



The so-called Seriously Pissed-off Grannies plan anti-war actions during weekly meetings at the Northeast 18th Avenue Peace House.

PHOTO BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN/ THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Taking Action to Stop War

continued ▲ from Front

"It's always really polite conversation with the recruiters," says Kay Exo.

In response to allegations that they cut off military career options for disadvantaged youth, Marianne Barisonok likes to cite various educational, environmental and economic programs that could be funded with the \$522 billion that the U.S. spends annually on the military.

The grannies are "committed to escalating nonviolent civil re-

sistance if our elected officials are not responsive to the majority of American voters who want the Iraq occupation to end," said Schweibert.

Knowing how daunting the task is, Exo adds, "I'm cynical, but I still have to believe that if some people are reached about all this, the injustice will end."

If nothing else, the grannies give hope to some military families.

Maggie Pondolfino's son was deployed to Baghdad for an original 12-month tour that was

extended for at least three months. She praises the grannies as "people of conscience who strive to bring the truth to the American people and keep Iraq in the public's eye."

Calling them "my role models and real American heroes," she engages in the group's legal protests, including visits to U.S. representatives and speeches.

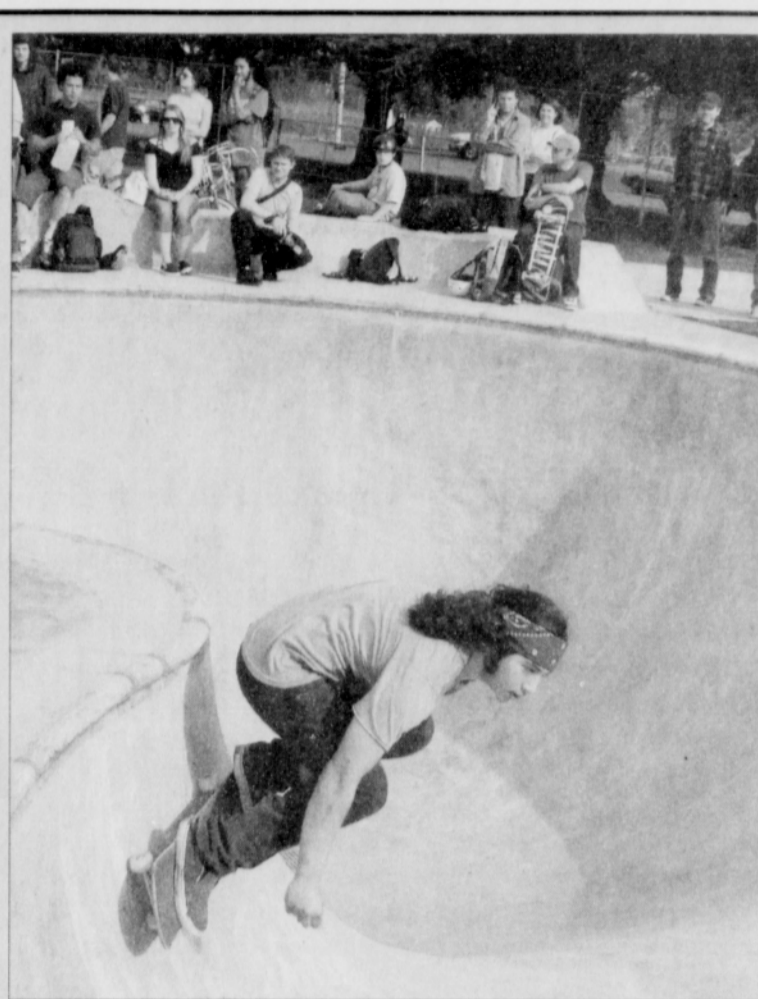
The grannies recognize how lucky they are to be able to engage in civil disobedience with the empowerment of old age, when many people experience

disability, isolation and disillusionment.

Barisonok wishes she could have so actively protested the first Gulf War, but she was too busy being a mom.

Given their current privileged position, they don't consider inaction as an option.

"We can look at the mounting death toll every day," Ann Huntwork says. "Our lives are really easy, and when you hear about Iraqi children having some hope, you have to ask who we are to whine about oil prices."



Riding the Barrel

PHOTO BY NIA DIYG/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Chaz Pineda, 19, of Sellwood, rides the wall of one of two skate bowls for advanced boarders during the grand opening of the Glenhaven Skateboard Park located near Madison High School at Northeast 82nd and Siskiyou. Glenhaven is the third free skate park to open in Portland. The other two are at Burnside, under the bridge on the east side, and at Pier Park in St. Johns.

Targeting Gun Violence

continued ▲ from Front

Blazer tickets worth more than \$50 will also be available.

The guns will be turned over to the Portland Police Bureau. All of them will be melted down, according to Jean Morton of the Ceasefire Oregon Foundation. No questions will be asked.

This year for the first time, the Concordia and Vernon neighborhood associations will be co-sponsors of the gun turn-in. Redeemer Church is contributing the collection space and Providence Health Systems and Ainsworth United Church of Christ are making financial contributions to help make the event successful.

Ceasefire spokeswoman Jean Morton said more than 2,500 guns have been turned in at these annual events over the past 13 years, including 125 at last year's turn-in.

This year, Ceasefire Oregon is bucking a trend. Since the recent massacre at Virginia Tech, there has been a surge in requests for concealed weapons permits. Julie Sterling, also of Ceasefire Oregon, estimates that there are now 100,000 holders of such permits in Oregon. Some people are of the opinion that more students at Virginia Tech had guns on them at least some of the carnage there could have been avoided. Sterling disagrees with this logic.

"The idea of a whole classroom of students carrying guns terrifies

me," she says.

Morton said if you do keep a gun at home, keep it locked up out of the reach of children and unloaded.

"No matter where you put it, children will find it," she says.

Sterling said gun safety concerns were not as high for firearms used for hunting or recreational target practice because those weapons can be stored property with ammunition stored separately. She said the biggest worry for accidental shootings comes from people who seek to defend themselves by storing guns loaded and handy.

Statistics show that a gun stored in a private home is 22 times more likely to kill or injure a member of the household, either because of an accident or because it was taken from them and used against them, rather than the gun used in self-defense, Sterling says.

In addition, altercations or suicide attempts in which guns are involved are far more likely to result in fatalities than similar incidents

involving any other methods or instruments.

The Ceasefire Oregon Educational Foundation is conducting the turn-in, a non-profit, educational group that does not take partisan positions. But the foundation does advocate for stricter gun laws. In particular, they would like to see a mandatory three-day waiting period before the delivery of guns in all gun sales.

"The police have told us that this is really important," Sterling says. "If you buy a gun in anger, and have three days to cool off, you are less likely to use it in anger."

"There will always be people having guns who shouldn't have them, but current gun regulations are a mess," she says. "People get concealed weapons permits for guns with no indication that they know how to use them."

For now, Morton and Sterling say, a few less unneeded guns lying around will make for a safer Oregon.

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Domestic Partnerships Law

Gov. Ted Kulongoski has scheduled a ceremony Wednesday to sign bills giving Oregon's gay and lesbian couples some of the benefits of marriage through domestic partnerships, and a law that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The governor will be joined by other lawmakers, former Gov. Barbara Roberts, members of the Governor's Task Force on Equality and Oregonians from across the state, for the signing ceremony.

The domestic partnership bill would enable same-sex couples to enter into contractual relationships that grant them the same benefits that state law offers to married couples.

The measure won unanimous endorsement from the Senate's majority Democrats, with two Republicans joining them.

When Kulongoski signs the measure, Oregon will join Vermont, Connecticut, California, New Jersey, Maine and Washington state in offering civil unions or domestic partnerships to same-sex couples.



Save the Date!
Thursday, June 21,



Event: *Doing Business with your Local Public Agencies*
Where: Portland Community College, Cascade Campus
 705 N Killingsworth Avenue
 Portland, Oregon 97217
When: 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
Who should attend: Minority, Women, and Emerging Small Business Owners
Why you should be there: Learn how to do business with local government agencies. Gain a competitive edge by taking your business to the next level!
Questions?: Greg Wolley, 503.823.6860, gwolley@ci.portland.or.us
Registration: Gale Hussey, 503.823.5057, ghussey@ci.portland.or.us

Please notify the City of Portland no less than five (5) business days prior to our event for ADA accommodations at 503.823.6860, by the City's TTY at 503.823.6868, or by the Oregon Relay Service at 1.800.735.2900.