

METRO

The Portland Observer



Mariela in the Desert

Latino theater production tells the story of a family whose creativity runs dry
See El Observador, page B3



Alberta Street Fair Northeast thoroughfare's annual celebration is Saturday
See story, A&E section

SECTION B

Community Calendar

Weatherization Workshops

Wednesday, Sept. 12, and Thursday, Sept. 20, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m., the Community Energy Project, 422 N.E. Alberta St., hosts free educational workshops to self-weatherize your home; qualifying participants will receive a free weatherizing kit. Call 503-284-6827 to register.

Kite Fest at Blue Lake

Colorful kites will fill the sky at Blue Lake Regional Park during a new family kite festival on Saturday, Sept. 15 from 1 to 5 p.m.

Lou Gossett Jr.

Community advocate and academy-award-winning actor Lou Gossett Jr. will kickoff the United Way's annual Community Campaign with a keynote breakfast address on Thursday, Sept. 20 at 7:30 a.m. at the Oregon Convention Center. RSVP by visiting unitedway-pdx.org or call the events line at 503-226-9366.

Fall Beach Cleanup

Saturday, Sept. 15, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m., the 23rd-annual beach cleanup will take place. Volunteers are needed for 42 sites up and down the Oregon Coast. To volunteer, call SOLV at 503-844-9571 or visit: solv.org.

Fun on Foster

Saturday, Sept. 15, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., enjoy food, music, workshops and family fun at the Foster Art Walk, S.E. 50th-93rd on Foster Road. Bring your dog for the charity dog wash, funds benefiting animal rescues. This event is free; call 503-774-2832 for more information.

Dolly Days

Saturday, Sept. 15, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., the Crossroads Doll & Teddy Bear Show will host a seminar on collecting antique dolls. The event will be held at the National Guard Armory, Northeast 33rd Drive at Marina Road.

Guild's Lake Reunion

A reunion for residents and employees from Guild's Lake Courts, the only defense housing project within the city to accept African-American residents in the 1940s, will take place Saturday, Sept. 15, beginning at 11 a.m. in the Con-way lot at Northwest 23rd Avenue and Savier Street. The gathering is part of the free Slabtown Community Festival.

Fall Swimming Lessons

The Portland Parks will be offering fall swimming lessons for ages 6 months to adults at various pools throughout the Portland-metro area. For rates, registration and information, contact 503-823-5130.

Interstate Farmers Market

A farmers market is held each Wednesday through Sept. 26 from 3 - 7 p.m. just off Interstate Avenue between Overlook Park and the Interstate Kaiser Permanente Campus. The market is known for its variety of quality fresh local produce, baked goods, cut flowers, artisan cheese, meat and fish.

Craftsman Workshops

The Northwest Woodworking Studio is registering participants for fall workshops, classes and lectures. Explore wood craftsmanship and learn the art. Visit northwestwoodworking.com or call 503-284-1644.

Tax Help in Rockwood

VITA tax aide for low-income families will begin to assist clients at the Rockwood Community office, 18709 S.E. Stark. Clients are seen by appointment only. Appointments will be made on Wednesdays only from 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. by calling 503-816-1530.

Neighborhood Farm Stand

Locally grown vegetables and bouquets of fresh flowers will be available to the public, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. every Sunday, at the Redeemer Lutheran Church, N.E. 20th and Killingsworth. The stand supports local refugees and immigrant farmers.

Relationship Transformation

Peace-Making, a local group based on non-violent communication and conscious awareness, hosts a seminar that includes information how to have better relationships both personally and professionally. For more information, call 503-228-7256.

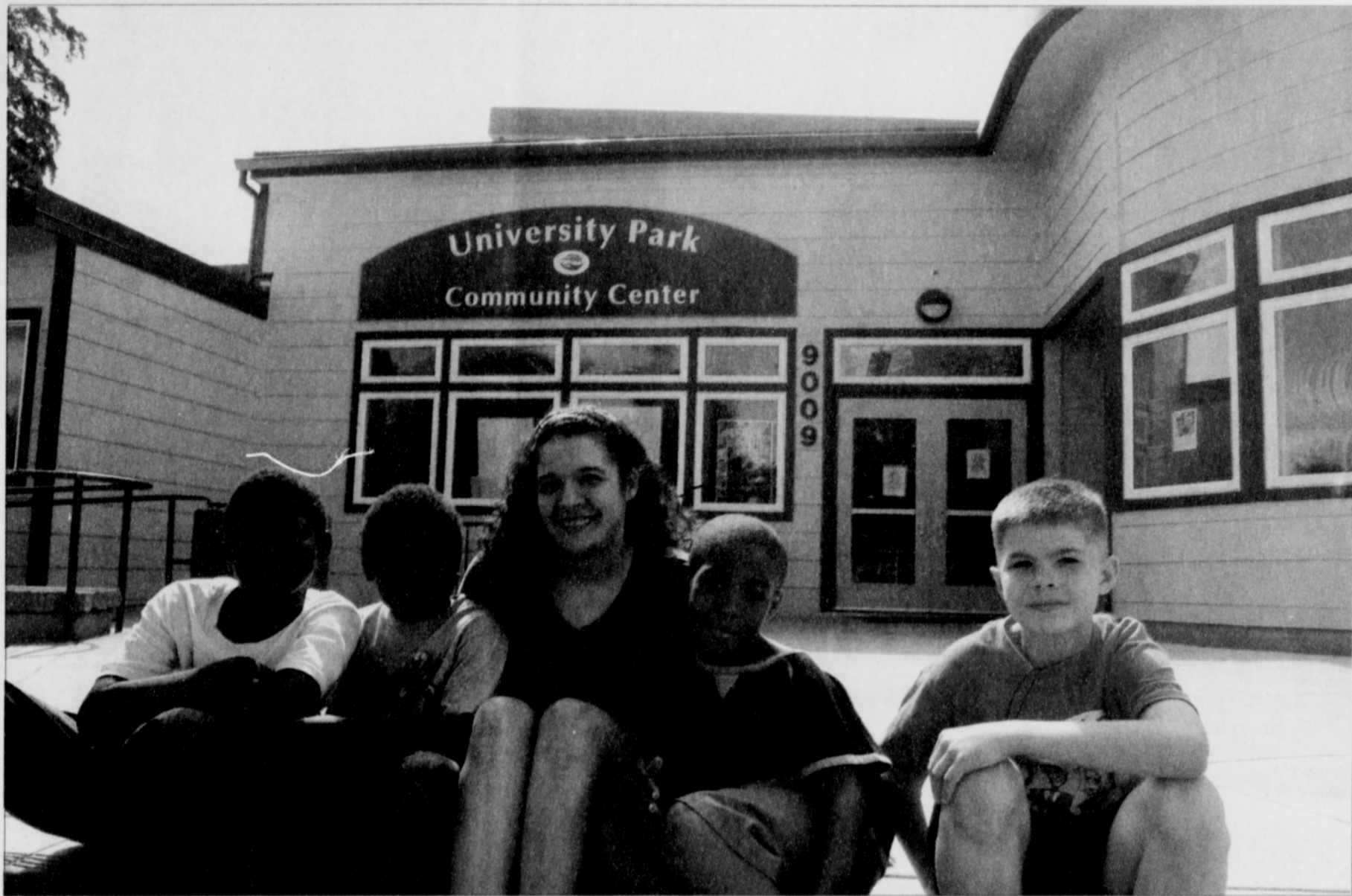


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Outside of the newly renovated University Park Community Center at 9009 N. Foss Ave., Portland Parks and Recreation supervisor Karen Birt joins students Daezhar Banks, (from left) Kev'vesn Campbell, Charles Crockett and Nicolio Kilon.

Celebrating University Park

Community Center's \$5 million renovation finally complete

Built as an emergency structure during World War II, the University Park Community Center wasn't meant to last more than a decade. But generations of neighborhood care have led to a multimillion-dollar investment, resulting in a recreational facility that serves the surrounding community in ways that the original architects never dreamed of.

The center at 9009 N. Foss Ave.

reopened in time for the school year with lots of new community spaces, including kitchen and dining facilities, a regulation double-court gymnasium, fitness/ dance studios, teen and senior lounges and classrooms fully equipped with computers.

Once used as a central dining hall for wartime temporary housing, the center became Vanport's makeshift City Hall after that community's destruction in a 1948 flood. It soon

passed to Portland city ownership, staying open in response to continued community need but falling into disrepair.

As the Housing Authority of Portland redeveloped the surrounding Columbia Villa neighborhood as "New Columbia" in 2000, Portland Parks and Recreation organized more than \$5 million in federal and park-levy funds for the center. Facility Manager Karen Birt and

her students were glad to finally have the major portion of the project finished.

The renovation of the 20,000-square-foot facility corresponded with the addition of 12,000-square-foot in adjoining wings.

By the end of this year, the community hopes to secure funding for the construction of a pool onsite and the gym will be made to convert into an auditorium.

Housing Saved on Russell Street

Urban League remodel builds on community

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A new partnership between social-justice and affordable-housing advocates saved 24 low-income housing units on Russell Street.

Adorned with portraits of civil-rights leaders past and present, the renovated apartments top the Urban League of Portland headquarters.

"We're excited about the partnership because we were able to preserve some affordable housing here in northeast Portland, and everybody knows that that's coming few and far between," says Maxine Fitzpatrick, executive director of Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives. "That was a project that could have easily gone to market if the Urban League had decided to sell the building and not care about preserving the affordable housing."

The building has a fresh coat of paint inside and out, improved lighting, a newly landscaped courtyard and other renovations bringing it to

the higher standards of PCRI.

In addition to these "very needed improvements to the building," Fitzpatrick expressed her satisfaction with using the building to commemorate local and national civil-rights advocates, particularly in the African-American community.

Fitzpatrick, State Sen. Margaret Carter and longtime activist/politician Gretchen Kafoury stood outside the building during a celebration last month to congratulate Fred Ingram for his work on the portraits.

Carter told Ingram of her firsthand experience of having portraits come out too dark, recalling how campaign billboards had to be replaced during her successful run for the state legislature in 1984, a first for an African-American woman in Oregon.

"I want to let you know in plain English why I'm so amazed with you: The way you have captured a group of African Americans, especially their eyes, their lips and the color like you did, is amazing," she said.

Ingram's only response was that he had tried to represent the lineup of civil-rights leaders accurately while keeping in mind the color scheme of



PHOTO BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

State Sen. Margaret Carter (from left) and longtime activist/politician Gretchen Kafoury congratulate Fred Ingram for his work on their portraits now spanning the facade of Urban League of Portland building on North Russell Street.

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