

Heading Off Trouble at New Columbia

continued ▲ from Front

trated in intimidating numbers along N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard last summer, getting into altercations with neighbors and police.

But McGranahan doesn't define the activity as gang-related.

"The root problem is that kids are bringing problems from school, getting groups together and sparking fights," he said. "And with 50 to 75 kids watching the fight and with technology, they can say 'it's happening right now,' which brings more people into the area."

New Columbia has suffered some fairly serious assaults and robberies associated with these crowds, and McGranahan said a recent fight occurred after a black youth told a Latino youth "this was a black park and he needs to stay out."

Currently, two full-time officers patrol the neighborhood and the housing authority recently agreed to pay for a third. The precinct plans to hire this third officer by the first week of May, meaning the area will be patrolled seven days a week

instead of Thursday through Monday.

But the biggest part of the solution, McGranahan says, is rallying the involvement of those who personally know the kids.

"I'm not sure crowd control is the solution," he said. "We're getting youth probation officers out there, and parents and community members are interacting with kids."

A community safety meeting last week was meant to be a presentation on gangs and training, but as police officers anticipated, the recent youth problems dominated the discussion.

Several neighbors signed up for foot patrol that evening and volunteered for neighborhood watch. Also, the housing authority is doing their part to curb violence in the park.

HAP executive director Steve Rudman said that within the next month they will increase the lighting at the park and remove a climbing structure that obscures the basketball court from street view, therefore increasing what Rudman calls "the most fishbowl-like place of the whole neighbor-



Community Liaison Leslie Esinga works to keep McCoy Park safe in the New Columbia neighborhood of north Portland.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

hood."

Also, since many of the youth don't live in the neighborhood, they rely on Tri-Met's No. 4 bus line to gather at the park. Rudman said New Columbia is working with the

transit agency's rider advocate program to help suppress any problems that occur on the bus ride to or from the area.

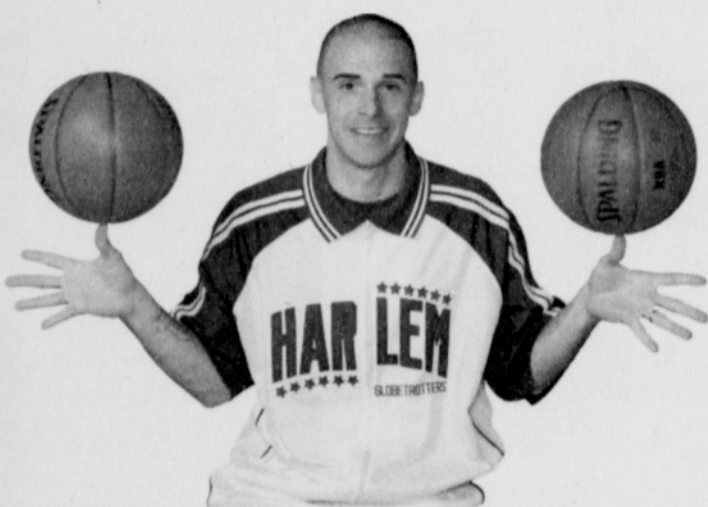
"We don't want families to feel afraid," Rudman said. "And part of

reclaiming the park is reusing the park."

But Esinga, who has an intimate perspective of New Columbia, says residents must be patient with the burgeoning community.

"You have a lot of new people coming in who don't know each other," she said. "The connectiveness isn't there because it's all too new."

"Give it time," is her advice.



Seth Franco, the first Caucasian Harlem Globetrotter since 1942, will be a guest of honor this week at the Doris Verbout Memorial Basketball Tournament at the Moore Street Salvation Army in north Portland.

Globetrotter Prays; Shares Success Story

Seth Franco will share his personal life story in which his dedication to prayer and study gave him the direction he needed to succeed in life and become the first Caucasian Harlem Globetrotter since 1942.

Franco will be the guest of honor this week at the Doris Verbout

Memorial Basketball Tournament at the Moore Street Salvation Army, 5325 N. Williams Ave. The tourney runs from Thursday, May 3 through Sunday, May 6.

For the specific times of Franco's appearances, call Tim Fuqua at 503-493-3925 or visit Franco's website at sethfranco.com.

De La Salle on Solid Ground

continued ▲ from Front

Roosevelt. Fifty five percent of students at De La Salle are a racial minority and more than 50 percent live in poverty.

But the curriculum at De La Salle is completely different. The catholic school is part of the Cristo Rey Network with more than 15 schools across the country. All are faith-based and all lay most of the responsibility for education on the student. De La Salle offers job training and other things that Portland Public School students don't get, but still the staff is humble.

"We never bash Portland Public Schools," said Hennessey, "Most of the students here are underserved and the goal was to bring a rigorous education to people who couldn't afford it."

Another component of De La Salle is the dress code. Male students must wear ties to school and female students must wear button down shirts. Dressing for success is important at De La Salle and also for their jobs.

Freshman Darnell Peterson, who attended nearby Holy Redeemer for middle school, currently works at Xerox in Wilsonville. As a student at De La Salle, he and his classmates must do an internship one day per week.

Working fast food, a common right of passage for many kids earn-

ing money to spend at the shopping malls, is surpassed by De La Salle students who find they are already paying for their education.

Approximately 70 percent of student tuition is earned by the students.

Sophomore Michelle Perea, 16, said that applying to the school was worth it

Perea works at On Point Credit Union as an intern and she enjoys the work atmosphere at her internship.

She says that the appearance requirement adds an element to learning.

"When you wear sweats, you get relaxed," said Perea. "If you dress this way (more formal), I feel I am more focused."

Darnell Peterson was one of the 115 incoming freshman who applied to De La Salle. The school was only able to take 85.

Senior Titus Stupfel, 18, is leaving before the big move to the Kenton campus.

"This campus has character, but it does get crowded," said Stupfel, who is one of 38 seniors at De La Salle and is trying to choose which college to attend.

The student population at De La Salle is scheduled to grow from 230 to 350 by the year 2011.

For more information about De La Salle and how to get a child enrolled, call the school at 503-285-9385.

Two Events on School Success

Portland Public Schools is reaching out to the local community with two events this weekend.

On Friday, May 4, student dancers and musical groups from Portland Public Schools' Wilson Cluster in Southwest Portland and Jefferson Cluster in north and northeast Portland will perform at "Showcase 2007: Dream, Believe Succeed" at Highland Christian Community Center, 7600 N.E.

Glisan St.

The evening begins at 6 p.m. with refreshments and an opportunity for students and families to connect, and continues at 7 p.m. with the performances.

On Saturday, May 5, the Jefferson high school community will host a conference for all PPS parents and teachers. "Schools and Parents Collaborating for Student Success," takes place from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Saturday, May 5, at King School, 4906 N.E. Sixth Ave.

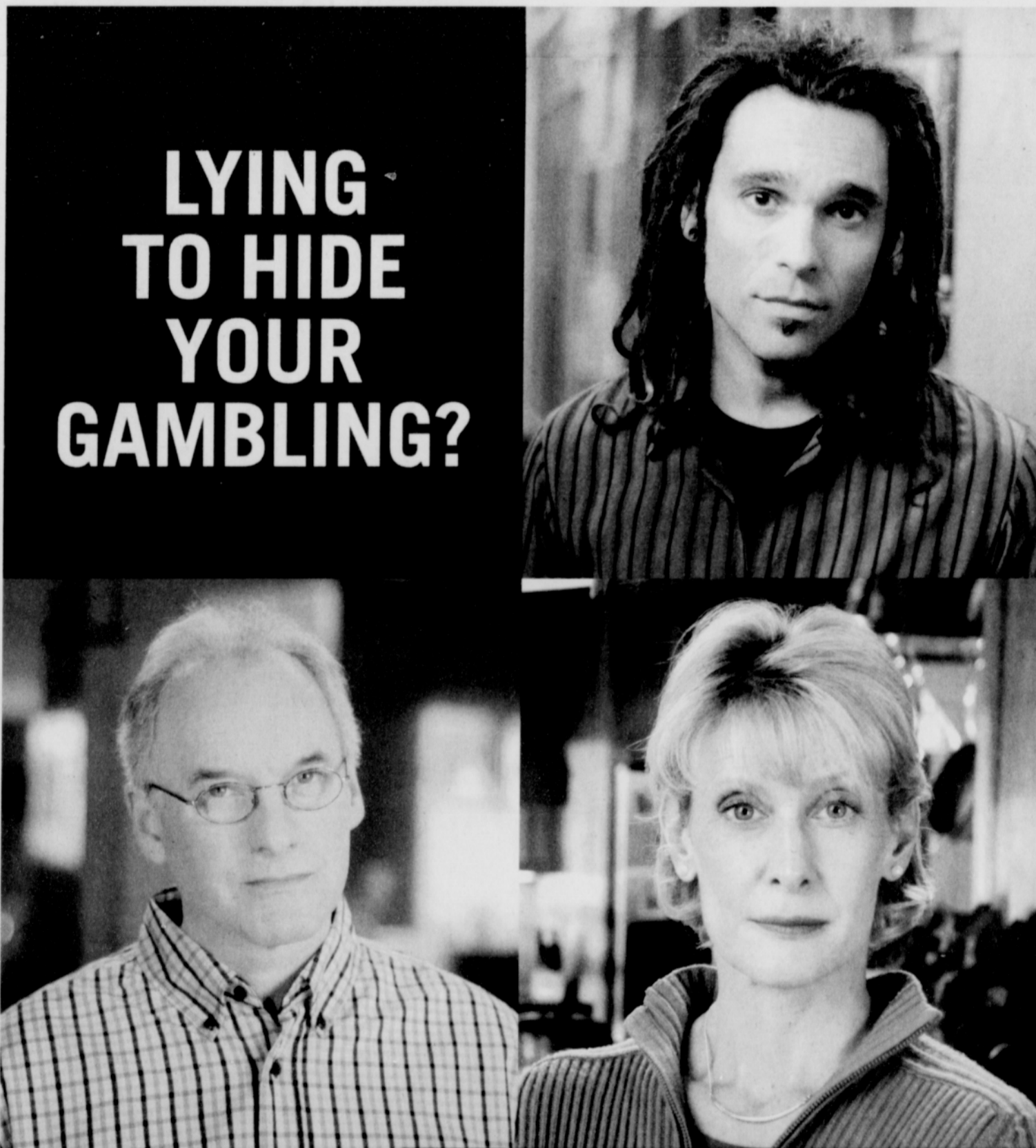
There is no cost, and breakfast and lunch will be provided for free.

Educational leaders will provide collaborative strategies for parents and teachers to help students succeed. Materials will be available in English and Spanish.

Preregistration is requested but not required by calling Lionel Clegg at 503-916-6282.

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