

# One 'Desperate Housewife' to Another

## Alfre Woodard speaks out on domestic violence

BY NICOLE RONAL HOOPER  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Award-winning actress and star of the hit television show "Desperate Housewives," Alfre Woodard declared a call to action at Tuesday's annual YWCA Leadership Luncheon in Portland.

During her speech Woodard said that the YWCA moves women forward and by its advocacy and services the community moves forward, even though others show a blind eye.

Woodard, also shared stories about the etiquette classes she took as a "knocked kneed little black girl," and referred to America's domestic violence and healthcare problems as national security risks that she wishes people in high places



Alfre Woodard

would pay more attention to. "The quality of life has eroded for an array of reasons," said

Woodard, "When 13 million children get sick, and their parents can't afford to take them to the hospital."

Jackie Hamilton, a survivor of domestic violence, also spoke at the luncheon with her daughter, Cassie, at her side.

Since starting the luncheon in 1992, the YWCA has raised more than \$2.5 million to help women like Hamilton, 39, and her daughter Cassie, 8, make a transition after moving to Portland and being homeless.

The Hamilton's moved from California in 2002 after Jackie's husband lost his job, became addicted to pain medication and started to beat her.

Hamilton said she even considered prostitution since she only had \$200 to live off of when arriving in Portland. However, six days later, Yolanda's House, YWCA's domestic violence shelter that took more than 9,000 calls last year, came to her rescue.

The Hamilton's are now on track



Actress Alfre Woodard (right) meets Jackie Hamilton and her daughter Cassie, who both escaped domestic violence with the help of the YWCA. Woodard was the keynote speaker at YWCA's 15th Annual Greater Portland Leadership Luncheon Tuesday.

and safe with new names and social security numbers. Oregonian columnist S. Renee Mitchell also shared her personal experience with domestic violence at the luncheon.

After she was introduced by Fox 12 News reporter Shauna Parsons, Mitchell quickly reminded the audience of other titles she's held.

"I am also a domestic violence survivor, rape survivor and a nappy headed hoe," said Mitchell as the audience laughed uncomfortably. "I am fortunate to live in this community and urge all to give to this organization."

The YWCA provides a diverse group of services that help women, children and seniors. Woodard also urged everyone to volunteer.

For more information about donating, or to volunteer or receive services from YWCA call 503-294-7400 or visit [www.ywca-pdx.org](http://www.ywca-pdx.org).

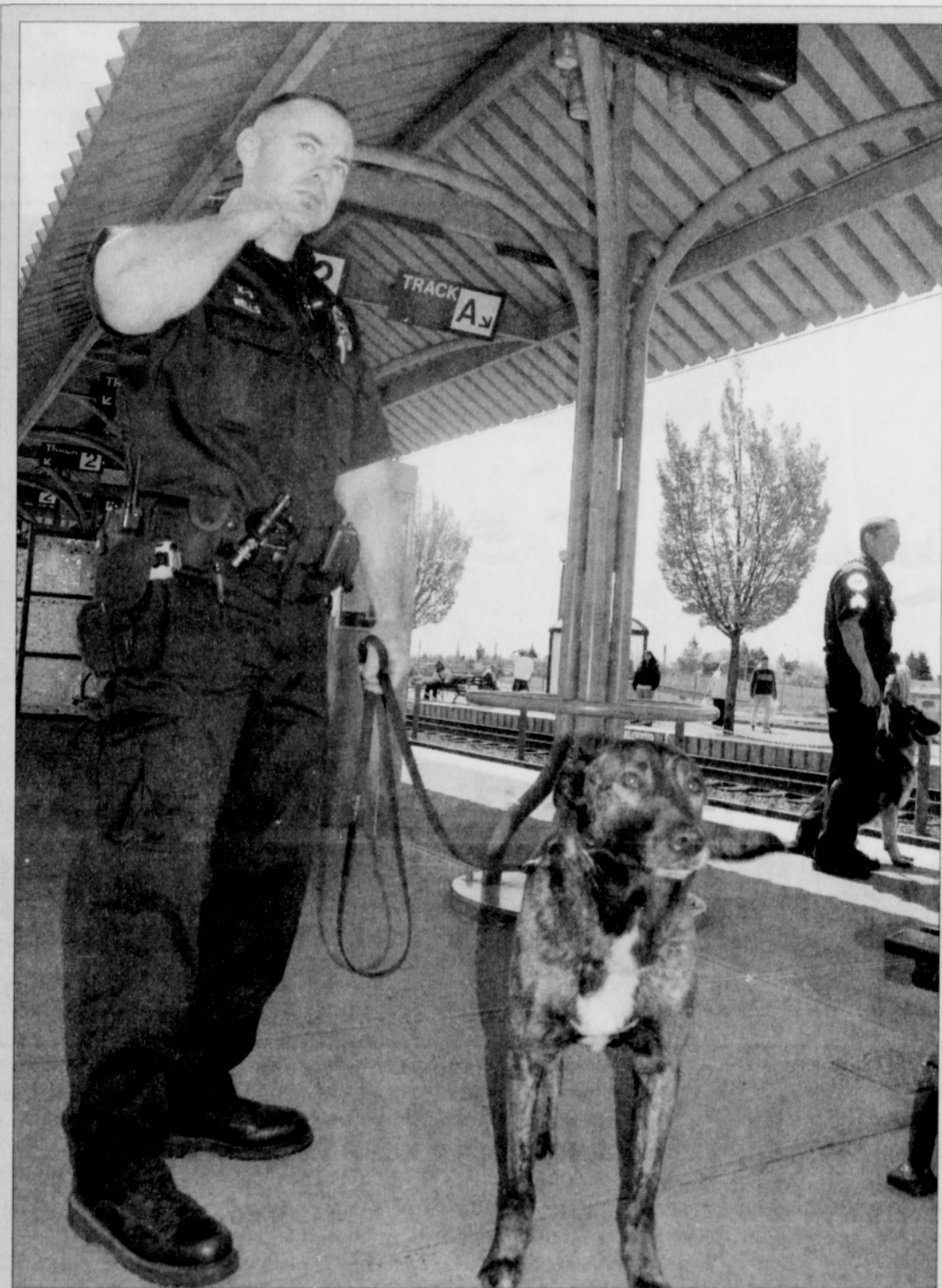


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

## Bomb Sniffing Dogs Triple Security

TriMet adds two K9 police units to its security force to sniff for bombs, a federal response to worldwide terrorism threats. The Dutch and German Shepards, with police officer handlers Billy Wells (left) and Sgt. Jim Simms, were introduced last week at the Gateway Transit Center. They round out TriMet's first canine team, a police officer and Labrador Retriever, that started patrolling Max trains and buses in 2005.

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## Governor on Food Stamps

(AP)-- If Governor Kulongoski seems a little out of it this week, he's got the perfect excuse: He couldn't afford to buy coffee.

In fact, the governor couldn't afford much of anything during a trip to a Salem-area Fred Meyer Tuesday, to buy exactly \$21 worth of groceries to last him for the next week.

The goal is to walk the proverbial mile in the steps of those who rely on food stamps to feed a family, to kindle awareness and empathy.



Gov. Ted Kulongoski

The challenge comes at a politically delicate juncture for the food stamp program.

The Bush administration has proposed several cuts, among them taking away food stamps from about 185,000 people because they already receive other non-cash government assistance.

Kulongoski, a Democrat, plans to lobby Congress to restore the proposed funding cuts.

## Fired Custodians Get Back Pay

Portland Public Schools and its union custodians on Monday announced a tentative \$14.5 million settlement of claims arising out of the 2002 decision by PPS to contract out custodial services, resulting in the firing of its custodial workforce.

The settlement fund will offer 280 custodians \$37,000 compensa-

tion for lost pay, medical benefits and other damages.

"This settlement is fair to our custodial employees, to our constituents, and to the taxpayers," said Jollee Patterson, General Counsel for PPS.

The agreement is subject to federal court approval.

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