

NFL Star Challenges Local Kids to Help Classmates



Jefferson High student Rosaunda Jackson is battling a life threatening illness.



PHOTOS BY ISAIAH BOUIE/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Ex-New York Jet Emanuel McNeil challenges Jefferson High School students to adopt a classmate in need.

Ex-NY Jet player Emanuel McNeil came to Jefferson High School Friday and challenged students to help their classmate Rosaunda Jackson who is bat-

tlng a life threatening illness and is a patient at Legacy Emanuel Children's Hospital. The effort was through Sparrow Clubs USA, a new

school-based "kids-helping-kids" organization that is expanding into Portland area schools and assists children in medical crisis.

McNeil's own daughter Moriah experienced awesome support through the Oregon-based group before she died in April 2004. McNeil traveled

from Virginia to share his family story and lend support to Jefferson students in participating in the organization. Sparrow Clubs is unique in

that it's the nation's only youth-based charity. For more information, call 541-312-8630 or visit www.sparrowclubs.org.

Local Energy Assistance Needed

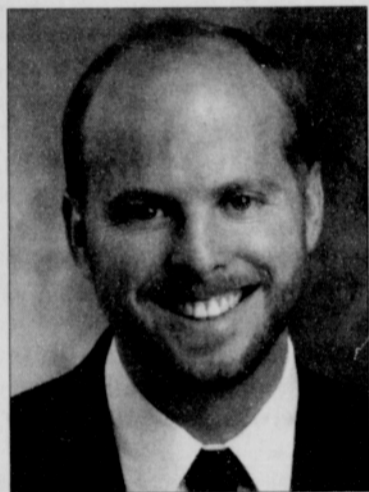
Northwest Natural with the help of contributions by donors is helping less fortunate members of the community keep warm this winter. The company's Gas Assistance Program provides much-needed help to more than 1,000 families when other assistance programs are stretched too thin, according to Steve Feltz, treasurer and controller

for the utility. GAP funds are collected by United Way and distributed through local community agencies. Families and individuals in need of low-income energy assistance this winter should contact one of the following groups for more information: YWCA Housing & Enrichment Resources at 503-721-6760, Albina

Ministerial Alliance at 503-285-0493, Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization Asian Family Center at 503-235-9396, the Salvation Army at 503-239-1264, Catholic Charities at 503-234-9074, Human Solutions at 503-548-0200, Portland Impact at 503-988-6000, St. Vincent DePaul at 503-235-8431 and Native American Rehabilitation Association at 503-274-4251.

Free Haircuts

The Salvation Army is again partnering with volunteer hair stylists for free holiday haircuts for kids through age 16 at its Moore Street Community Center, 5325 N. Williams Ave. on Monday, Dec. 19 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. For many of the youngsters this will be their only haircut for the year. To volunteer, call 503-493-3925 or 3927.



Chip Shields

Switching Gears

Oregon Tradeswomen, Inc., is enlisting north and northeast Portland State Rep. Chip Shields as its employment and development specialist. The organization headquartered on Northeast Alberta Street promotes success for women in the trades through education, leadership and mentorship. Shields was the founding executive director of Better People, a northeast Portland employment and counseling program for ex-offenders. He has also worked as an employment specialist with the Youth Employment Institute. Shields just completed his first legislative session in the Oregon House of Representatives where he served on the House Business, Labor and Consumer Affairs Committee.

Gulf Relief

The local Red Cross is thanking all the organizations, businesses and individuals who stepped forward with help for Hurricane Katrina victims. More than 900 evacuees to the Portland area have received financial support from the Red Cross with on-going relief efforts in Gulf Coast states still underway. So far, local kids, adults, organizations and businesses have raised \$10.2 million for Red Cross relief efforts, which amounts to more than the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and the 2004 South Asia tsunami and hurricane season combined. Some 4,000 local participants have trained to help the Red Cross, compared to 700 individuals in an average year. Locally, 14,814 meals were served at the former Washington High School in Portland for evacuees and volunteers of the disaster. Red Cross volunteers also provided up to 989 health screenings and 2,867 mental health visits. Some 304 local Red Cross volunteers left the Portland area to help with hurricane relief efforts in the Gulf and 460 volunteered at Washington High School.

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