



The Portland Observer

'City of Roses'

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Week in The Review



Mt. Hood Search Dims

Photos found with the body of a climber found on Mount Hood have increased worries about how long his two missing companions could survive in the brutal environment. "Looking what they had with them, I'm pretty concerned about how long somebody can last out there," Hood River County Sheriff Joe Wamplers said Tuesday.



More Troops Opposed

Former Secretary of State Colin Powell is casting doubt on a plan under consideration by President Bush that would increase troops in Iraq, calling the U.S. Army overextended and "about broken."

Brawl Brings Suspensions

NBA scoring leader Carmelo Anthony was suspended for 15 games Monday and six other players were penalized as commissioner David Stern came down hard on both teams after the Nuggets and Knicks brawled Saturday night at Madison Square Garden.

Draft Obama Campaign

Local backers of Democratic U.S. Sen. Barack Obama, who's mulling a presidential bid, have launched an Internet campaign to get people to sign a petition at draftobama.org. Jason Owens said the goal is to get thousands of Oregonians to join people in other states who are urging the Illinois senator to run.



Wholesale Prices Surge

Inflation at the wholesale level surged by the largest amount in more than three decades in November, reflecting higher prices for gasoline and a host of other items.

Universal Healthcare Plan

Oregon Democrat Ron Wyden is preparing a proposal to provide health care coverage to all Americans through a pool of private insurance plans.



Liv Warfield's Straight Up Soul

On the brink of fame, Portland singer revives local R&B

BY SARAH BLOUNT
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland soul singer Liv Warfield, who first graced the stage of Jimmy Mak's in 2003, has come full circle in the renowned jazz venue.

The tiny downtown club with colossal soul took a chance on the young singer while she still collaborated with other bands, including her debut at Jimmy Mak's with keyboardist Joey Porter's jazz ensemble "Silky".

Three years later Warfield, 27, takes center stage with her own band, the Warfield Project. Just a few minutes into her set and devotees have anticipated a Liv favorite, "Brother Man" after a just couple of notes. The hollers die down, and with her multi-octave range she serves up a dose of sultry love notes that slide over bass lines. Having already built a reputation for her impromptu live performances, the crescendo dips before the tempo builds again. Warfield quickly abandons her syrupy lyrics for a biting expose aimed at the now ex-lover.

All fluid movement in a silky black dress against a backdrop of red velvet, Warfield's chant of "why do you lie?" taunts an unlucky ex who squandered her love. Her lyrical adoration-turned-anger brings the sold-out crowd to their feet.

Her stage is a pulpit and the message is clear — this girl's got soul and she's no longer afraid to use it.

The evening is a turning point in Warfield's musical journey. The classic soul, rhythm and blues singer/songwriter says she kept her voice a secret for 20 years, but this evening she not only celebrates her new album, but also performs for a live taping on BET J, the jazz cable channel belonging to the Black Entertainment Network.

Warfield has gained tremendous ground since first taking that stage; a moment she recalls was an eye opening experience.

"The thing is, I hadn't even found my voice yet," Warfield explains from a corner booth of the empty club, sipping chamomile tea with honey. In a few hours there will be a standing room-only crowd, including as many fans as friends and supporters, gathered to watch



PHOTO BY SEAN O'CONNOR/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Portland's Liv Warfield performs for a live taping on BET J, the jazz cable channel belonging to the Black Entertainment Network.

Warfield complete another milestone in her rise to fame.

The gig comes fresh on the heels of her debut album "Embrace Me", released in September on B&M Records. The collection of 11 uplifting yet sexy songs ends with "Brother

Man" recorded live at the Doug Fir.

It is the same song she works the crowd with at Jimmy Mak's, but the similarities cease when she decides where she wants the lyrics to take her audience.

"L-I-V talks from her soul," she sings on the

album cut, practically bleeding into the microphone. This version ends in a crescendo of unyielding need to show her affection before an explosion of horn and drums.

Warfield complements her suspiciously diva-like behavior with a humble question for the audience. "Is my hair still a mess?"

It all started with karaoke

Actually it all started with an ironically non-musical upbringing in Peoria, Ill. But the story of how she injected a much-needed dose of pure soul into our rainy and guitar-addled city starts six years ago. It begins with a microphone and a very large book of song titles.

When her strong legs carried her here from the midwest (through a track and field scholarship at Portland State University) Warfield arrived in a city dominated by indie rock darlings — the Pacific Northwest music scene had landed on the world's radar, and aspiring rock stars stood nearly as much chance of incubating fame and success as any musician in New York or Los Angeles.

At that time Warfield flirted with karaoke but balanced academic pursuits. Gigs at Jimmy Mak's, an opening spot for mega-group Dave Matthews Band and hours of boot camp rehearsals — these were not yet her top priorities.

Her musical infancy was spent channeling the greats — like Billy Holliday and Tina Turner — on the small platforms of the Galaxy Bar on Hawthorne and the Ambassador Lounge on Sandy Boulevard.

Perhaps it was a preview of what Portland would come to recognize as the town's hardest working R&B soulstress, but Warfield's fondness for karaoke eclipsed any other lounge chanteuse you only thought was dedicated.

"At school, I went to the Galaxy from 8 p.m. to 4 a.m. on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday," she said. "I'm talking about for two or three months straight, I was like a sponge."

Clocking that many hours at a bar might spell trouble for most, but for Warfield, singing, dressing the part and emulating jazz heroes was her way of coming into her own.

"Before, I couldn't get up in front of people

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'Tis the Season for Depression

Post holiday is when most dangers lurk

BY CHARITY PRATER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

'Tis the season for parties, festivities, family gatherings and also for depression. While television relentlessly echoes Christmas melodies and the smells of smoked ham concentrate amongst chilled winter neighborhoods, many people aren't feeling the joys of the holiday season.

From dealing with complicated relation-

ships within mixed families to working December budgets to exhaustion, thousands of people struggle with depression and stress during the most festive time of year.

Herbert Ozer, the director of operations for Behavioral and Mental Health Services at Providence Portland and Providence Saint

Vincent hospitals, says that there are basically two kinds of holiday depression. There are people that experience a mild depression during the holidays and there are people who experience a more severe and dangerous depression.

"The holidays bring about many mixed emotions," says Ozer. "While the holidays emphasize feelings of loneliness and depression they also bring out a temporary feeling of renewed hope through television ads and the New Year celebration. However, once the New Year is over, January looms, bringing on the most worrisome symptoms of post-holiday depression."

As people struggle to keep up with shopping, cooking, family get-togethers and financial obligations, they are experiencing the pressure to deliver during the holidays.

Post-holiday sadness is common after the New Year when people realize that the resolutions they made the previous year weren't succeeded, coupled with the disappointment of the holiday season.

During the month of January, as the holidays come to an end and many people expectations are not met, depression sky-

Adding a depressant or a stimulant into a depressive equation only makes the symptoms increase.

-- Harris S. Matarazzo, mental health expert and attorney

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Herbert Ozer, the director of operations for Behavioral and Mental Health Services at Providence Portland and Providence Saint

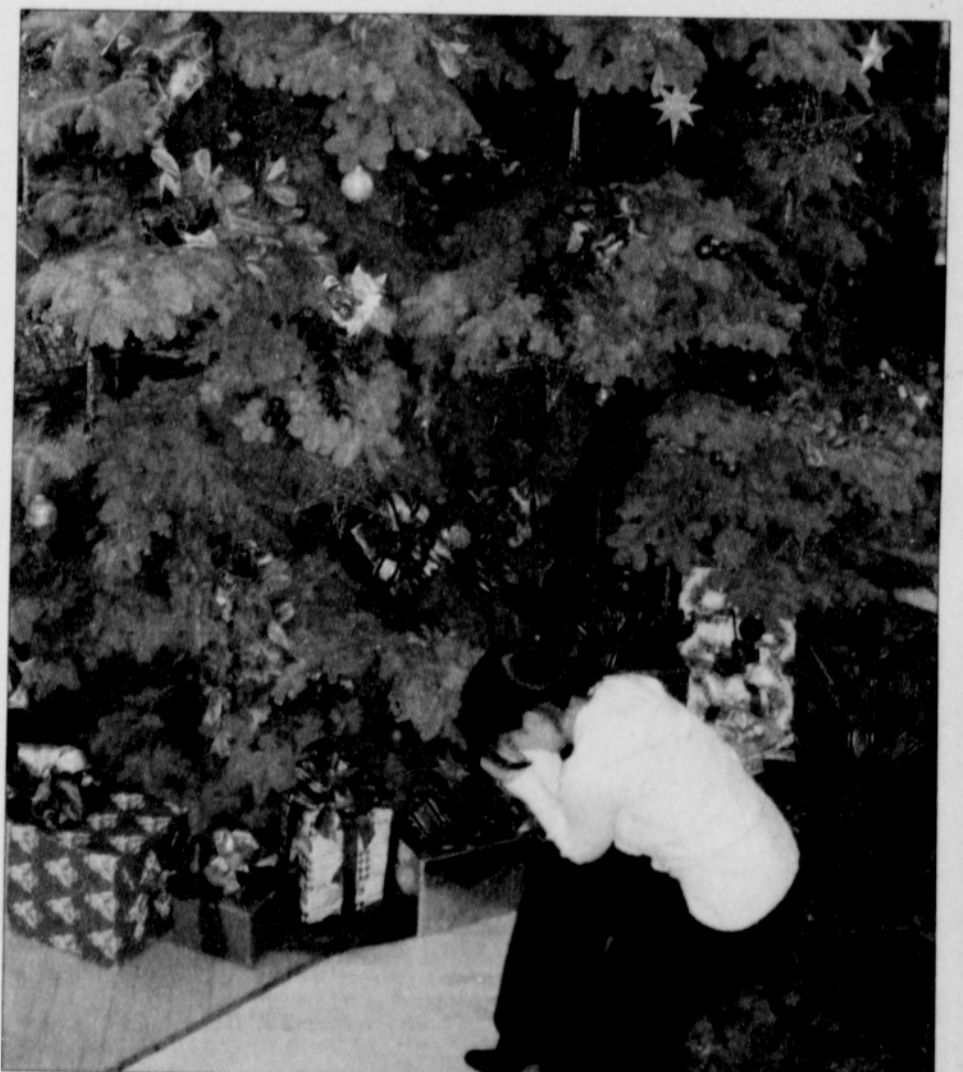


PHOTO BY CHARITY PRATER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

It's not always easy to feel the joys of the holiday season. Experts say celebrations during Christmas and the New Year can bring renewed hope, but can also be exhausting and stressful.

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