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'City of Roses'

Volume XXXVII, Number 38

Artists Open Studios

See art being made
during annual tours
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Student

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See Metro section, inside

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Week in
The Review

Superintendent Hired



The Portland School Board introduced school district insider Carole Smith as its next superintendent Monday. Smith

most recently worked as chief of staff to former superintendent Vicki Phillips. She formerly was executive director of Open Meadow, an alternative school. See story, page A3.

Exclusion Zones End

New data finds a racial disparity in how the city excludes people from drug free zones, signaling an end to a constitutionally questionable means for barring hundreds of citizens from their homes and neighborhoods. See story, page A2.



Guilty but No Fine

A jury decided Tuesday that New York Knicks coach Isiah Thomas sexually harassed a former

team executive, subjecting her to unwanted advances and a barrage of verbal insults, but also said he does not have to pay punitive damages. See story in Sports, page B6.

Probe of 'Jena 6' Wanted

The Congressional Black Caucus is asking the Justice Department to investigate possible civil rights violations in the "Jena 6" case. The caucus also wants Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco to pardon 17-year-old Mychal Bell, the black teen convicted in adult court of aggravated second-degree battery after the charge was reduced from attempted murder. See story, page A3.

O.J. Must Forfeit Rolex

O.J. Simpson must hand over a Rolex watch and other assets to satisfy a civil judgment that found him liable for the deaths of his ex-wife Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend Ron Goldman, a judge ruled Tuesday.

Flu Shots Encouraged

Oregon health officials are encouraging people to get a flu shot as the cool, wet winter months approach. The state has more than 400,000 doses available this year. Last year at this time, it had 91,000, and vaccine shortages appeared in some places.

Rose-Tu Pregnant

The Oregon Zoo's 13-year-old Asian elephant Rose-Tu is 10 months pregnant, zoo officials announced Monday. With a gestation period of 20 to 22 months, Rose-Tu will likely give birth in September or October 2008. Tusko, a 13,500-pound, 36-year-old Asian



PHOTO BY ANTONIO HARRIS/FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Regence Boys & Girls Club Opens

A ribbon-cutting ceremony Friday for the Regence Boys & Girls Club at New Columbia in north Portland draws Rosa Parks Elementary students, Principal Tamala Newsome and other dignitaries. The club features a game room, literacy center, media room and 'teen nitescape' facility. The club and adjacent Rosa Parks School will share a full kitchen, cafeteria, art room, computer lab, music room and outdoor covered play area.

Health Coalition Funds Dry Up

Free exercise program on hold

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

When the African American Health Coalition received notice seven years ago that its proposed programs were "approved" yet would go "unfunded," the grassroots organization took it as a good sign for larger sources of monies.

But now that it's receiving the same message from Centers for Disease Control, the sign isn't so good. The federal source of half its funding is coming to an end, which means the elimination of free exercise classes and access to facilities that have been credited by county health officials for significantly reducing heart-disease rates in the local African-American population.

The loss of \$880,000 meant that public facilities like the Matt Dishman Community Center in northeast Portland last weekend started charging African Americans for their use.

Exercise programs had played a major part to "change the community norm," according to Corl... continued on page A5

Landfill Site Becomes Park Dream

Despite risks, the Cully neighborhood forges plan

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

In what parks administrators call a "once in a lifetime opportunity," Cully neighborhood residents will help forge a plan to build a park over a now sealed-off landfill.

The large, elevated field at Northeast 75th between Columbia Boulevard and Killingsworth Street boasts views of Rocky Butte, and on clear days one can see Mt. Hood and much of the Columbia River floodplain.

Nevertheless, the only project of its kind ever formally discussed in Portland presents a unique set of serious safety considerations that the design team will have to tackle. With a device on the south that burns off pressurized methane gas and railroad lines bordering the east and north, the 25-acre site has more than its fair share of hassles.

Citing successful former-landfill transformations in Washington and California, Portland Parks and Recreation Department officials, and their contracted landscape architects, assure that solutions can be found for almost any vision the community can come up with.

The solutions will require significant financial resources, but the city is hopeful the costs would be softened by securing some federal monies set aside for so-called "brownfields." Environmental Protection Agency-regulated properties that have been so polluted that they need a cleanup to make them safe and economically viable.

The local officials' message to the community stresses imagination as the most major limitation to a beautiful and well-loved future park resting above a landfill that's isolated by a protected membrane.

The park's master planner can already envision a major transfor-



PHOTO BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

On a clear day, the proposed Thomas Cully Park boasts views of Rocky Butte, the Columbia River floodplain and Mt. Hood. Portland Parks and Recreation Department administrators Seve Ghose (from left) and Peggy Glascock and city planner David Yamashita are overseeing the construction and maintenance of the site north of Killingsworth Street at northeast 75th Avenue.

"It doesn't look like much now, but once it's finished, it'll be one of the city's gems. We just have to make sure that we don't do anything to cause the membrane to be a problem."

— David Yamashita, Parks Department planner

mation to the spot, since David Yamashita remembers negotiating his car through it to empty his yard's laurel clippings when it was a pit littered with construction debris in

the early '80s.

"It doesn't look like much now, but once it's finished, it'll be one of the city's gems," says Yamashita, who has orchestrated park devel-

opments in Portland for over two decades. "We just have to make sure that we don't do anything to cause the membrane to be a problem."

When community members recently got a sneak preview of the site, they became more skeptical with each new barrier and downside they saw.

The landscape architect working on the project sensed the lack of enthusiasm and similarly encouraged community members to "dream big."

"You look at it now, and you may not think much of it," said

Paul Agrimis, a landscape architect on a contract with the city. "but it's easy to visualize people kicking balls and doing all kinds of things with this site."

Agrimis proceeded to spend most of the time, however, walking around the site addressing serious logistical issues.

Safety topped the list of concerns as the group discussed how to prevent children from entering the chutes needed to release methane-gas pressure during emergen-

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