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38
years of
community serviceSpecial
Coverage
IssueBlack
History
Month

Giant Surprise

New York team
stuns with Super
Bowl upset

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The
City of Roses

The Portland Observer

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Week in The Review

Civil Rights Victory

Gay couples in Oregon were allowed to register as domestic partners after a federal judge Friday lifted the temporary injunction he imposed in late December. Couples began certifying Monday at the Multnomah County building, 501 S.E. Hawthorne Blvd., Suite 175.

Local Rep Picks Obama



Rep. Earl Blumenauer, D-Ore., endorsed Sen. Barack Obama over Sen. Hillary Clinton for president last Friday. The

Portland Democrat said Obama's energy, enthusiasm and optimism helped him make up his mind between two great candidates.

Tobacco Verdict Upheld

The Oregon Supreme Court upheld a \$79.5 million punitive-damages judgment Thursday against Philip Morris for the family of longtime Marlboro smoker Jesse Williams, an African American who worked as a janitor in Portland for many years before dying of lung cancer in 1997.

Yahoo Offered \$44 Billion

Microsoft has moved to buy Yahoo with an unsolicited takeover offer of \$44.6 billion, seeking to join forces against Google in what would be the biggest Internet deal since the Time Warner-AOL merger in 2001.

Education Donation



National radio personality and philanthropist Tom Joyner announced on Monday that he's donating \$1.1

million to the National Education Association increase the number of fully certified teachers in minority and hard-to-staff schools across the country.

Mardi Gras Kicks Off

Clarinetist Pete Fountain, dressed in a tunic as one of King Arthur's knights, looked frail but happy Tuesday morning as he led 100 members of his Half-Fast Walking Club onto Uptown streets in what has become New Orleans' unofficial opening of Mardi Gras.

African Violence Spreads

Hundreds of civilians have been estimated killed and a 1,000 more wounded in a coup attempt this week by rebels in Chad. Bodies lay in streets littered with the hulks of burned out tanks as soldiers blocked two bridges crossing into neighboring Cameroon, cutting off an escape route for thousands.

Picking a President

Washington Caucus Saturday

As this election year shapes up to be the most suspenseful in decades, voters in Vancouver will join their counterparts across Washington on Saturday to participate in the Democratic and Republican caucuses to choose a president.

Barring an unlikely sweep of most of the 22 states voting in elections and caucuses on Tuesday, Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama will have picked up a mix of wins and losses. Each will accumulate delegates to the Democratic National Convention this summer, but neither will have enough to secure the nomination.

At press time on Tuesday, the Republican contest had narrowed between former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney and Sen. John McCain.

Washington State voters will get their chance to weigh in at Saturday's party caucuses around the state, mark the first step in a complicated state process of registering voters' presidential preferences.

Washington's presidential



Hillary Rodham Clinton and Barack Obama marked a turning point in the Democratic presidential contest on Tuesday, but barring an unlikely sweep of most of the 22 states voting, neither will have enough delegates to secure the nomination.

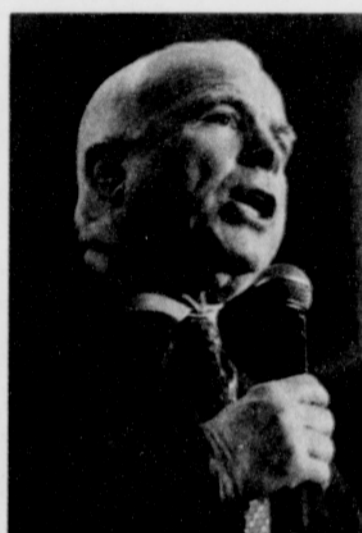
preference primary is Feb. 19, but Democrats will elect nearly all their delegates through the caucus system.

Republicans, on the other hand, will choose 51 percent of their delegates to the national convention based on results of the presidential primary.

As part of the preparation for the caucuses taking place Saturday from 1 to 3 p.m.,

Democrats have rented 30 schools to host voters in Clark County's 180 precincts, with four to seven precinct caucuses meeting at each school. Republicans rented space in 17 locations for their own caucus meetings.

Vancouver voters may visit clarkvotes.org to determine which caucus event to attend. More information can also be



John McCain



Mitt Romney

found by calling Democratic Party representatives Dan Ogden at 360-254-8886 or Marsha Aller at 360-254-2158, or Republican Party representatives Mike Gaston at 360-574-0984 or Anna Miller at 360-600-6668.

Northeast Neighborhood Activist Fired

With no chance
to refute any
complaints

BY LEE PERLMAN

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods board voted to fire its executive director, Joseph Santos-Lyons, at a special meeting Monday. The 12-1 decision came with one abstention.

In a letter to the board prior to the vote, Santos-Lyons, who has held the position for six months, complained that he had not been given any information about complaints against him or given a chance to review and respond



Joseph Santos-Lyons

to them. He also warned against an arbitrary, quick decision that could damage the neighborhood organization.

Santos-Lyons is a Portland native who has worked extensively with neighborhood associations in the past. He was a national director of field organizing for Campus Ministries, was active in Oregon Action, the Coalition for a Livable Future, the Environmental Justice Action Group and the Interstate Urban Renewal Advisory Group.

The board spent almost three hours discussing his future in a closed-to-the-public executive session and board members declined to comment after the dismissal, other than to release a statement saying that the action was "in the best interest of the Northeast Coalition and the community." They also declined to hear public comments on the issue, to the chagrin of some of Santos-Lyons' supporters who attended the session and wrote e-mails.

Gerri Washington of Oregon Action said that discussing personnel issues in private was "totally proper." However, she added, "As a resident who has lived here for 54 years, when will I have input? My voice will not have been heard."

Board chair Ron Laster said public testimony may be accepted possibly at some future time.

The firing followed an emergency meeting of the organization's executive committee last Thursday, also in executive session, called by Laster at the request of two other board members. The next day, Laster placed Santos-Lyons on administrative leave and scheduled the Monday board meeting.

Both Santos-Lyons and the board members declined to make any additional public statements following the board vote. Santos-Lyons will be paid for two weeks of accrued vacation time as severance pay.

The coalition, a nonprofit corporation, contracts with the city through the Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement to



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Thirty-one-year-old James King argues that changes for the better in the Alberta neighborhood will start with the creation of more nonalcoholic activities geared to younger generations.

Perceptions Collide on Alberta

New survey shows support, hesitations

BY RAYMOND RENDLEMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

In response to a series of violent, alcohol-related incidents last spring, a nonprofit that supports artistic events on Northeast Alberta Street commissioned a survey of community attitudes toward celebrations on the thoroughfare.

The Portland State University study, released Monday at Talisman Gallery, shows much more community support for Alberta than organizers expected. The pollsters had braced themselves for greater negativity in response to the violence.

More than 80 percent of the survey's responses express enjoyment in attending Alberta's events and a sense that the street festivals benefit the local community.

However, the survey also showed strong desire to make the events safer and more inviting to various types of people, which are sentiments especially echoed in the area's black community. A PSU survey almost two years ago showed that African Americans were less happy with the process of gentrification occurring on the street than their white neighbors.

Although the latest survey doesn't ask respondents about ethnicity, conversations with community members reveal that perceptions about the street may continue along racial lines.

"The art walks have been really good for the street, but the problem is getting everyone involved," says Roslyn Hill, an African-American developer known for organizing against Alberta blight in the early '90s.

Anthony Blake, 40, has lived in the Alberta neighborhood for decades and says he never sends back questionnaires. He worries that the survey missed important sentiments about the street.

The latest PSU study analyzed 102 completed surveys out of 402 randomly sent throughout nearly 2,000 addresses on both sides of Alberta from Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard to Northeast 33rd Avenue, and from Prescott to Killingsworth Streets.

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