

METRO

The Portland Observer

Gulf Coast to Portland

A pastor reflects on past year in new home and congregation

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SECTION B

Community Calendar

Oregon Food Bank

The Oregon Food Bank seeks volunteers on Mondays from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., and Tuesdays, 9 a.m. to noon, to sort and repack perishable foods. Call 503-282-0555, extension 272 or visit Oregonfoodbank.org.

Black Colleges Conference

The 27th annual Black Colleges Conference will be held Saturday, Oct. 28 at the Cascade Campus of Portland Community College, 705 N. Killingsworth from 7:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for high school and middle schools students. For more information, call 503-275-9603.

Create-A-Costume

On Saturday, Oct. 28, from noon to 4 p.m., bring your ideas and imagination and let SCRAP, the non-profit recycler on N. Williams Ave., supply materials and creative help to make a Halloween costume. Visit scrapaction.org.

Home Buying Fair

The African American Alliance for Homeownership presents its annual home buying fair, Saturday, Oct. 28 from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. in the Legacy Emanuel Hospital Atrium, 501 N. Graham. Attendees will get help through the homebuying process with valuable information and free workshops. Two \$2,500 housing grants will be raffled.

Canine 101

Find out why your dog does that. "Problem Pooch" class is for people who have just entered pet parenthood, or are thinking of adopting a new pet. Class will be held at 1067 N.E. Columbia Blvd., Saturdays, Nov. 4 and Nov. 18 at 11 a.m. Call 503-285-7722 or visit oregonhumane.org or call the free behavior help line at 503-416-2983.

St. Charles Spaghetti Dinner

The annual St. Charles Spaghetti and Meatball Fundraiser Dinner takes place Sunday, Nov. 5, from noon to 6:30 p.m. at St. Charles Church, 42nd and Emerson Street. Take-out is available. Adults are \$9, children \$4. For information, call 503-287-1615.

Say Hey, NW Reception

Partners in Diversity welcomes new professionals of color with a quarterly reception, allowing new professionals to network with the more established "welcome brigade" of community leaders. This is a great opportunity to build strong professional bridges. The reception is Thursday, Nov. 9, from 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Self Enhancement, Inc., 3920 N. Kirby Ave. For more information, call 503-516-3505.

Women of Wealth

The Women of Wealth program is committed to helping women of all backgrounds reach their full potential. A variety of self-improvement classes are offered to improve your health, career, marriage and family. The event will be held at the Vancouver Hilton Hotel & Convention Center, 301 W. 6th St. For more information, call 866-815-REAL (7325) or 253-536-0801.

Fighting Cancer with Food

Free nutrition and cooking classes for cancer prevention and survival take place at 4 p.m. each Sunday through Nov. 19 at the Community Learning Center, 4212 N.E. Prescott. To register, call 503-281-8596.

36
years of
community service



Seniors and people who have suffered from strokes or other medical conditions form clay in an art therapy class at the Marie Smith Health and Social Service Center, 4616 N. Albina St.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Activities Help Locals Stay Active

Therapeutic classes at Marie Smith Center

Specialized classes for older adults in art, music and horticultural therapy as well as exercise are being offered on an a la carte basis at the Marie Smith Health and Social Service Center at 4616 N. Albina St.

The classes are also suitable and open to people with disabilities. The Center is oper-

ated by the non-profit organization, Volunteers of America Oregon.

"Our Centers serve older adults, many with dementia, and persons with disabilities who can benefit from the therapeutic benefits of music, art and gardening as well as find immediate joy in the experiences," said

Lynn Schemmer-Valleau, VOAOR director of senior services. "Our exercise class is helpful for all seniors and suitable for those who have suffered from strokes or have Parkinson's disease."

The horticultural therapy classes are presented through Life's Seasons Gardening with instructor Linda Park each Thursdays at 11 a.m. Art therapy classes meet weekly on Tuesdays at 1:30 p.m. and music therapy classes are every Monday at 11 a.m. and Tuesdays at 1 p.m.

Among older adults, studies have shown that art therapy helps foster creativity, lifts morale, increases cognitive skills, decreases anxiety and stimulates the senses. Music therapy provides many of the same benefits.

"It's so encouraging to see many of our participants dance with delight during the music classes, said Schemmer-Valleau. "We see people who are sedentary all of the sudden brighten up and move with gusto to the music. Some dance, others tap their toes and many in wheelchairs nod with the beat. We know they are fully engaged at that point."

The exercise classes are every day at 10:15 a.m. They are led by the center's professional staff and consist of low impact movement, stretching and chair exercises.

All classes last 45 minutes and have a fee of \$15 each including lunch or snacks where timing is appropriate.

For more information or to enroll, contact the Marie Smith Center at 503-335-9980.

Leesha Posey Grows E-Mat Café

Takes reigns of business on MLK

BY LEE PERLMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The E-Mat Café is growing into its name.

Owner Leesha Posey is showcasing the retail outlet's new look. It is now more of a cafe, rather than a store, and features fresh baked pizza, bagels and cinnamon rolls, as well as pastries from Delphina's Bakery.

Posey has also brought in more comfortable chairs and couches, and given the interior of the place at 2808 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. a new coat of paint. It is now a more comfortable place for people to "hang out," Posey says.

The cafe retains its free Wifi facilities, TV viewing and Laundromat services. To this last, Posey says, she will shortly be adding a new, large washer capable of laundering sleeping bags and other large items.

Tuesdays and Sundays are Game Nights, when all comers are welcome to compete in checker, chess and domino matches.

Leesha's father James, an independent contractor, community activist and former political candidate, started the E-Mat in 2000 when Bill Reed redeveloped the Standard Dairy Building.

E-Mat began as a sort of convenience store and internet provider, although Posey and Reed took the extraordinary step of foregoing alcohol products to respond to community concerns. Lately the place has gradually transitioned from a market into a cafe, offering fewer retail products and more in-store services.

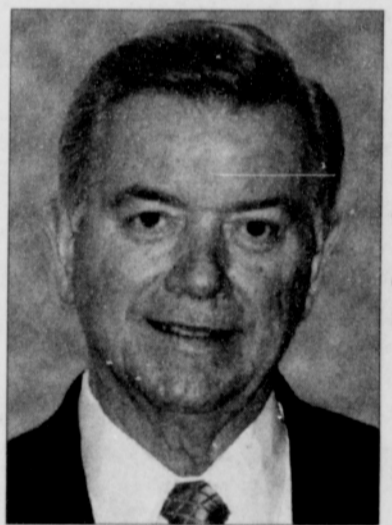
During this time, Leesha has gradually been taking over the running of the place.

Born in Portland, she graduated from Benson High School and Alabama's Oakwood College. She taught school in Japan and Maryland before returning to Portland in 2001 to help her father run the store, whom she calls "my hero and mentor."

The cafe is open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 9 p.m. weekends.



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Owner Leesha Posey brings new products and a new look to the E-Mat Café in the Standard Dairy Building at 2808 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.



Tom Potter

Diversity Commission Forming

To foster diversity, investigate bias

Mayor Tom Potter has won approval of a plan to create a Human Relations Commission, an independent body charged with advocating for the rights of all Portlanders, fostering diversity and investigating bias and discrimination anywhere in the city.

Co-sponsored by Commissioners Randy Leonard and Dan Saltzman, a resolution calls for city staff to report back in six months with key recommendations from the community about the final structure, staffing, funding and name of the commission.

"Portland has become a city of great diversity, and this enriches our cultural life and economy," said Mayor Potter. "We must ensure that this diversity is protected, nurtured and viewed as the asset to our city that it is."

The commission will be charged with looking not only at discrimination, but also at the more subtle questions that come with a more multicultural and diverse city: How to ensure affordable housing and equal educational opportunities? How to keep gentrification from re-segregating neighborhoods? How to end homelessness? How to build greater trust between neighborhoods and police officers?

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