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Classic Savion
Dance extraordinaire
returning to Portland
See Metro section, inside

Oregon's Best
Terrell Brandon
named to the Oregon
Sports Hall of Fame
See Sports, page B6



Week in The Review

U.S. Embassy Attacked

Islamic militants tried to storm the U.S. Embassy in Damascus on Tuesday using automatic rifles, hand grenades and at least one van rigged with explosives, the government said. Four people were killed in the brazen attack, including three of the assailants, but no Americans were hurt.

Iraq War Defended on 9-11

President Bush, in a prime-time address from the Oval Office on the five-year anniversary of the Sept. 11 attacks, staunchly defended the war in Iraq even though he acknowledged that Saddam Hussein was not responsible for the terrorism that killed nearly 3,000 people. See story, page A2.

Gulf War Syndrome Debunked

A Veterans Administration-sponsored report released Tuesday says there is no such thing as Gulf War syndrome. But the study found U.S. and foreign veterans of the Gulf War do suffer from an array of very real problems.

TV Anchor Says Dog Talks

Has Barbara Walters lost it? Some of her co-hosts on "The View" may think so after her claim Tuesday about her Havanese dog Cha-Cha. Walters says when she told Cha-Cha she loved her, Cha-Cha said "I love you" back. Walters says she's going to bring the woman who was with her at the time on the show to back up her story.

Dropouts See Big Pay Gap

Dropping out of high school has its costs around the globe, but nowhere steeper than in the United States. Adults who don't finish high school in the U.S. earn 65 percent of what people who have high school degrees make, according to a new report comparing industrialized nations.

Mom Rewards Son with Pot

A woman facing drug charges admitted in court that she smoked marijuana with her 13-year-old son, often to reward him for doing his homework. Amanda Lynn Livelsberger, 30, pleaded guilty to several misdemeanor drug charges Monday in Adams County, Pennsylvania.

On Leadership's Path

Local lawyer in race for judge

BY SARAH BLOUNT
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Portland lawyer and aspiring judge Ulanda Watkins strives to follow the path of three African American judges who helped shape her professional life, and a grandmother for whom she is thankful, for pushing her in almost a military fashion.

At the age of 36, Watkins is a partner at the downtown law firm Walker, Warren and Watkins. She primarily practices criminal defense but has a civil practice of personal injury, real estate and creditor collections.

Now she faces the opportunity to fill an unexpected vacancy on the Multnomah County Circuit

Court, following last month's death of Judge Clifford Freeman, a respected community leader from northeast Portland.

Watkins distinguishes herself as the only ethnic minority running for the judicial post, a gap intensified in recent years by the deaths of two other African American judges, Multnomah Circuit Court Judges Mercedes Diaz and Roosevelt Robinson.

She recalls her connections with the three judges, who promoted minorities in law on the bench and reached out to aspiring lawyers in the classroom.

Her first exposure to law dates back to Wilson High School, where the stirrings of a legal career connected her with Diaz, Oregon's first female, black judge.

"I was impressed that she went through college as a mom, and that



PHOTO BY SARAH BLOUNT/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Ulanda Watkins follows a path laid down by other African American leaders and mentors in her November General Election campaign to fill a vacancy on the Multnomah County Circuit Court.

she stood not just for minority women, but for all women," Watkins said.

After high school, Watkins at-

tended Oregon State University, where she received her bachelor's in political science in 1993. It was there she met Robinson, who in-

structed students in an approachable and memorable manner.

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Rosa Parks Elementary Opens to Eager Audience

Rosa Parks Elementary welcomed its first class last week from the New Columbia neighborhood, a mixed-use development in north Portland built to replace Columbia Villa.

Rosa Parks, 8960 N. Woolsey Ave., is the first new Portland Public School built since 1998, and replaces the old John Ball Elementary. The new school offers a host of new amenities, including a new gym and event room at the community center, open to the entire neighborhood.

Solar panels and natural light brighten each room, and sustainable building materials distinguish the school as Portland's first to earn certification for Leadership in Environmental and Energy Design.

Although John Ball Elementary, built in the 1940s, was a deteriorating structure without even a gym, achievement within



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Rosa Parks Elementary students get some pointers from Instruction Specialist LaShawn Lee during the first week of school at the brand new school in the New Columbia neighborhood of north Portland.

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Major Life Changes through Small Miracles

Club celebrates 12 years of services

BY SARAH BLOUNT
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Miracles Club opened a dozen years ago to provide an environment free of drugs and alcohol for recovering addicts. Now Miracles serves as a national model, offering a critical social outlet for the African American community.

A 12th anniversary celebration open to the public takes place Saturday, Sept. 16 from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. at the club, 4069 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Miracles founders, twin brothers Johnny A. and Johnny W. Gage and friend Sam Brown, met while seeking treatment for addiction, but as they faced the road to recovery they realized social interaction was as important as the 12 steps of Narcotics Anonymous (NA).

At the time, there were no clubs operated by recovering people for recovering people in north and northeast Portland's African American com-



PHOTO BY SARAH BLOUNT/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Junior Gibson has been clean from drugs and alcohol for 12 years. He regularly attends the Miracles Club on Northeast Martin Luther King Boulevard and Mason Street for Narcotics Anonymous meetings.

munity. One had to travel to the Pass Club in southeast Portland or the Personality Club in Vancouver to find strength through likeminded peers.

In 1994, Brown and the Gage brothers pooled \$3,000 apiece for start-up costs to open a recovery club on North Killingsworth, near Portland Community College. Four years later they moved to MLK and Bryant before finally settling at their current address five years ago.

The building sits between the busy boulevard and Mason Street, and is open from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily for a variety of NA meetings, games and fellowship, or just a safe place for everyone, children included. The location also serves as an entertainment venue for gospel and Motown performances, dances, karaoke and fashion shows.

"There's a black recovery community that's grown up around here," said Harry Watson, co-chair of the non-profit's board, friend of the founders and a person in recovery like all of its board members. "When we were young we didn't

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