



**Bongo Love**  
Zimbabwe musicians introduce Portland to 'Afrocoustics'  
See story, page A7

**Literacy President**  
Nobel laureate Toni Morrison and other writers welcome Barack Obama as a man of his own words  
See story, page A6



# The Portland Observer

'City of Roses'

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## Week in The Review

### New Attorney General Eyed



President-elect Obama has decided to tap Eric Holder as his attorney general, putting the veteran Washington lawyer in place to become the first African-American to head the Justice Department, according to two legal sources close to the presidential transition.

### Obama a Hit on 60 Minutes

CBS' "60 Minutes" had its highest overnight ratings in nearly a decade with Sunday's episode featuring Steve Kroft interviewing the president-elect and future first lady. Nielsen Media Research's preliminary estimate the show was seen by 24.5 million people on Sunday.

### Torture Charges Unlikely

Barack Obama's incoming administration is unlikely to bring criminal charges against officials who authorized or engaged in harsh interrogations of suspected terrorists during the George W. Bush presidency. Obama, who has criticized the use of torture, is being urged by some scholars and human rights groups to investigate possible war crimes.

### Automakers Plead for Billions

Detroit's Big Three automakers pleaded with Congress on Tuesday for a \$25 billion lifeline to save their teetering industrial titans from collapse, warning of economic catastrophe for the nation as well as their once-proud companies if they are denied.

### Pirates Hold Super-tanker

A hijacked Saudi super-tanker, carrying 100 million dollars of oil, anchored Tuesday off a notorious Somali pirate port as sea gangs struck again and seized a Hong Kong cargo ship. The biggest act of piracy yet by the marauding Somali bandits has stunned the international community.

### Jailers Surf Pornography

Multnomah County Sheriff Bob Skipper has disconnected the Internet from most of the county jails while his office investigates allegations that deputies used a work computer to view pornography. Jail employees will no longer be able to surf the Web from work computers unless they submit a written request.

### NBA Owner Cuban Charged



Federal regulators on Monday charged Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban with insider trading for allegedly using confidential information on a stock sale to avoid more than \$750,000 in losses.

### House Foreclosures Double

A recent report shows foreclosure rates in the Portland area have doubled in the last year, from .4 percent to .8 percent, still lower than the national average of 1.7 percent. Local home sales dropped by almost 20.3 percent, higher than the national average of 18.2 percent.

# Obama Changed Oregon Electorate

## Pollster cites inroads with all voting groups

BY JAKE THOMAS  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

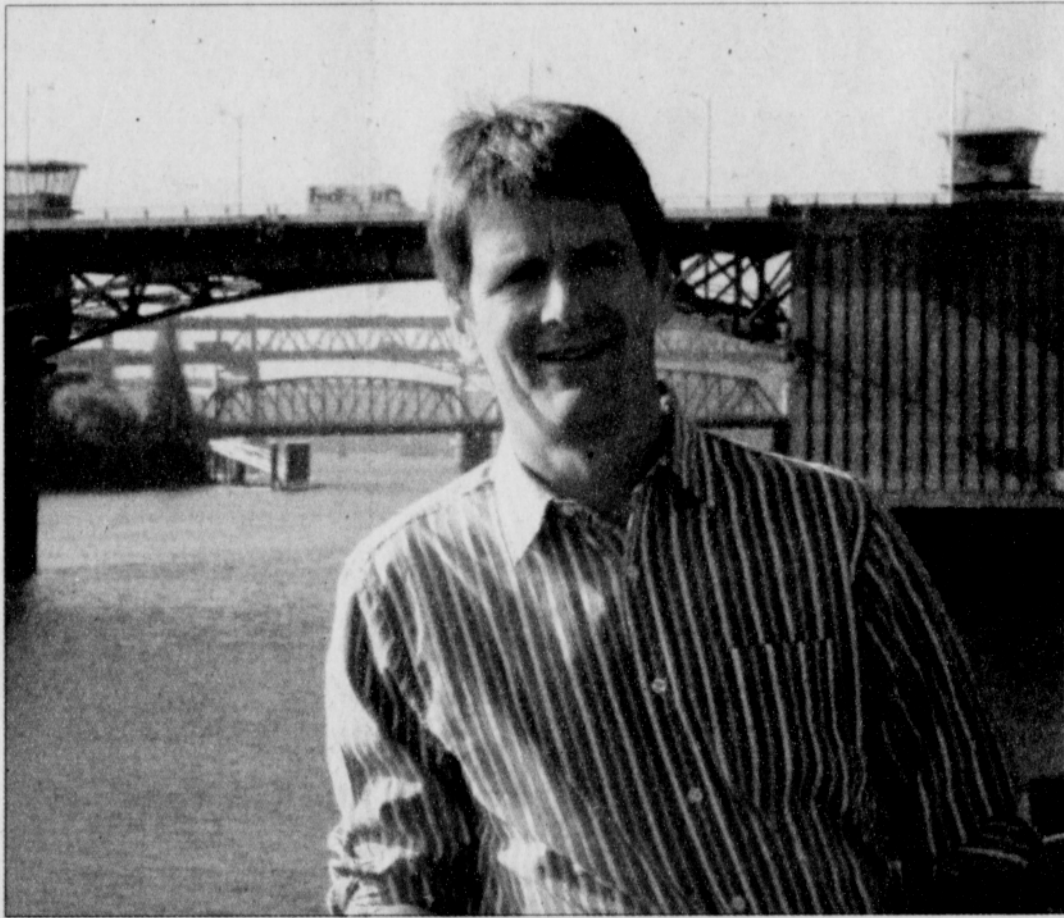
For decades, Tim Hibbitts has been watching Oregon elections about as close as humanly possible. But what he saw on Nov. 4 was unlike anything he has seen prior.

Very rarely have Oregonians of such varying social segments coalesced around a candidate in the way they did with President-elect Barack Obama, said Hibbitts. However, the new president has a rough road ahead of him.

Hibbitts, a 55-year-old partner at Davis, Hibbitts, and Midghall Research, Inc., is one of Oregon's most respected pollsters. From decades of crunching data from throughout the northwest Hibbitts has insights into the politics of the region that aren't easily rivaled.

Hibbitts said that Oregon and Obama was an easy match. He explained that the man's calm demeanor and substantial mental furniture made Oregonians ready to give the Illinois senator the state by a 16-point margin.

"Oregon's got an electorate that's tailor-made for an Obama-type candidacy," said Hibbitts, who points to former Colorado Sen. Gary Hart, who had similar attributes that helped him carry



Tim Hibbitts, one of Oregon's most respected pollsters, says Barack Obama's election victory was one of the most impressive he's ever witnessed. Hibbitts grew up in northeast Portland where he attended John Adams High School.

the state in the Oregon Democratic Presidential Primary in 1984.

However, Obama has qualities that Hart (and most other candidates) lack, said Hibbitts.

Hibbitts explained that Obama is rare in possessing impressive oratorical abilities, an easy-going demeanor that helps him connect with voters, and legions of fervent supporters.

"Normally a candidate gets one or two of those things," said

Hibbitts. "But they don't get them all," he added.

According to Hibbitts' data, the state didn't hinge on one particular social segment (i.e. the much bandied-about "working class whites.") Instead, Obama successfully wooed men, women, whites, blacks, and Hispanics.

Of note, is how the Illinois senator won big with middle-aged and older voters, Hibbitts said. It's also particularly impressive that

Obama received a bigger share of the white vote than former Democratic Presidential candidates Al Gore and John Kerry, added Hibbitts.

"That's no small achievement," said Hibbitts of the inroads Obama made with white voters.

Hibbitts also points to how Obama nearly won the traditionally Republican-leaning Deschutes County in central Oregon, and made another big blue

dent in cherry-red Jackson County of southern Oregon.

"Obama clearly changed the electorate to some degree," said Hibbitts, who explained that Obama brought out people who hadn't been politically engaged, and he won young voters by 30 points. Kerry won by only 10.

Hibbitts said that Obama walloped Sen. Hillary Clinton by 20 points in Oregon's May primary by tapping into frustrations over the Iraq War, and pointing to his early opposition to it. He then artfully pivoted his focus to the economy, which had soured in Oregon along with the rest of the country in time for the general election.

However, Hibbitts points out that the honeymoon could be short lived: Obama could stumble as he's putting together his administration, and will have to balance competing demands from the broad coalition that elected him. If he doesn't manage this task well, his support will crumble.

Hibbitts came to Oregon with his parents a teenager. He attended John Adams High School in northeast Portland. He went on to Portland State University, graduating with a degree in political science in 1976. Unsure of what to do next with his newly minted degree, Hibbitts started his own political consulting firm. Hibbitts found that he had an instinct for picking out trends in data, and his polling work quickly took off. He worked polling and political analysis at KATU, be-

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## Excitement Grows for a Barack Obama School

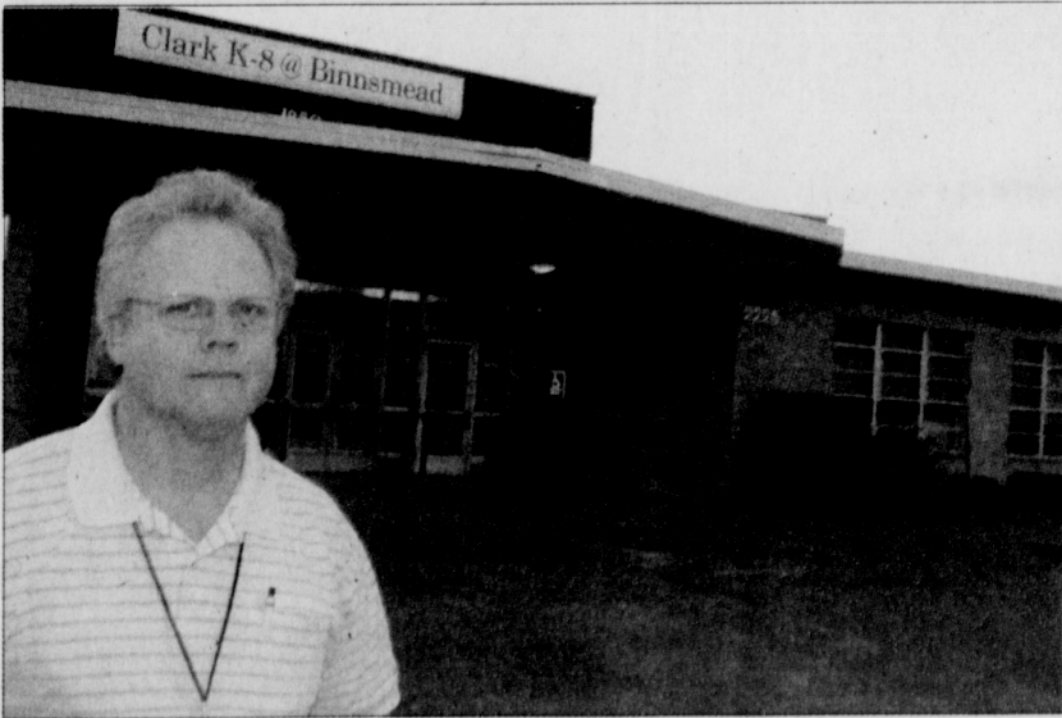


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

School volunteer Ralph Leftwich is generating lots of excitement over the suggestion to name a school in southeast Portland in honor of Barack Obama, the first African-American elected president.

## Name suggested for diverse elementary

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The excitement of Barack Obama's presidential election is spilling over to a school in southeast Portland that's looking for a new name.

Scores of students at Clark K-8 @ Binnsmead, a clumsy name that combines the former names of two schools which merged in the Montavilla neighborhood last summer, have stuffed a suggestion box advocating Barack Obama as the new name for their school at 2225 S.E. 87th Ave.

A day after the Nov. 4 election, they started chanting "Obama, Obama," says Ralph Leftwich, a school volunteer.

Leftwich was advocating for Obama as his first choice several weeks ago, but says he didn't want to jinx anything before the election.

Now he says the idea has caught on like wildfire.

The exceptionally diverse school with African American, Asian, white and Hispanic kids is midway through a re-naming process involving the school principal, parents, staff and students.

After a period of soliciting feedback on possible names, the school will narrow a list of three to five names to be sent the school superintendent for review and a decision by the Portland School Board.

According to Matt Shelby, school district spokesman, there is a process for naming schools in Portland. It requires

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## Oregon Loses 14,000 Jobs in One Month

### May get worse before improving

(AP)—Oregon's unemployment rate took a sharp jump in October with major industries shedding more than 14,000 jobs.

Oregon's seasonally adjusted jobless rate jumped from 6.4 percent in September to 7.3 percent last month, the highest jobless rate since August 2004 and well above the national average of 6.5 percent.

There are predictions that things could get worse before improving.

"It's horrible," said Tom Potiowsky, the state economist. "The speed at which this economy is going down is just very surprising," he told The Oregonian.

Potiowsky expects the state unemployment rate to reach or exceed 8 percent before this recession is over. "We really aren't going to see better growth until 2010. Oregon will suffer more than Washington," he predicted.

Last month's unemployment rate translated to 134,096 Oregonians on the jobless rolls — an increase of more than 40,000 over this time a year ago.

The job losses were spread across most major industries.

- Manufacturing cut 5,000 jobs at a time of year when a loss of only 500 is expected.

- Transportation equipment manufacturing cut 1,500 jobs.

- Computer and electronic product manufacturing cut 1,200 jobs and is down

3,100 jobs since October 2007.

- In a key sector, construction employment shrank again in October, dropping 2,000 for the month, more than double the typical seasonal decline of 900.

Construction employment has been on a steady decline since July 2007, when employment stood at 105,800. Since then, construction is down 13,900 jobs or 13.1 percent.

The state's widespread job losses have retailers bracing for a lackluster holiday shopping season that could result in reduced hiring of part-time workers at stores and malls, said Art Ayre, the state employment economist.

In recent years it's been common for retailers to add a net 10,000 workers statewide from September through De-

ember, he said, "but this year it's likely to be lower, possibly around 5,000."

The state's political leaders are watching employment trends, too, for further signs of a worsening economy that could result in a continuing drop in tax revenue to fund state services and programs.

Democratic Gov. Ted Kulongoski said Monday's jobless figures are a "call to action" for the state to keep investing in renewable energy and other sectors that can create jobs for the future.

He again called on lawmakers to approve his \$1 billion transportation package, which includes a 2-cent-a-gallon gas tax increase, to help pay for road and bridge improvements and create thousands of family wage jobs.