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See story, page A10

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## Week in The Review

### O J Simpson Trial Begins



O.J. Simpson went on trial for kidnapping and robbery Monday with a judge determined to find a jury unaffected by his long-ago "Trial of the Century." The stakes are high with a robbery conviction bringing mandatory prison time and a kidnapping conviction carrying the possibility of life in prison. See story, page A2.

### Major League Soccer Wanted

Advocates wanting to bring a Major League Soccer team to Portland outlined a plan last week to renovate PGE Park with soccer improvements and create a new ballpark in Lents as home for the Triple-A Beavers.

### Obama Blasts Job Numbers

A 10.6 percent unemployment rate for African Americans in the latest employment numbers drew a strong rebuke Friday from Sen.



Barack Obama. The presidential candidate said the jobs report is a stark reminder of what's at stake for African Americans in the upcoming election. See story, page A2.

### Officer Settles Race Case

A former Vancouver police officer has settled a federal race discrimination lawsuit with a \$1.65 million settlement from the city. The attorney for Officer Navin Sharma said the harassment did not end even after the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission intervened with a federal court settlement in 2001.

### Racial Attack in Longview

Police say a brutal attack on a young interracial couple in Longview seems to have been motivated by racism. An 18-year-old man is accused of punching a 14-year-old male and choking his 13-year-old female friend after shouting racial slurs at them.



### Serena Wins U S Open

Displaying the talent and tenacity that allowed her to dominate tennis early in the decade, Serena Williams outlasted Jelena Jankovic 6-4, 7-5 Sunday to win her third U.S. Open championship and ninth Grand Slam title.

### Jones Completes Sentence

Sprinter Marion Jones was released from federal prison Friday after completing most of her six month sentence for lying about her steroid use. She was stripped of her five Olympic medals in 2007 after admitted that she used the drugs.

### Higher Driving Age Proposed

An influential auto safety group is calling on states to raise the age for getting a driver's license to 17 or even 18. Adrian Lund of the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, acknowledged the idea is "a tough sell," but noted that car crashes are the leading cause of death among teenagers.

## Sheriff Candidate is Change Agent

Says time is now, not to wait

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

An experienced corrections officer in the Multnomah County Sheriff's office is running for the department's top position in an effort to bring permanent change and leadership to the law enforcement agency.

Sgt. Muhammad Ra'ooof will face caretaker Sheriff Bob Skipper in the November General Election to fill the two years remaining on former sheriff's Bernie Giusto's term.

Giusto resigned this summer while facing ethics investigations and charges of mismanagement. Skipper, 69, returned to duty as sheriff after retiring 14 years ago. He has pledged to serve no longer than the two years if he is elected.

Ra'ooof says times have changed since Skipper left and change in the department is needed now.

"Why wait for 2010 for change," he said. "In two years, we would have to start all over again."

Ra'ooof said his priorities as sheriff would be to do a better job at managing the sheriff's department budget, better prepare sheriff's deputies for advancement, and improve the county jail system with more educational and job skills programs to reduce recidivism and invest more in mental health.

He said a safe community needs jail space, but the county can make better use of the jail



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER  
Sgt. Muhammad Ra'ooof brings extensive experience in community corrections to his race for Multnomah County Sheriff on the Nov. 3 General Election ballot.

beds it has.

On the proposed opening of the new Wapato Jail after years of mothballing due to budget shortfalls, he said, "We shouldn't just open a jail to save face, that's stupid. We have options. We can make it a mental health facility or a tri-county jail that could include

Clark County."

Another one of his issue is the future retirements of an aging workforce in the sheriff's department, which includes the corrections division, the largest segment of the department and the one he has the most extensive experience.

He said he wants to increase the diversity in the sheriff's department workforce and proposes giving law enforcement a public face in local schools by letting young people know about career opportunities.

Ra'ooof said he looks to his role as sheriff as not being behind a

desk, but out into the community building ties with residents and strategic partnerships with other state and local leaders.

"I want the community to be healthy," I care about the community. I live in the community," he said.

Ra'ooof was born in Portland and raised in the Oakland, Calif. area before embarking on a 12 year career with the U.S. army where he served as a military police officer, army recruiter, equal opportunity officer, race relations officer and retention officer.

*"We shouldn't just open a jail to save face, that's stupid. We have options. We can make it a mental health facility or a tri-county jail that could include Clark County."*

—Sgt. Muhammad Ra'ooof

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An image from director Charles Burnett's film "Killer of Sheep," part of the 10-film Diversity Film Festival at the Vancouver Campus of Washington State University this fall.

## Diversity Film Festival

### WSU Vancouver hosts fall series

The first diversity film festival at the Vancouver Campus of Washington State University Vancouver carries the theme, "Visions from the Inside: Directors Look at their Communities."

Ten films will be shown Wednesday, Sept. 10 to Oct. 14 at various afternoon and evening times in the

college's Administration Building, Room 110. All films are free and open to the public.

"Each of the 10 films concentrates on relations and experiences within minority groups, rather than on interactions with dominant culture," said Carol Siegel of the WSU Vancouver Diversity Council, sponsor of the festival.

Portland director Andy Blubagh is featured along with directors Chris Eyre, Mira Nair, Liev Schreiber, Spike

Lee and Siddiq Barmak.

The films include "Killer of Sheep," by Charles Burnett, Tuesday, Sept. 16, 4 p.m.; "Maquilapolis," by Vicky Funari and Sergio de la Torre, Tuesday, Sept. 23, 4 p.m.; "A Family Gathering," by Lise Yasui, Tuesday, Sept. 30, 4 p.m.; and "Mala Noche," by Gus Van Sant, Wednesday, Oct. 1, 7 p.m.

WSU Vancouver is located at 14204 N.E. Salmon Creek Ave., east of the 134th Street exit from either I-5 or I-205, or via C-Tran bus service.

## Police Victim's Family Settles

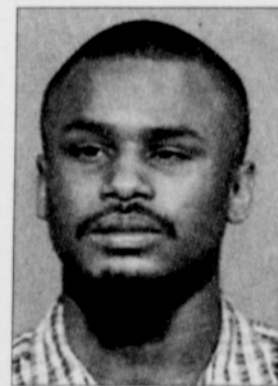
### Unarmed motorist's death sparked an outcry

The family of an African American man who lost his life when he was fatally shot by police during a traffic stop in north Portland four years ago has won a financial settlement from the city of Portland.

The City Council voted last week to pay \$350,000 to the son and mother of James Jahar Perez.

Portland Officer Jason Sery shot and killed Perez on March 28, 2004 in the St Johns neighborhood, claiming he saw him pull a clenched fist from his pocket, thinking he was pulling a gun out. Another officer, Sean Macomber then shot him with a Taser gun.

Police said they pulled Perez over after he failed to signal at least 100 feet before making a turn. They also said they followed Perez, 28, because his 1997 Mitsubishi with tinted windows and chrome wheels stood out as a luxury sedan in a working-class neighborhood.



James Jahar Perez

The shooting of the unarmed motorist sparked an outcry and charges of a fix in the grand jury probe.

In response, Multnomah County District Attorney Michael Schruck held a rare public inquest after the grand jury found no criminal wrongdoing by the officer.

Sery resigned from the Portland police later that year, saying he wanted to become a minister. He later took a job with Beaverton police.

The Perez lawsuit charged that the Portland Police Bureau's use-of-force policy was uncon-

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