogues and realize that families are families. I don't think it hurts anyone else how you live your life as long as it's with in your own area - it's your right. On the other hand, I think society has an obligation to protect their children. We have allowed homosexuals to do everything else. If that piece of paper doesn't mean anything to a heterosexual couple, then the homosexual couple should have a right to have the same meaningless piece of paper. We need to get off our high horses and figure out how we want to discuss this in our country. -- Kay Newell

I think gay marriage should be legal. There are more important things going on then deciding whether two people should be able to get married. This will make it more likely for America to legalize it since other countries are doing it. Since the economy is going in a bad direction, some companies may not like that because of cheaper rates for health insurance. -- Arianna Purifoy



I am not for it. I think that God made man for woman and vice versa. How other countries feel about gay marriage will not affect how America decides on this issue. We do what we want. President Bush is going to continue doing just as he wants. For example, we are in war for no reason even though others have urged him to stop the war. -- Donnie Baines



I don't know how it will affect us. I can only hope that it will lead to the trend which California and Massachusetts started, although halted. Americans tend to be very resistant to things Europeans do. I tend to be optimistic and hope people see it as a sign of change. -- Margaret Shear



NEW SEASONS MARKET

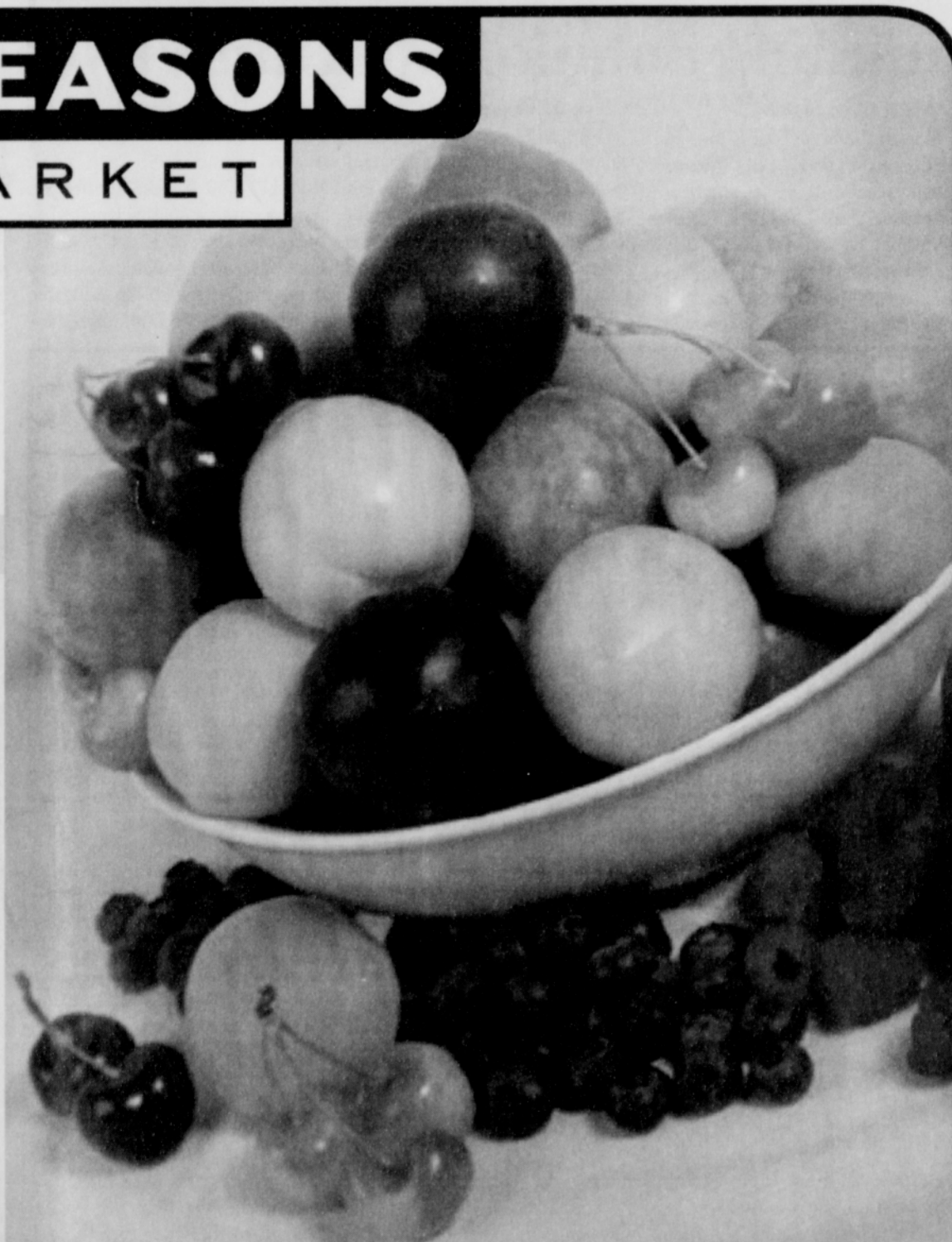
Local is Fresher

STONE FRUIT & BERRY TASTING

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Juice, flavor, crunch, color, variety! This weekend our produce department is bursting with all of these irresistible summer fruit qualities. It's really pretty simple to make this happen. Jeff Fairchild, our produce buyer, makes a point to purchase our fruit tree-ripe and ready-to-eat from Northwest growers who are passionate about their crops. We're confident that we'll convince you of the superiority of local fruit when you sample peaches from Maryhill Orchards in Goldendale, Washington, or the Stewart Family's cherries, which are grown just up the road in Hood River. Scott Frost, who runs Nature's Fountain in Jefferson, can't wait to have you sample his tart and tangy blueberries. He's positive you won't be interested in those imported imposters after one taste of the real thing.

But don't just take our word for it. Stop by this weekend and sample the best locally grown summer fruit we think you'll find anywhere. Join us Saturday and Sunday, 11am until 5pm.



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