

50¢

38
years of
community service

Revival on Stage

Godspell musical reborn at
Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center
See A&E section

Daylight Savings Time Ends

Clocks turn back
one hour Sunday
at 2 a.m.



The Portland Observer

'City of Roses'

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Week in The Review

Interstate Rename Limbo

Uncertainty befell the campaign to change North Interstate Avenue to Cesar Chavez Boulevard after its most powerful supporter, Mayor Tom Potter, walked out of debate in City Council chambers Thursday saying, "I am irrelevant."

California Firefighting Conditions Improve

Cloudy skies and occasional raindrops brought a welcome improvement in conditions for firefighters battling stubborn wildfires across Southern California, where hot, dry Santa Ana winds a week earlier spread fires over more than a half-million acres, killing seven people and destroying more than 2,300 structures, including 1,700 homes.

Red Sox Sweep Series

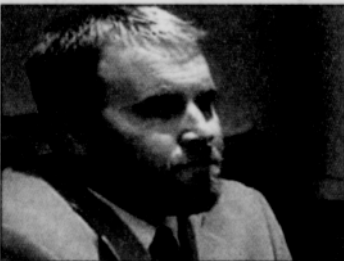
Boston fans swarmed the streets to celebrate the second World Series title in four seasons for a team that previously experienced an 86-year drought. See story, page A6.

U.N. Against Cuba Embargo

With 184 votes in favor, four against and one abstention, the U.N. General Assembly voted overwhelmingly on Tuesday to urge the United States to lift its four-decade-old embargo against Cuba in a nonbinding resolution adopted for the 16th consecutive year.

Carolina Fire Mystery

Investigators are still trying to figure out what caused a North Carolina beach house fire early Sunday morning that took the lives of seven college students who were active in the Greek system. One student escaped by jumping out of the third story.



Officer Found Guilty

Following an investigation that found he touched several women inappropriately under the guise of searching them, Matthew Kohnke, a nine-year police veteran, pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge and submitted his letter of resignation, reaching a deal that involves 40 hours of community service and a \$500 fine. See story, page A2.

Dogs Shoot Hunter

As James Harris, 37, crossed a fence in Iowa Saturday to retrieve a bird he shot, his hunting dogs stepped on the rifle he had placed on the ground, striking him in the left calf from distance of roughly three feet.

Driving While Distracted

Safety takes a backseat

BY JASON FLOYD
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Like the Columbia River, the streets of Portland are flowing. Commuters of all types routinely travel at high velocities in metal boxes on wheels or even more daringly on two-wheeled contraptions that leave the rider open to the outside elements.

As a rule, drivers must be licensed, but with so many unknowns mixed in, that's not enough to guarantee safety.

A growing concern are drivers constantly being distracted with cell phones, text messaging and I-phones, making the all-too-common casual approach to the road all the more dangerous.

The Traffic Division of the Portland Police Department doesn't keep quantitative statistics of which distraction, if any, causes a wreck, but it is the professional opinion of a seasoned traffic patroller that cell phones are the most common culprit in terms of distracted driving.

Officer Tom Larsen has witnessed the streets of Portland for more than a season or two and has seen a number of mishaps and misdemeanors blamed on drivers diverting their attention to matters not related to the road. He can even read the body language, so to speak, of a driver not giving proper attention to road.

"Driving slow, with kind of unsure behavior," is often a tell-tale sign of driving while distracted,

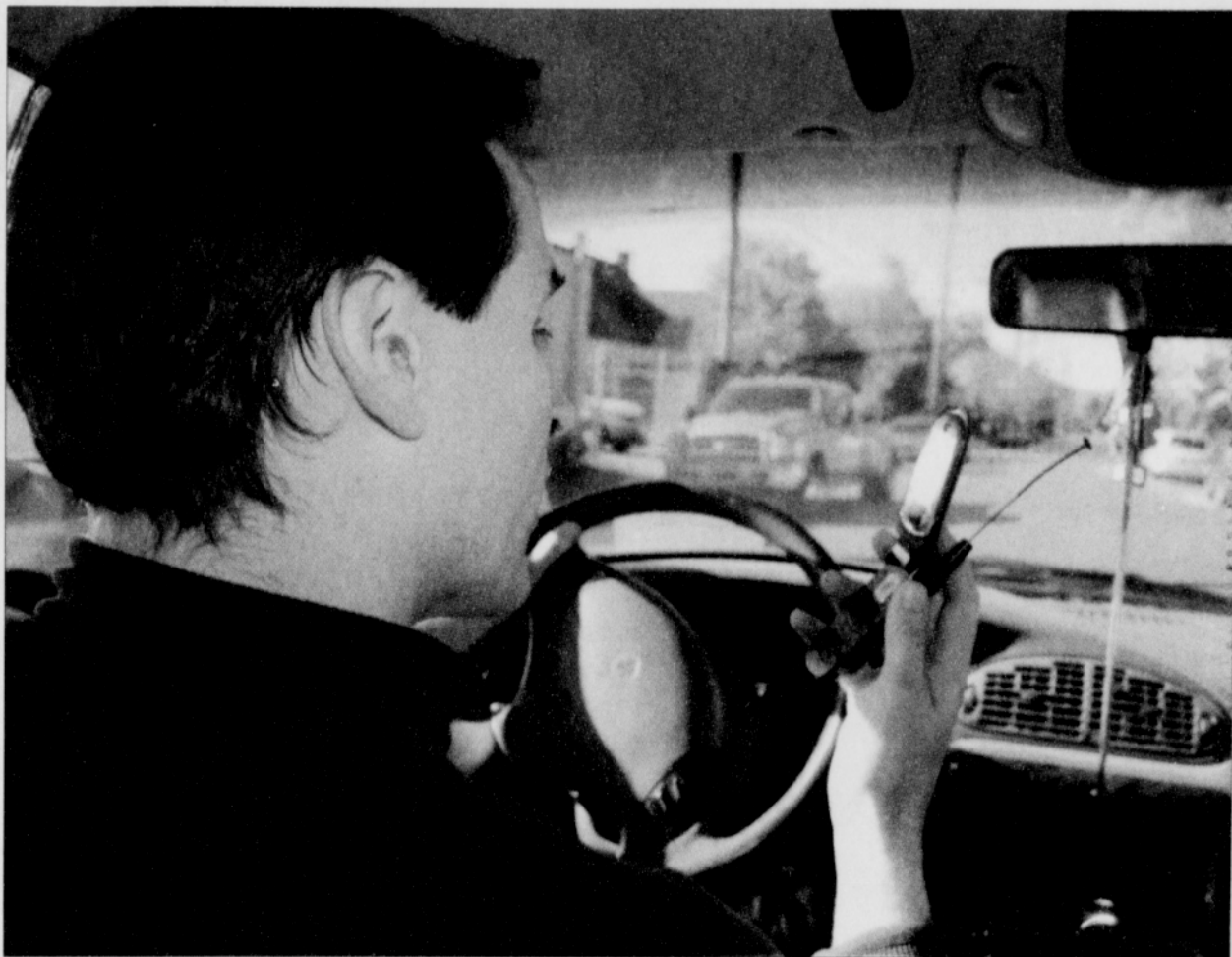


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Using a cell phone for dialing and text messaging is a dangerous and too often seen distraction that makes our roads and sidewalks less safe.

Larsen explains.

It sounds similar to driving while under the influence of intoxicants, and some parties in the State Legislature agree that it should be policed in a similar way. Our neighbors to the north in Washington have taken a stance against the use of cell phones by teenagers in particular while driving, making texting and hand-held calling illegal on the road.

Why is the cell phone such a distraction that it beats out other mid-drive menaces like applying makeup, fiddling with the radio/stereo or negotiating a hot cup of coffee?

According to Larsen, cell phones are a greater distraction because they are more commonly used. One major group you don't see incessantly chatting on them is the older generation of baby boomers who grew up with good-old land lines as the primary mode of communication.

"That group usually uses the cell phones as an emergency phone" says Larsen. The younger generations have cell phones like the older generations had chickenpox.

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An artist's rendering shows a new permanent home for the Miracles Club on Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. The drug and alcohol-free club would have the primary use of the ground floor with 30-40 units of housing above.

Miracles Club Gets Lifeline

Building would house community group

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A drug and alcohol-free club serving the African-American community is looking forward to a stable and secure future with the purchase of property for a new permanent home.

The Portland Development Commis-

sion has added almost a half-acre of property at 4218 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. to its Oregon Convention Center Urban Renewal Area to help finance the construction.

The not-for-profit Miracles Club is a beloved local institution of more than 10 years, assisting individuals with recov-

ery from drug and alcohol addiction. The vacant parcel will allow construction of a five-story building with Miracles as the primary ground floor use and 30-40 units of housing above.

The housing would be owned and managed by Guardian Management with the PDC contributing monies that the city of Portland requires it to set aside for affordable and low-income housing. Miracles provides services for people

in recovery and their families, including 12-step meetings, a social gathering space, and weekly family nights where parents and their children get together in an atmosphere free of drugs and alcohol.

Miracles currently rents space nearby at the corner of MLK and Mason Street and has faced eviction because of plans

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