

# The Portland Observer

'City of Roses'

Volume XXXVI, Number 26

Established in 1970  
Committed to Cultural Diversity

www.portlandobserver.com

Wednesday • July 5, 2006



## A Cause to Celebrate

Larry Collins leads group in neighborhood cleanups and celebration

See story, Metro, back page

## Campaign Rap

Candidate makes name with young rapper's song

See story, page A5



## Week in The Review

### Military Trials Illegal

President Bush overstepped his authority in ordering military war crimes trials for Guantanamo Bay detainees. The Supreme Court ruled Thursday that the proposed trials were illegal under U.S. law and international Geneva conventions. See story, page A2.

### Soldiers Accused of Rape, Murder

Five U.S. Army soldiers are being investigated for allegedly raping a young woman, then killing her and three members of her family in Iraq, a U.S. military official said Friday. The soldiers also allegedly burned the body of the woman.

### Rosa Parks' Will Disputed

Relatives of Rosa Parks and the people she appointed to handle her affairs have failed to reach an agreement in a dispute over her estate. A trial is likely in the legal challenge to the civil rights icon's will, said Frederick Toca Jr., a lawyer representing Parks' 13 nieces and nephews.

### VA Laptop Recovered

The missing laptop and hard drive that contained veterans' personal information has been found. The announcement came at the beginning of a hearing Thursday before the House Veterans' Affairs Committee hearing.

### Blazers Get No. 2 Pick

The Portland Trail Blazers pulled off a stunner in the NBA draft, trading for the No. 2 overall pick, LaMarcus Aldridge, a 6-foot-11 power forward/center from Texas. See story in Sports, page A9.

### Housing Plan Opposed

A lawsuit alleges that a plan to demolish four public housing complexes in New Orleans is discriminatory, violates international laws that protect people displaced by natural disasters and will drive black families outside the city.

### Bush Misses Border Deadline

The Bush administration was unable to muster even half of the 2,500 National Guardsmen it planned to have on the Mexican border by the end of June. Fewer than 1,000 troops were in place as of last week, according to military officials in the four border states.

# Martin Luther King Refocus

## Revitalization gets new 5-year priority

BY LEE PERLMAN  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A new strategy update and action plan has been approved for revitalizing Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, the major thoroughfare in the Portland's African-American community.

The Portland Development Commission will refocus limited public resources and seek out new partners to jumpstart development on the street after years of mostly failed attempts. MLK has suffered economically because of so many empty buildings and vacant properties and a bad image for a relatively high crime rate.

The PDC unanimously adopted a six-point plan Thursday to fight those past obstacles and stimulate redevelopment along the boulevard:

### Public involvement

PDC staffers will regularly attend neighborhood association meetings, the North-Northeast Business Association, and minority chambers of commerce. A MLK Business Ambassadors Network will form to help lure potential developers and businesses to the avenue, and work with community newspapers to publicize their efforts.

### Business support

The commission will place special emphasis on supporting existing, and especially minority businesses in the MLK corridor. This would mean maintaining existing efforts such as the Storefront



Jim Hlousek inspects routine road construction work on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. A new push for the economic development of properties along the thoroughfare also includes a study on improving the street's design.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Improvement Program, working with real estate brokers to recruit businesses that fit identified "niches" that met local needs and create jobs, and working more closely with other agencies such as Portland Community College.

### Better Image

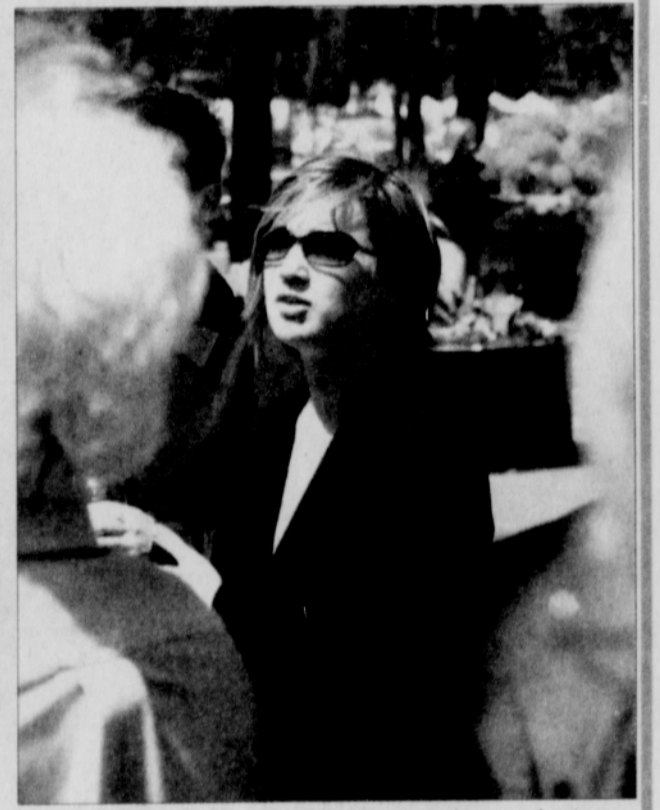
Marketing strategies on creating a better image for the boulevard include refurbishing the designated "gateway" to MLK on Northeast Grand Avenue at Hancock Street; working with property owners to promote

good maintenance; assisting and promoting community celebrations such as Good in the Neighborhood; and demonstrating demographics that show the area to be a

continued ▼ on page A3



A flood-damaged house in the Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans gets the needed repairs and cleanup from a team of volunteers. The site will be used for a free health clinic.



Kristina Brand of Portland helps organize a volunteer team in New Orleans.

# Taking Leadership to Heart

## Local Volunteers Build New Orleans Free Clinic

Thanks to the leadership of a Portland woman and 28 very determined people, a free health clinic is being built in the poorest and one of the hardest areas hit by Hurricane Katrina, the Lower 9th Ward of New Orleans.

Kristina Brand, a videographer from Oregon Health & Science University Educational Communications, with a group of men and women from throughout the United States, attended a workshop in April designed to teach leadership. They call themselves LC3, which stands for Leaders Creating Change Through Contribution.

The group decided they wanted to go to New Orleans and build

something to help the Hurricane Katrina victims.

Common Ground Collective, a relief agency for victims of the hurricane disaster, said they could come to New Orleans and build a

raise \$30,000 and get the clinic built," Brand said.

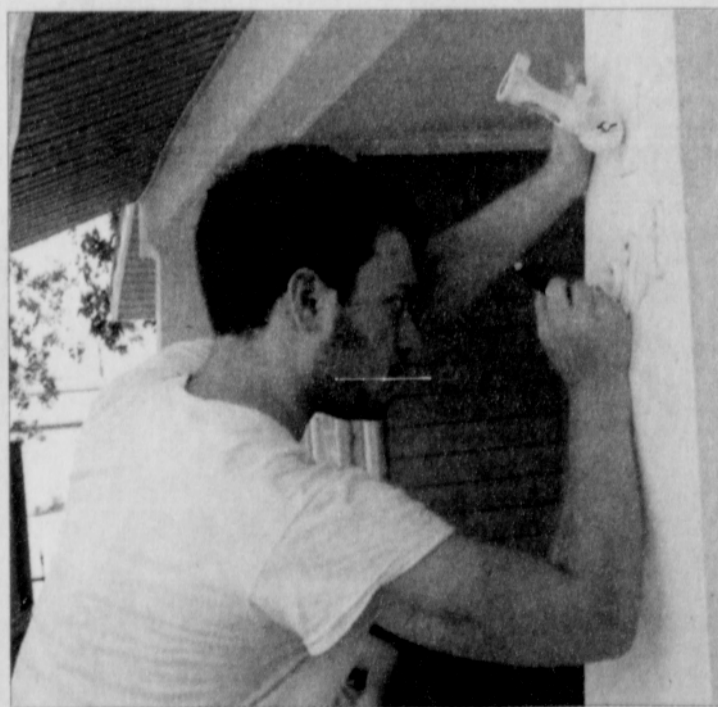
And they've almost done it.

A nurse from the 9th Ward donated her flood-damaged house. Home Depot donated supplies and the LC3 group is close to their \$30,000 goal.

Last month, some 30 volunteers, including Brand's mother, Debbie Brand of Philomath, Ore., landed in New Orleans and began work on gutting, bleaching out the mold, and renovating the house at 5228 St. Claude. It is called the Common Ground, Lower 9th Ward Health Clinic.

continued ▼ on page A3

*This is going to be the only free, operational health care facility in [the 9th] ward.*



A Common Ground Collective volunteer touches up house numbers on a Katrina damaged home that will soon serve as a public health clinic.

PRESORT STD  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
PORTLAND OR  
PERMIT  
NO. 1610



University of Oregon  
Knight Library  
1299 University of Oregon  
Eugene, OR 97403-1205