

**Comfort for Dark Times**

Police crisis team offers support after tragedies  
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**Hip Hop's Higher Power**

Rennie Harris to return with 'Puremovement'  
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Sean Taylor

## NFL Star Dies after Shooting

### Redskin fans, players shocked

(AP)—Pro Bowl safety Sean Taylor died Tuesday after he was shot in his home by an apparent intruder, leaving the Washington Redskins in mourning for a teammate who seemed to have reordered his life since becoming a father.

The 24-year-old player died at Jackson Memorial Hospital in Miami, where he had been airlifted after the shooting early Monday.

Family friend Richard Sharpstein said Taylor's father informed him of the death at about 5:30 a.m.

"His father called and said he was with Christ and he cried and thanked me," said Sharpstein, Taylor's former lawyer. "It's a tremendously sad and unnecessary event. He was a wonderful, humble, talented young man, and had a huge life in front of him. Obviously God had other plans."

A string of mourners, including Taylor's father, visited the player's home and embraced outside.

"This is the worst imaginable tragedy," Redskins owner Daniel Snyder said. "Our thoughts and prayers are with Sean's family."

Redskins teammate Clinton Portis also played with Taylor at the University of Miami. He had sensed a new maturity in his close friend.

"It's hard to expect a man to grow up overnight," Portis said. "But ever since he had his child, it was like a new Sean, and everybody around here knew it. He was always smiling, always happy, always talking about his child."

Taylor's death comes nearly a year after Broncos cornerback Darrent Williams was killed in a drive-by

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PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

## 'Tis the Season

A litged tree at downtown's Pioneer Courthouse Square is a familiar landmark for the holidays. The 75-foot Douglas Fir was a gift to the city from Stimson Lumber.

## Workers Fight for Fairness

### Custodians, bus drivers fight cuts

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Imagine someone responsible for the maintenance of school facilities getting a 30 percent pay cut during the holidays, a school-cafeteria worker without health-care coverage settling on a one-percent pay increase when inflation is 3.2 percent, or a school-bus driver enduring without any contract as a starting point to labor negotiations.

This is not the fantasy world of some morality tale, but a reality that Portland Public Schools administrators are trying to push on its workers.

PPS says that it that it needs to cut costs somewhere. By reducing the salaries of its lowest-paid employees, the district contests that all of its disbursements for wages will still remain within a comparable range to their respective sectors.

For reliable and experienced employees, PPS competes with neighboring school districts. But if the cuts go through, the starting wage of \$10.70 an hour for custodians, for example, would fall short of the wages paid for school custodians in Beaverton, David Douglas and Tigard, according to labor representatives.

There's another problem with the offers, according to Birdie Kirk, the head custodian at Benson High School in northeast Portland with 29 years of experience in the district.

Kirk says school administrators would effectively push out employees who are dedicated to the long-term health and safety of students.

"While some people have one or two kids, I have 1,200 kids," Kirk says. "I hope that my

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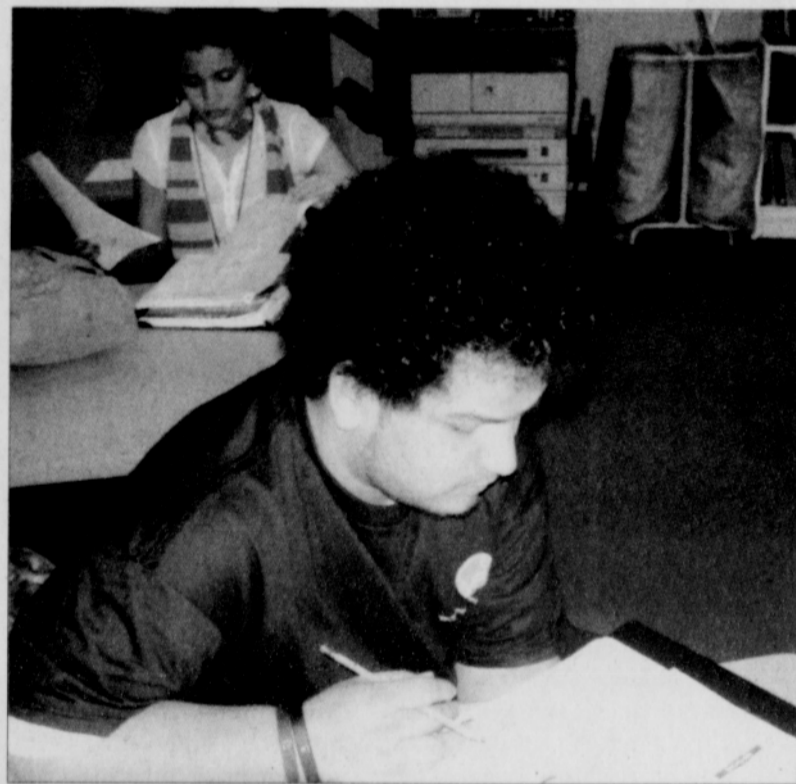


PHOTO BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Jeff Evans and Kirsten Olivio get in some last-minute studying after a Youth Employment Institute math class.

## Employment Institute Seeks Larger Role

### Helping high-risk youth build careers

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Dreams for the future should not be diminished for young parents unable to afford living in Portland's core area. The Youth Employment Institute mostly serves those living inside of Portland school-district boundaries, but the organization is working to reach out to disadvantaged populations displaced by gentrification.

As one of the few GED-preparatory schools to integrate teen-parenting curriculum into its alternative-education strategy, the learning center recognizes the need to serve a broader constituency than its traditional inner-eastside area.

In targeting dropouts, foster-care youth, teen parents and offenders, the program's

leader wants increasing pressure on funding sources to end limitation based on place of residence.

"So many of the teen moms and dads of color have been moved out to east county, and that's out of our service area," says Bennie Boggan, a YEI executive with 23 years experience working with Portland's highest-risk youth. "What we would like to have are some unrestricted resources that would allow us to serve more kids with strategies that we know work."

YEI program directors also aim for an alternative-education program that goes beyond GED prep and testing to work with young adults on barriers that are inhibiting their success. The institute's approach to education includes strategies that support youth with employment training and social services, building skills that address barriers in multiple areas while preparing youth for the next step in their

career.

"We're trying to make sure kids really understand the value of getting an education and transferring their education into a livable wage," says Boggan.

Teaching in a system of rewards rather than punishments, YEI provides its students with 85 percent attendance a free bus pass while teen parents get paid \$5 for each day if their attendance exceeds 90 percent. The program operates on a year-round basis, offering case-management services, free onsite child care, employment training, life-skill classes and additional rewards for passing tests.

J.J. Lynch, a YEI program manager, sees the effort to find jobs for students, even in the offices of the institute itself, as a crucial role that is difficult to accomplish when youth don't have someone who

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## Week in The Review

### Time for Healing

Agreeing that Portlanders need time to heal, Mayor Tom Potter and the City Council voted last week to hold any decision to rename a street after Cesar Chavez. The controversy over Interstate and Fourth Avenues had generated charges of racism from one side and worries of undue hardship from the other.

### Pageant Sabotage Fails

Beauty pageant organizers were investigating Sunday who doused a contestant's

evening gowns with pepper spray and spiked her makeup, causing her to break out in hives. Ingrid Marie Rivera had to strip off her clothes backstage and apply ice bags to her face, but stayed composed and won the Miss Puerto Rico Universe pageant.

### Appointees Support Obama

Barack Obama confronted claims that he's light on foreign policy by surrounding himself Tuesday with several foreign-policy heavyweights appointed by Bill Clinton who agreed with his willingness to meet with tyrants

and restore the nation's moral authority by closing Guantanamo Bay's military prison.



### Paris Immigrants Riot

Youth, many of them Arab and black children of immigrants, rioted for a third night Tuesday in Paris' suburbs, targeting a French establishment they feel has left them behind. The trigger was the deaths Sunday of two minority teens when their motor scooter

collided with a police car.

### Economic Confidence Falls

American consumers became more pessimistic about the economy in November, sending the Consumer Confidence Index to the lowest level in two years amid worries about rising fuel costs, an escalating credit crisis and a housing-market slump.

### Stadium Collapses in Brazil

A stadium collapse that killed seven people highlighted the crumbling state of Brazil's soccer arenas. At least 40 others were injured Sunday night falling 49 feet through a 10-foot wide hole that opened in the concrete stands of the Fonte Nova sta-

dium, deemed the worst of Brazil's 29 major soccer stadiums in a recent survey.

### Musharraf Bows to Pressure

Pervez Musharraf had his last full day as Pakistan's army chief Tuesday as he bows to international pressure to become a civilian president. Faced with swelling anger over his three-week-old state of emergency, the embattled U.S. ally plans to take an oath for a second five-year term as president Thursday.

