

# Drinks Flow on Alberta

continued from Front

the beer and wine flows more freely than is usual or legal.

Last month's alcohol-related mob scene has prompted neighborhood residents, business owners, police and the Oregon Liquor Control Commission to find a way to curb future trouble.

The art walks are in their 10th year, but some long-time business owners say not all visitors are there to view art.

"It's a love/hate kind of thing," said Allan Oliver of Onda/Arte Latina Gallery and a member of the non-profit Art on Alberta.

"It has obviously created a great consciousness, but it really doesn't do me in good in terms of my business. People are so dazzled by the stimulation that they rarely concentrate on the art," Oliver said.

OLCC spokesman Ken Palke said there are 38 businesses along the main 21 blocks of the Alberta district that serve or sell alcohol. Many long-time residents of the neighborhood remember when just a very few businesses served alcohol on Alberta.

"In the past, because of the neighborhood, it was hard to get a liquor license on Alberta," said James Dixon of Dixon's Rib Pit on 24th Avenue. Dixon just opened his barbecue shop on the street but had lived off Alberta for several years.

Many business owners believe the pubs or complimentary wine served inside galleries shouldn't be blamed for last month's disturbance. They observed several revelers bringing their own alcohol to the event and drinking illegally on the street.

"People think it's Mardi Gras," said Bianca Youngers, who owns Binks on 27th Avenue with her husband, Justin. "They have the idea that it's okay to walk around with bags or backpacks full of beer."

Palke agrees, saying the agency doesn't think the bars are part of the problem, and added that none of the liquor licensees have recently violated OLCC rules.

Youngers says her Binks' staff is among the toughest in the neighborhood, placing wristbands on all drinkers and strictly monitoring the sidewalk to keep patrons from wandering off with drinks in hand.

"We usually staff one or two people, but on Last Thursday we hold conversations with the OLCC and Art on Alberta this week. Kriss Parnell of Keystone Mortgage on 22nd Avenue has helped form an Alberta Street Safety Project.

Officers said they issued 40 to 60 warnings to individuals with open containers on April 26, and that sidewalk vendors caused pedestrians to walk in the street.

Lt. Bill Walker of the Northeast Precinct said he and Cmdr. Bret Smith are set to strategize how best to handle future art walks while maintaining a festive atmosphere.

"This is not really a crackdown on what's going on there, it's just going to be a necessary enforcement," he said.

Police haven't come up with any firm plans, Walker said, but hope to



PHOTO BY SARAH BLOUNT/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Bianca Youngers owns Binks, a bar at Northeast 27th and Alberta. She and her employees keep close tabs on revelers during the monthly Last Thursday art event that spun out of control last month. "It's not ok to see people walking by with beers," she said.

missioner Sam Adams and TriMet's traffic control.

TriMet has to reroute the No. 72 bus for safety reasons during the monthly event, staying on

"It's a major inconvenience and it affects the entire line," she said.

Block said that on more than one occasion in the past, people on Alberta have staggered in front of buses and have thrown beer bottles at bus drivers, prompting some operators to say they don't want to drive that route.

Last month's event indicated that changes must come soon.

The OLCC, neighborhood and all other parties involved have a deadline of Saturday, May 19 to find a better way to celebrate - that's the date of the annual art hop running from early morning to midnight.


Oliver of Art on Alberta said the community is invited to weigh in at their next meeting at 6:30 p.m. Monday, May 14 at the Acadian Ballroom, 1829 N.E. Alberta.

*People think it's Mardi Gras. They have the idea that it's ok to walk around with bags or backpacks full of beer.*

- Bianca Youngers, owner of Binks

The group has addressed among other issues the impact of closing the street and allowing only bikes and pedestrians during the upcoming Art Walk. They've met with the police, representatives of City Com-

Killingworth and missing a total of 28 stops, Shirley Block, a field operations coordinator for the transit agency, says rerouting the bus affects several people who rely on the system.



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## Secret Service to Protect Obama

(AP) -- The Secret Service says Democratic Sen. Barack Obama is being placed under its protection, the earliest ever for a presidential candidate.

Secret Service spokesman Eric Zahren said Department of Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff authorized Obama's protection after consultations with the congressional advisory committee.

Zahren would not provide details of what led to the extra security, but said, "I'm not aware



Democratic presidential hopeful Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill., addresses the First AME Church congregation Sunday in Los Angeles, Calif. (AP Photo)

it was based on any threat."

Obama's rival, Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, has a Secret Service detail that is provided to all former first ladies.

In a Feb. 12 interview with The Associated Press, Obama dismissed concerns about his own security, but would not answer directly when asked if he had received death threats. The Rev. Jesse Jackson drew early Secret Service protection because of violent threats during his campaigns for president in the 1980s.

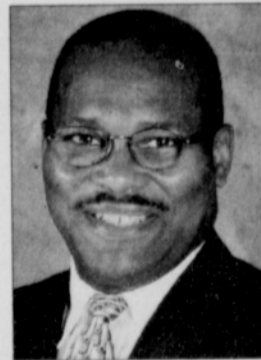
## NAACP Vancouver Banquet Saturday

The Vancouver Branch of the NAACP will hold its annual banquet on Saturday, May 12, from 5:30-8:30 p.m. in Gaiser Hall on the campus of Clark College, 1933 Fort Vancouver Way.

The first hour is reserved for socializing and visiting exhibits, followed by dinner and the program. Tickets are \$25 and can be purchased online via the NAACP website naacpvanc.org.

The banquet keynote speaker is Dr. R. Wayne Branch who will share his

thoughts on "Community Participation in the Education of Our Children." Branch has spent his career focusing on improving the lives of underserved youth and adults in the areas of higher education, vocational and technical training, and health care.



R. Wayne Branch

The group will present a Diversity Leadership Award to Washington State Rep. Jim Moeller, a Vancouver Democrat known for his ongoing work on

behalf of diversity and fair and equal treatment for all community members.

Moeller's contributions include being the first local legislator to actively solicit African American youth to serve as legislative pages, helping to bring a Washington State Human Rights Commission office to Clark County, and working successfully to pass legislation prohibiting discrimination against people based on their sexual orientation.

Academic Achievement Awards will be presented to high school seniors who have maintained a 3.0 grade point average or above.

## Minority Entrepreneurs Trade Show

The Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs holds the northwest's largest trade show for minority, women and emerging small businesses on Thursday, from 10 a.m. to 3

p.m. at the Oregon Convention Center.

Walter Bond, a motivational speaker from Chicago and a former professional basketball player, will serve as keynote

speaker when the trade show breaks for its luncheon between noon and 1:30 p.m.

For registration and luncheon information, call OAME at 503-249-7744 or visit oame.org.

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