

Church Help Comes in All Ways

Morning Star still in need

BY SARAH BLOUNT
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

When tragedy befalls a community, ordinary items can suddenly be put to extraordinary use.

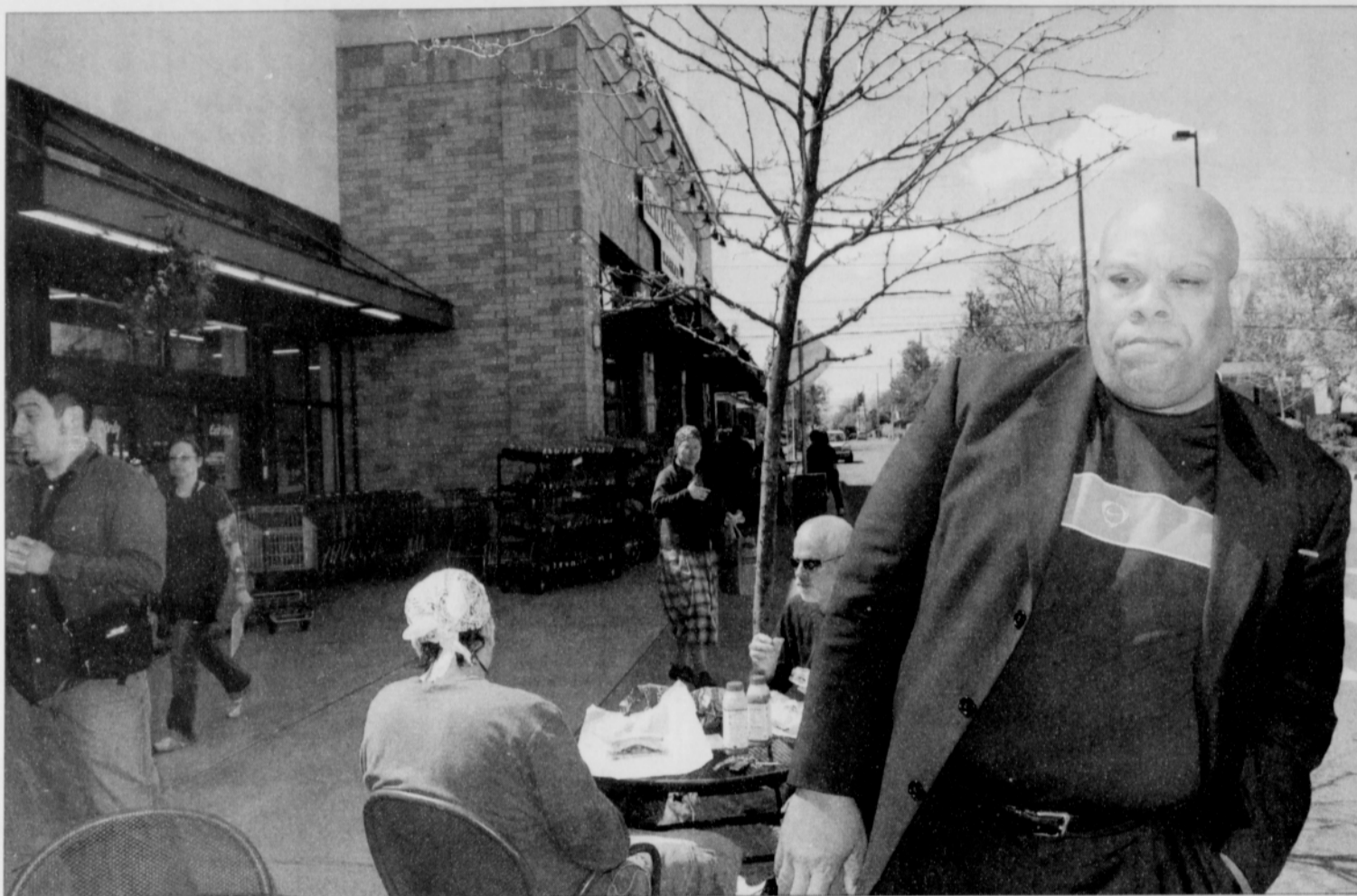
Take, for example, the role of an ordinary barbecue sandwich in the devastating fire at Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church last February. When local grocery chain New Seasons Market set out to raise money for the church by selling barbecue meals, they turned out \$10,000 in a single day.

A special ceremony to present the money to the church took place April 20, with members of the Albina Ministerial Alliance and Mayor Tom Potter gathered at the New Seasons Concordia site in northeast Portland. \$7,500 was given to Morning Star, with the remaining \$2,500 going to New Generation Revival Church, which operated out of the church. Locally owned Hometown Buffet also presented a \$500 check to Morning Star.

The ministers spoke about the privilege of watching the community rally around the church.

"Since this happened, all we've seen is the best of Portland," said Pastor Matt Hennessy of Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church.

Barbecue benefits are standard



Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church pastor Albert Wayne Johnson stands outside of New Seasons Market in northeast Portland. The local grocer held a benefit for the church, raising \$10,000 in a single day.

for New Seasons, who hosts them 10 times a year, but what made this particular event special was the speed at which \$6 dinners turned into ten grand. New Seasons chief executive officer Brian Rohter said that previously, the most they'd

raised for an organization was \$10,000 over an entire weekend.

"There is something about this that really resonated in the community," he said.

Morning Star is more than a Sunday meeting place, the congrega-

tion hosts men's and women's ministries, Sunday school and outreach services. Right now members meet for church services each Sunday at Rose City Chapel at 5623 N.E. Fremont, while their administration office and ministries are located at

Legacy Emanuel Hospital.

Pastor Rev. Albert Wayne Johnson said he continues to be overwhelmed by the outpouring of support, but one of the first moments of relief came when fire investigators concluded foul play

was not the cause of the fire.

"The mere fact that it was not determined arson tells me there is love in the community," he said.

After the investigation, crews completed the site's demolition, which was an expensive excavation that Johnson said took most of the community donations they've received so far. The church hoped to salvage what was left of the historic bricks, but Johnson said theft has been a problem, and many of the bricks disappeared overnight by the wheelbarrow load.

But the corner of N.E. Rodney and Ivy is now empty, appearing as a blank canvas. Johnson says the next step is to plan a new building, adding that while they don't yet have concrete ideas, the goal is to have a new building within a year.

Two local unions are stepping in to help with that phase of the rebuilding process — International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 49 and Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 290 said they will offer apprenticeships for young individuals interested in learning a trade while working on future church construction.

For more information about the apprenticeship or for other ways to help Morning Star, contact the church at 503-284-0200. Donations can also be made to the Morning Star Catastrophe Relief fund at any branch of Wells Fargo Bank.

Only African Americans Cited in Recent Curfew Sweep

When Portland police cracked down on curfew violations over spring break under a pilot project aimed at making parents accountable, all seven citations issued went

to African American mothers. Cited parents must appear before a juvenile court judge, who may suspend a sentence for first offenders but order the families to

participate in a federally funded anti-gang program.

Deputy District Attorney James Hayden said the intent was to cite parents whose children 14 and

younger were out after the curfew as part of a program to educate parents and protect young people.

Police say they targeted northeast and downtown neighborhoods

because that's where crowds of young teenagers have congregated in the past. But they said they expect to expand the curfew enforcement citywide over time.

If parents are cited a second time, a Multnomah County Circuit Court judge could sentence them to community service or a fine of up to \$720.



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Obama Offers World View

Says Bush has fallen short as leader

(AP)—Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama said Monday that President Bush has fallen short in his role as leader of the free world, and the 2008 election is a chance to change that.

This president may occupy the White House, but for the last six years the position of leader of the free world has remained open. And it is time to fill that role once more," Obama said in a speech to the Chicago Council on Global Affairs.

The Illinois senator was in his hometown to deliver a foreign policy address that was rescheduled last week after the shootings at Virginia Tech.

Obama said the world is disappointed in the United States, but it would be a mistake to "cede our claim of leadership in world affairs" because Americans might be tempted to turn inward in the face of negative world



Sen. Barack Obama

opinion.

"America cannot meet the threats of this century alone, but the world cannot meet them without America. We must neither retreat from the world nor try to bully it into submission — we must lead the world by deed and by example," he said.

The theme is a popular one in the Democratic presidential campaign. Obama rival John Edwards repeated the sentiment Monday evening, saying, "The world primarily sees America as a bully."

In an address to the National Jewish Democratic Council in Washington, Edwards said, "We should be leading in a way that demonstrates our moral authority so that the rest of the world wants to be like America."

State Equality Bills Advance

State Legislatures in Oregon and Washington have moved forward on laws protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination and giving them some of the state-level rights and responsibilities of marriage.

In Oregon a law to protect gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people in employment, housing and access to public

accommodations won final approval Thursday and now goes to Gov. Ted Kulongoski, who plans to sign it.

In Washington, Gov. Chris Gregoire signed into law a domestic partnership bill on April 21. When the law takes effect July 21, Washington will join California, Connecticut, Hawaii, Maine, New Jersey, Vermont and

the District of Columbia in granting same-sex couples some of the state-level rights and responsibilities of marriage.

Still awaiting an Oregon Senate vote is a House-passed "domestic partnership" bill. That measure also is also expected to win Senate approval and the governor's signature.

Classroom Dedicated to Reservist

A passion for providing knowledge and tools for tomorrow's Airmen has led one of the top enlisted men in the Air Force Reserve and a former Portland resident to be recognized in a way that has been done for few before.

Chief Master Sgt. Reuben Evans, a former 939th Air Refueling Wing Reservist at the Portland Air Base, will have a classroom named after him at the facility where all air force mechanics are trained.

Officials from Sheppard Air Force Base in Texas said one of their classrooms will be dedicated to Chief Evans for his selfless efforts and dedication to the



Reuben Evans

Aerospace Ground Equipment career field.

"This was the right thing to do for someone like Chief Evans whose impact truly has been felt Air Force wide," said Howard McKellip, 361st Training Flight chief at Sheppard.

The 2005 Base Realignment and Closure decision to downsize the Air Force Reserve mission in Oregon required Chief Evans and other 939th members to find employment elsewhere in order to continue their military careers.

The chief is now settling into his new job as an aircraft maintenance supervisor for the Reserve wing in Minneapolis.