

Week in
The Review

Astrodome Evacuees Stay

A plan to move some Hurricane Katrina evacuees from the Houston Astrodome to cruise ships was postponed Tuesday because many didn't want to go. Officials had planned to begin moving about 4,000 evacuees on Tuesday to cruise ships docked at ports on the Gulf of Mexico. See related story, page A2.

Kanye West Blasts Bush

Outspoken rapper Kanye West claimed "George Bush doesn't care about black people" and said America was set up "to help the poor, the black people and the less well-off as slow as possible" during a live hurricane relief broadcast Friday on NBC. West's comment about the president was cut from NBC's West Coast airing, which showed three hours later on tape.

Supreme Court Justice Dies

On Tuesday, Supreme Court justices led a somber line of Americans paying their last respects to William H. Rehnquist, the chief justice whose conservatism helped drive the high court toward the right. Rehnquist died Saturday at 80 after battling thyroid cancer. See page A2.

Iraq Stampede Kills Hundreds

More than 719 Shiite pilgrims were killed and 383 were injured last Wednesday when a railing on an Iraq bridge collapsed during a religious procession, sending scores into the Tigris River. There were reports that the stampede may have been caused when someone in the crowd shouted there was a suicide bomber among them.

Gas Prices Halt Travel



Labor Day traffic slowed around the country as many drivers paid 30 percent more than before Hurricane Katrina disrupted Gulf Coast refinery and pipeline operations a week ago. Drivers paid an average of about \$3.20 a gallon for unleaded regular on Monday and 75 cents more than they did before the hurricane.

U.S. Jets Attack Targets

U.S. jets struck targets Tuesday near the Syrian border where al-Qaida has expanded its presence, and civilians fled fighting in the northern city of Tal Afar, complaining they were running short of food and water. As of Monday, at least 1,889 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003.

Rallying Local Relief

Gulf coast disaster hits close to home

BY ERIKA-LEIGH GOODWIN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

In the wake of Hurricane Katrina's devastation, Portland's African American community has been hit close to home.

Several area residents have families and loved ones in the areas affected by the natural disaster and people are feeling the need to do more. The hurricane and flooding has left hundreds of thousands of people homeless in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama.

Oregon State Sen. Margaret Carter, originally from Shreveport, La., has a personal interest in the relief effort. Her niece Yurico Claiborne was able to gather 13 relatives as the storm approached and they all survived by running a four-car caravan to Columbus, Ga. Currently, her niece is one of three adults responsible for the health and well being of 8 children and 3 disabled adults.

"I had great fear that she had been a victim of the floods," Carter said.

Because the phone lines were down and/or busy, Carter was unable to contact her niece and other loved ones until Wednesday.

"Those were very emotionally charged and very sad days," Carter said. "I was beyond disbelief and certainly very desperate to get in touch with my family as the water

continued to rise.

The extended family was able to afford only three rooms at the rate of \$269 a night.

Three adults who qualify for unemployment insurance are only eligible to receive \$289 a week per person. With no money for food or

gas, coupled with the fact that their weekly benefits barely cover the cost of shelter, their situation like so many other hurricane survivors can seem hopeless and bleak.

She has set up a family fund for her niece to assist them until the Red Cross can provide more relief.

But the agonizing reality is that Carter's family members are some of the luckier citizens who have been struck by this tragedy.

Continuing images of children and the

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Rev. Matt Hennessee and Sen. Margaret Carter go to work coordinating local relief efforts for victims of Hurricane Katrina.

PHOTO BY
ERIKA-LEIGH
GOODWIN/
THE PORTLAND
OBSERVER

Gospel Concert for Survivors

An Amazing Grace Relief Concert to benefit Hurricane Katrina survivors who are being relocated to Portland will be held Friday at 7 p.m. at Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church, 3138 N. Vancouver Ave.

Attendees are encouraged to bring donations of money, non-perishable food and clothing.

For more information, call the church at 503-282-9496.

Parallels to New Orleans Tragedy

Survivor looks back on Vanport flood



OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY PHOTO

A historical photo of the aftermath of the Vanport Flood. Vanport, once the second largest city in Oregon, was obliterated in less than a day when the dike for the Columbia River broke.

BY KATHERINE BLACKMORE
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Ed Washington was only 12 years old when the infamous Vanport Flood of 1948 took everything his family had—beyond their lives and their hope.

Today he is seeing families in New Orleans experience a travesty similar to the one he went through.

"It's a calamity. My heart aches for those people," Washington said. "There are obviously lots of parallels. The magnitude is no comparison, but people are sharing the same kinds of issues, the same sense of loss."

More than 50 years ago, Vanport, located between Portland and

Vancouver, was once the second largest city in Oregon and the largest housing project in the nation. But on May 30, 1948, the dike holding back the Columbia River gave way and the city, situated 15-feet below water level, was engulfed in a devastating flood. A community that had once housed 50,000 people was literally wiped off the map and 15 people were killed.

Washington, now the Community Liaison for Diversity Initiatives at Portland State University and a former Portland Metro Councilor, recalled the disbelief his mother had at the idea that Vanport could be obliterated by water.

The rivers, he said, had been

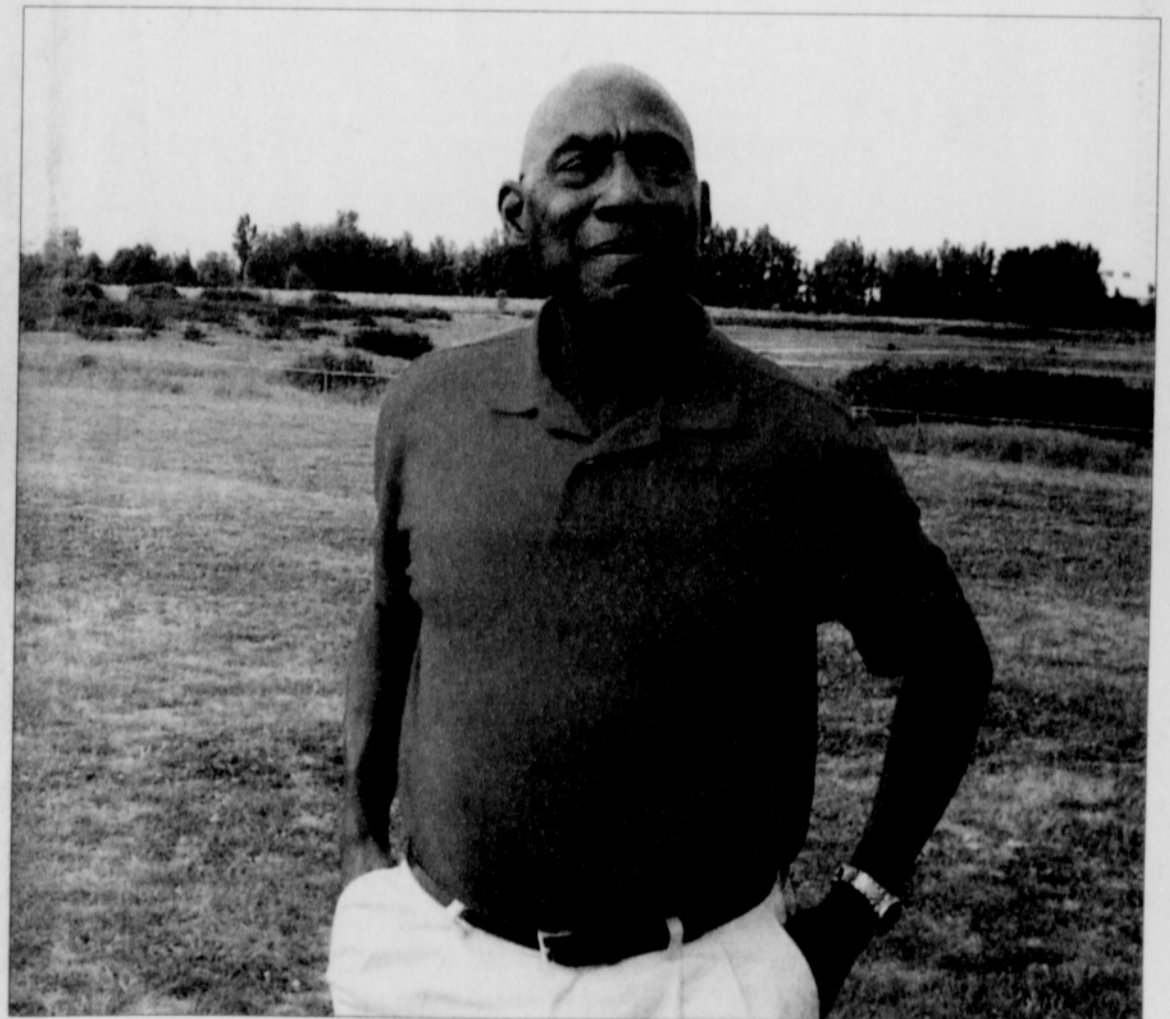


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Ed Washington, a survivor of the 1948 Vanport Flood, stands in a field that was once part of the city of Vanport, destroyed by Columbia River floodwaters.

rising steadily before the flood occurred, but the community was told the dike would hold for a few days until the Columbia River could crest over. People went about their business, having picnics and getting ready for the school year.

Curious to see exactly how high the river was rising that day,

Washington's mother was walking with her four sons and a friend toward what is now called Marine Drive, when emergency sirens went off throughout the town. A police officer told the family to run back home and grab what they could, because the dike had broken and a flood was imminent.

They were only able to pack a suitcase with some clothes and important documents before the family rushed up to what is now Interstate 5. There, they stood and watched as a huge wave wiped out their belongings, their neighbor

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