



Down at the Pump

Portland prices for regular were an average \$3.98 a gallon Tuesday, down 27 cents from a month ago

For Your Health

Summit Research Network at Montgomery Park hosts a free blood pressure screening in the fight against heart disease
See story, page A9



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Week in The Review

Quake Hits S. California

A strong earthquake shook Southern California on Tuesday, causing buildings to sway and triggering some precautionary evacuations. Scattered minor damage and a few minor injuries have been reported in the aftermath of the magnitude 5.4 jolt.

Shooter Hated Liberals

An unemployed man who opened fire with a shotgun and killed two people at a Unitarian church in Tennessee apparently targeted the congregation out of hatred for its liberal social policies, police said Monday. See story, page A2.

Climber Dies on Mt. Hood

A 55-year-old Eugene doctor descending from the summit of Mount Hood died after a rock knocked him downhill. Dr. Gary Lee was with his son, Devin, Sunday afternoon when a rock "dislodged from the ice above" and hit him at about 9,000 feet on the 11,239-foot peak.

Ex-NBA Referee Sentenced

A federal judge in Brooklyn Tuesday sentenced former NBA referee Tim Donaghy to 15 months in prison for taking payoffs from a professional gambler for inside tips on games. The league has angrily denied Donaghy's claim that corruption among referees runs deeper than one bad referee.

Alaska Senator Indicted

Sen. Ted Stevens, the nation's longest-serving Republican senator and a major figure in Alaska politics, was indicted Tuesday on seven counts of failing to disclose hundreds of thousands of dollars in services from an oil services company that helped renovate his home.

Crude Oil Prices Fall

Crude oil prices sank \$2.54 to \$122.19 a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange Tuesday, extending their two-week-long retreat from record highs above \$147.

Housing Prices Drop

Home prices tumbled by 15.8 percent in May compared to a year ago, according to a closely watched national housing index released Tuesday, as the housing slump deepened nationwide.

Candidates Focus on VP

As speculation swirls, Barack Obama and John McCain were knuckling down Tuesday to the work of choosing running mates with their nominating conventions just weeks away.

Iraq to Attend Games

The International Olympic Committee ruled Tuesday that Iraq could participate in the Beijing games, reversing itself after Baghdad pledged to ensure the independence of its national Olympics panel.

First Step Summer jobs put youth on right track

At-risk youth are learning responsibility, employment skills and good decision-making during an intensive 10-week summer jobs program.

TriMet and the Youth Employment Institute, Inc. have kicked off the 10th year of First Step, with A.K. Rucker, a TriMet bus operator, providing overall supervision of the 20 teens enrolled in the program.

Over 170 kids applied to the program this year with half of the kids enrolled returning from last year.

"We have a good mix of kids this year," said Rucker. "Those chosen are teens at-risk or associated with risk groups. They're picked based on how they can help each other."

During the rest of the year, Rucker operates the Line 75-39th Ave/Lombard. The route puts him in regular contact with teens from First Step and it connects with other middle and high school kids from Portland and Gresham.

Participants travel on a TriMet bus to pick up litter, sweep bus stops and empty TriMet trashcans along transit corridors. Two hours per week are devoted to development of life skills and exploring various fields of employment. The youth involved in the program receive a monthly transit pass and are paid minimum wage for work up to 40 hours per week.

"The First Step job program is making a real difference in the lives of at-risk kids," said Fred Hansen, TriMet general manager. "It provides good role models and positive, structured experiences that help these students develop into responsible adults. I'm proud that TriMet is involved in this program and that one of our operators is the driving force behind it."



First Step started in 1998 employing 10 youth full-time during the summer months. In 2004, the program increased to 20 full-time youth positions. The First Step program is designed to encourage young people to develop work and life skills. It prepares the teenagers to enter the world of work and includes positive experiences designed to help them develop an understanding of work place standards.

YEI's mission is to promote self-sufficiency and life-long learning by nurturing personal, educational and career development of young people. It was founded on the belief that youth have the ability to overcome barriers that stand in the way to successful employment.

Local youth pick up litter, sweep bus stops and empty TriMet trash cans along Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard as part of a summer jobs program with the transit agency and the Youth Employment Institute.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Urgent Care Ends 24-Hour Service Clinic to close after midnight

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Kaiser Permanente will no longer offer a 24-hour clinic at its North Interstate Avenue campus, ending a relationship to the community that was started when it closed Bess Kaiser Hospital on North Greely Avenue more than a decade ago.

Starting Aug. 1, Kaiser will close its Interstate Urgent Care clinic from midnight to 7 a.m. and redeploy staff to work hours with more patient demand while enhancing health care services during the day, according to Justin McGowan, Kaiser's primary and urgent care director for the eastside of Portland.

McGowan said the Interstate Urgent Care facility was averaging just a dozen patients during the after midnight and predawn hours. Under the new service schedule, urgent care services still will be available seven days a week at Interstate, including weekends, from 7 a.m. to midnight.

Two years ago, Kaiser dropped the name Emergicenter from its Interstate campus so that the urgent care facility would not be confused with emergency level services available at hospitals.

Urgent care clinics help patients with ailments such as cold, flu, ankle sprains and minor cuts, while hospitals function during life threatening emergencies like heart attacks and stroke, McGowan explained.

Kaiser doctors with emergency room experience formerly shared duties at Interstate and Kaiser Sunnyside Hospital in Clackamas before recently being transferred to work exclusively

at Sunnyside.

An open letter to Kaiser administrators criticizes all of the recent changes.

The document states that Kaiser emergency department doctors have had an invaluable role in the function and success of the Interstate facility. It also points out the difficulty for patients to drive to Sunnyside, which is more 15 miles away, and the fact there's no TriMet bus or light rail service to Sunnyside after midnight.

Because Interstate doesn't have an adjacent hospital it cannot operate at the full scope of an emergency facility, so there is no need to have an emergency room staff at that location, McGowan explained.

He said Kaiser has family-practice doctors and other health care professionals at Interstate who are providing the needed services for urgent care, mirroring Kaiser's five other urgent care facilities in southeast Portland, Beaverton, Vancouver, Longview-Kelso and Salem.

Kaiser is still committed to its population base in north and northeast Portland and the changes don't decrease the overall staff level at Interstate, McGowan said.

He said telephone advice with an advice nurse will be available after midnight and patients with needed emergency care will be taken to Sunnyside or a nearby non-Kaiser facility like Legacy Emanuel Hospital.

The intent is to have an after-hours urgent care facility for Kaiser members at Interstate, McGowan said, disputing speculation that hours would be reduced further or the clinic could close entirely in the future.

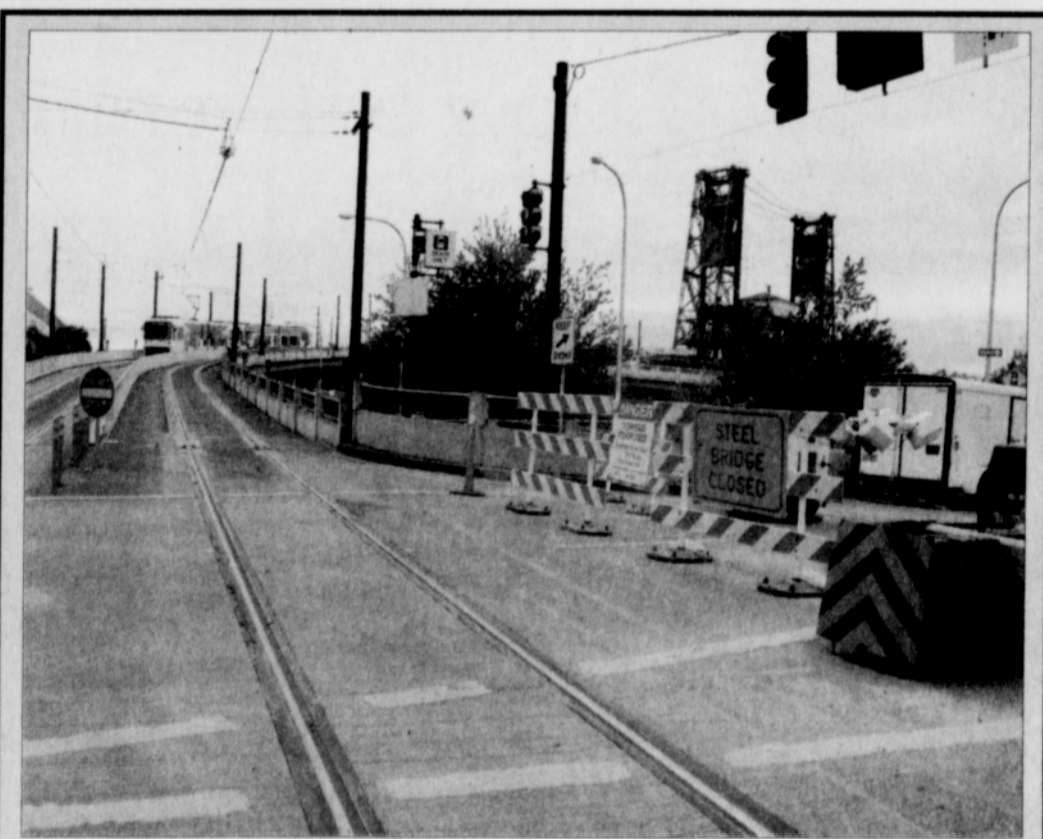


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Steel Bridge will close to all traffic including MAX trains on Saturday for three weeks as construction crews connect new tracks for the downtown Portland Mall Light Rail project. Shuttle buses will transport riders across the river on the Burnside Bridge.

Construction to Close Steel Bridge Saturday starts three weeks of shuttles

Starting Saturday, Aug. 2, the Steel Bridge will close to all MAX service for three weeks of construction as crews connect new tracks for the downtown Portland Mall Light Rail Project.

There will be no MAX service between the Rose Quarter Transit Center and the Old Town/Chinatown stations. Shuttle buses will be available to take riders across the Willamette River via the Burnside Bridge.

TriMet says riders should allow an extra 15-30 minutes for their commute if using the shuttle. Riders also can walk across the lower deck of the bridge, which takes about 15 minutes or bike across in about half of that time. Shuttles will

have limited space for bikes.

Commuters can catch the westbound shuttle bus at the Convention Center Station, which drops off riders at the Old Town/Chinatown Station. Westbound Red Line trains will become northbound Yellow Line trains at the Rose Quarter Transit Center.

Southbound Yellow Line trains are not servicing the west side; once they reach the Rose Quarter Transit Center they will become eastbound Red Line trains with service to the airport.

Due to operating constraints, fewer MAX trains will be running on the west side between Beaverton Transit Center and downtown Portland.

TriMet staff will be on hand to help and signs

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