

Revamp for Jefferson, Area Schools Coming

School Board vote is unanimous

By MICHAEL LEIGHTON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

An extensive plan to revamp Jefferson High School in north Portland and nearly all its feeder schools in north and northeast Portland has won final approval from the Portland School Board.

The seven-member panel put aside objections from many local

residents and voted unanimously Monday on the recommendations by Superintendent Vicki Phillips and a community-based design team.

The most contentious issue of imposing school uniforms on high school students was removed from the proposal before the vote. School board members were

united in going forward with the other changes in an effort to reverse declining enrollment and years of low achievement scores at Jefferson and the schools that feed into the high school.

Accusations that the proposals were racist because they would treat Jefferson area schools differently from the other schools in the district were flatly rejected. School board members

said ignoring the achievement and enrolment problems the schools face would continue discriminatory practices of the past.

In the new structuring, individual middle schools are eliminated and most elementary schools feeding into Jefferson become kindergarten through eighth grade schools.

Harriet Tubman Middle School in north Portland becomes a girls-

only, grades 7 through 12 academy with a focus on science and technology. Jefferson High School would be split into a boys-only leadership academy for grades 7 through 12 and two coed academies, grades 9 through 12. One of the Jefferson coed programs would place emphasis on Arts and Technology and the Other Sciences and Technology. The design team was instituted

last fall after complaints from many parents about a proposal to merge younger middle school students into Jefferson.

School board members pledged to make the changes approved Monday successful and indicted they could be copied for other schools in the district in the future, such as at Roosevelt and Marshall High Schools and their feeder schools.

YWCA Justice Award

The YWCA of Vancouver has named educator Leilani Russell as its 2005 Val Joshua Racial Justice Award winner.

Russell, the multicultural coordinator at Evergreen High School, has dedicated years to educating youth and school staff on issues such as racism, harassment, discrimination and bullying.

She serves as the Evergreen School District's trainer of diversity trainers, is the co-facilitator of

Diversity Youth in Leadership, a program of both the Evergreen and Vancouver School Districts, and is actively involved in the Washington State Board of Education Equity Committee.

She is also on the board of the Washington State Association of Multicultural Education and was a member of the Peace Jam Northwest Planning Committee for nine years.

"I am very passionate about top-

ics of social justice, nonviolence, human rights and the power of youth. I have a love for working with young people," Russell says. "My grandmother taught me to stand up for injustice; she taught me to have a voice and the power of youth."

The award will be presented during the YWCA's Annual Celebration on Wednesday, Aug. 25 at the YWCA Helene Schoen Center at 6:30 p.m.



Leilani Russell

Downtown Parks Curfew Expanded

Whatever your intentions may be, hanging out in any downtown parks after 9 p.m. is no longer allowed.

Last October, the Portland Police Bureau's Central Precinct responded to criminal activity in the South Park Blocks by enforcing a

tightened curfew from midnight to 9 p.m. and increasing foot patrols in the area.

Because an overall reduction to crime was reported, the City Council is now extending that curfew and police visibility to all five downtown parks.

Drug and alcohol abuse and property crime have been the main issues, with city parks hosting an array of illicit activity.

The downtown's parks include the North and South Park Blocks, O'Bryant Square, Ira Keller Fountain Park, and an unnamed park at Southwest 14th and Hall. All five parks open daily at five a.m., but remain open 24 hours to pedestrians passing through.

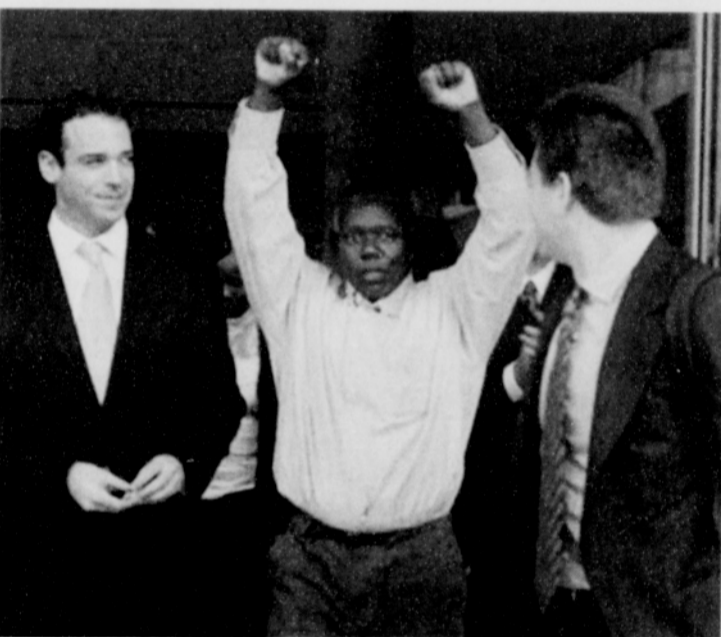
Inmate Freed on DNA Evidence

(AP)— Alan Crotzer stepped into the warm sunlight outside the courthouse in Tampa, Fla. Monday and raised his arms to the sky, celebrating his freedom after more than 24 years behind bars for crimes he didn't commit.

A judge freed the 45-year-old Crotzer after DNA testing and other evidence convinced prosecutors he was not involved in the 1981 armed robbery and rapes that led to his 130-year prison sentence.

"It's been a long time coming," said Crotzer, his black hair graying at the temples. "Thank God for this day."

Crotzer walked free more than three years after he wrote to the Innocence Project in New York, a legal clinic that seeks to exonerate inmates



Alan Crotzer throws his arms up in the air as he leaves a Tampa, Fla. courthouse after being released from prison for a crime he didn't commit. (AP photo)

through DNA testing.

"Are you ready for what you waited so long to hear?" Circuit Judge J. Rogers Padgett said to Crotzer during the brief hearing. "Motion granted - you're a free man."

Members of Crotzer's family and other courtroom spectators clapped and cheered as a bailiff removed the shackles from his wrists and ankles.

Prosecutor Mike Sinacore congratulated him. "Trying to fix an error in the system is just as important as trying to convict someone who is guilty," he said.

DNA has been used to clear at least 172 people wrongly convicted of crimes in 31 states since 1989, according to the Innocence Project.



Meet with the Mayor and City Council: Community Budget Forums

Take part in the budget process!

Tuesday, January 31, 6:30 - 8:30 PM
- Focus on Infrastructure Services -
 David Douglas High School Cafeteria
 1001 SE 135th Ave - Ample Parking
 Bus Lines: 20 & 27
Info tables open at 5:45!!!

Additional Forums: Feb 28, 6:30 - 8:30
 April 8, 10 - Noon

www.portlandonline.com/communitybudget

ADA accessible - Special needs: 823-4519 in advance
 More info & childcare/interpretation inquiries: 823-5288
 TDD: 823-6868

NEW SEASONS MARKET

Go Green!

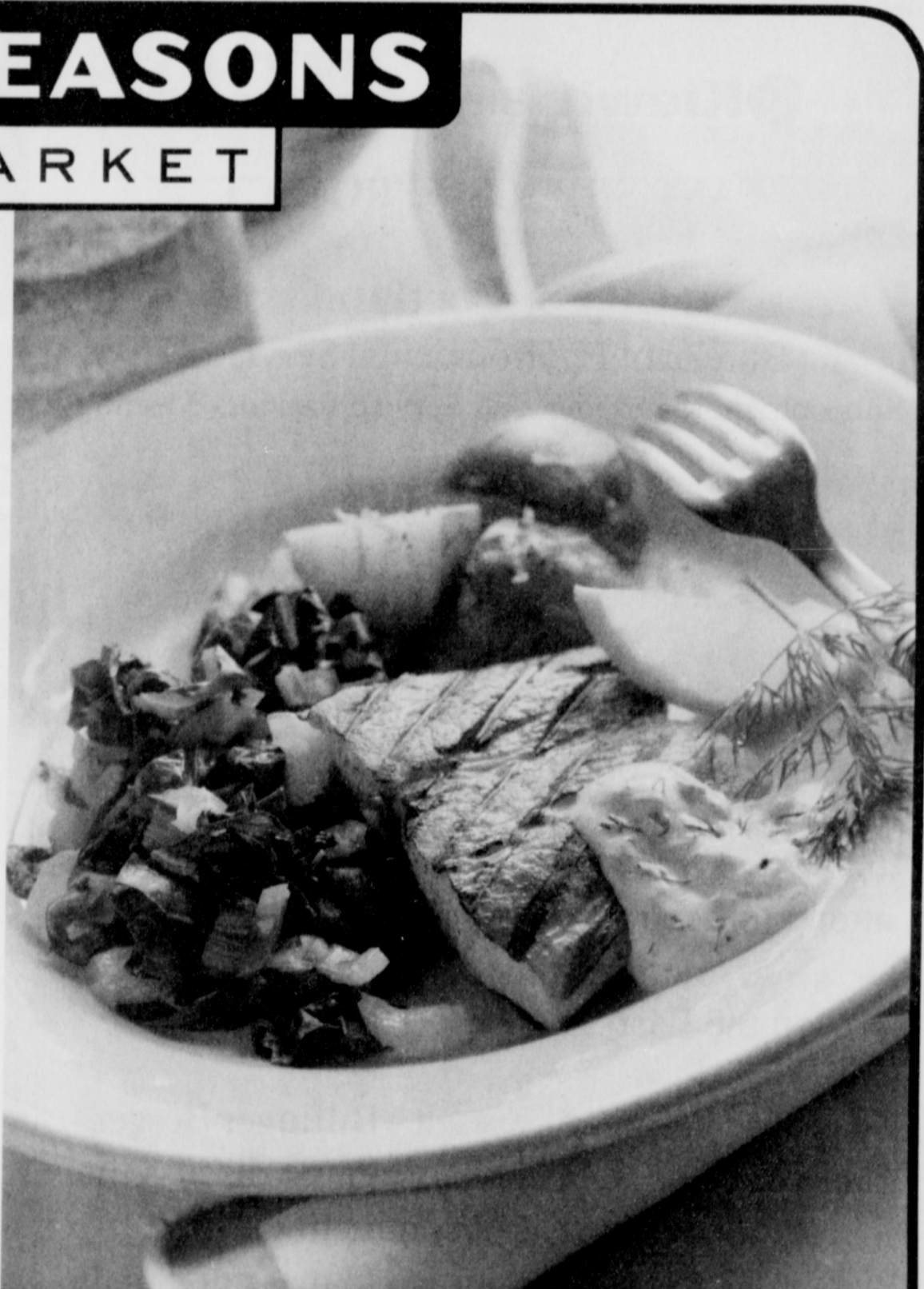
SATURDAY & SUNDAY • 11AM-5PM

Did you know the world of leafy green vegetables stretches far beyond iceberg and Romaine lettuce? It's true that greens may not be as diverse in color and shape as peppers and mushrooms, but they definitely make up for it in flavor and nutrition.

Most people think greens have a bitter flavor. Some varieties do, but others are sweet, pungent, or even sour and can add amazing flavors to salads and cooked dishes.

Need another reason to eat more greens? These vibrant vegetables pack a powerful, nutritional punch including vitamin A, beta-carotene, calcium, magnesium, iron, folic acid, and chlorophyll. Greens are also a great source of fiber and are full of plant compounds that offer a variety of health benefits. Remember the greens with the darkest, most vivid hues tend to contain the highest levels of nutrients.

Join us this weekend as we introduce you to the lively world of leafy greens. We'll be sharing tastes of bok choy, curly mustard, green, red and rainbow chard, dandelion, beet, spinach, special braising greens, and green, red, and lacinato kale. Our demo staff will be on hand to show you easy ways to incorporate greens into your diet by whipping up some of our favorite recipes.



EASY & FUN TO SHOP • LOCALLY OWNED & OPERATED

ARBOR LODGE: N Interstate Ave & Portland Blvd Portland OR 97217 503.467.4777

CONCORDIA: NE 33rd & Killingsworth Portland OR 97211 503.288.3838

...and four other Portland area locations. Visit us online at www.newseasonsmarket.com.