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Foul Play in Jackson Death?

Michael Jackson's father raises new concerns about son's death
See inside, page A6

Free Food!

A new neighborhood program helps people stretch food budget
See inside, page A3



The Portland Observer

'City of Roses'

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www.portlandobserver.com

Volume XXXIV, Number 28

Wednesday • July 15, 2009

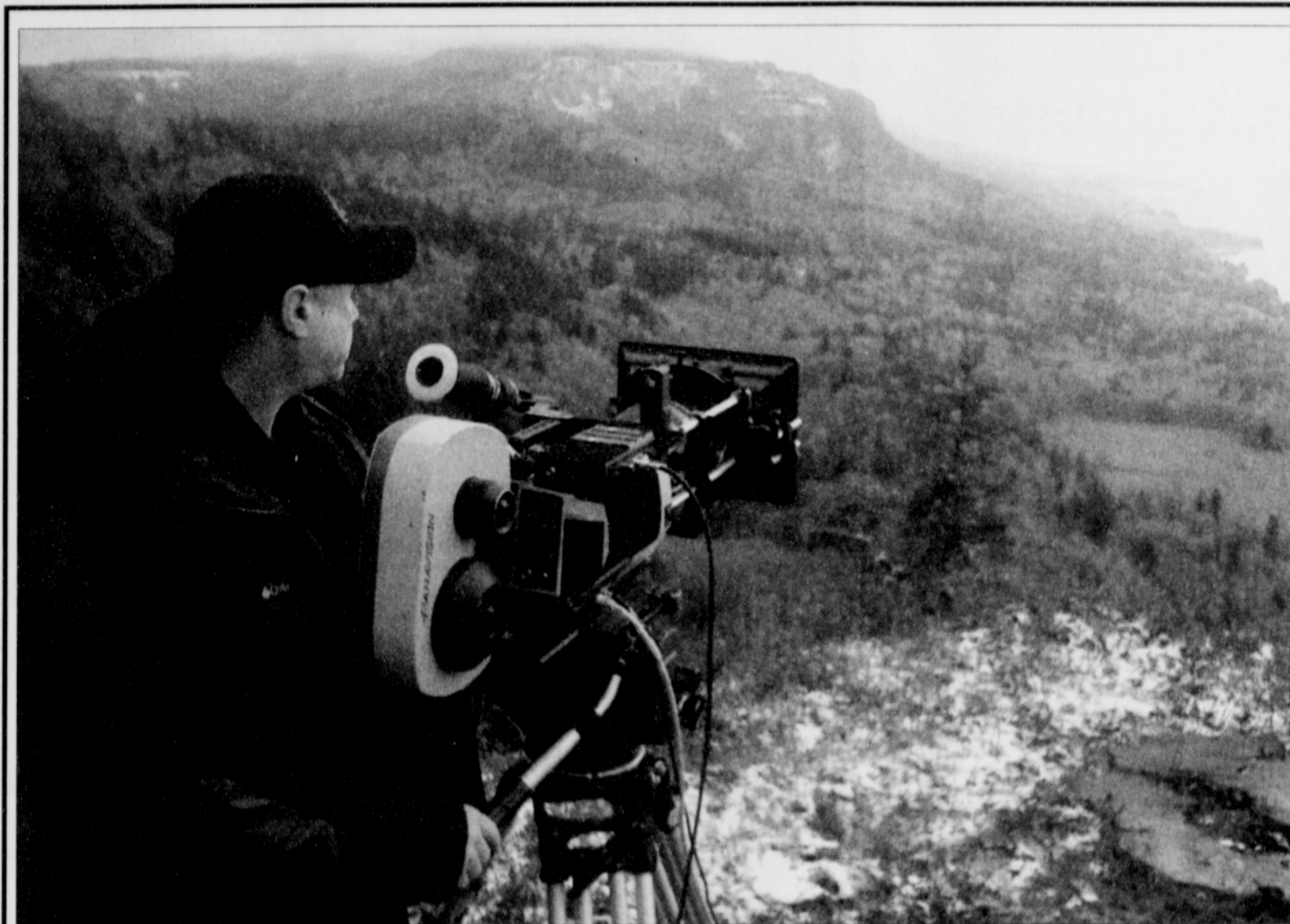


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF FILM & TELEVISION

A cameraman films an overlook in Oregon. The state's scenic beauty and geographic diversity bring in film and television producers. So does millions of dollars of taxpayer money.

Star Struck? Lawmakers expand a film incentive program during hard times

Oregonians might recognize the landscape present in movies like "Twilight," which were filmed in the state.

But they might not notice another feature of such movies: they helped pay for them. Since 2003, the state of Oregon has doled out

millions of dollars each year to movie and television producers, in hopes they'll choose the Beaver State as the location for their next production.

Last legislative session, lawmakers approved a bill expanding Oregon's film incentive pro-

gram, while slashing services to the poor. Supporters applaud the bill while it awaits the governor's signature, claiming that the sweeteners offered to film makers are critical to luring

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West Coast Hip Hop Awards This Saturday



Sir Mix A Lot

The Jackson Armory, located at 6255 NE Cornfoot Road, will bump this Saturday as it hosts the West Coast Hip Hop Awards, which seeks to honor the innovations and accomplishments of West Coast hip hop artists past and present.

The awards will pay tribute to both major and independent artists, and will feature performances by MC Ren, Sir Mix A Lot, Celly Cel, T Nutty and others.

The event will also present an opportunity for up-and-coming local artists. Three major labels will have booths set up, as will a number of independent labels, so bring a demo or a DVD.

Local hip hop artists are encouraged to register to perform short sets (10 minutes) throughout the show.

Low riders from all over the West Coast will also show up to show off.

Students under 12 get in with a can of food for needy families. Admission is \$25 for ages 13-18, and \$40 for ages 19 and up.

Tickets are available at www.ticketwest.com

Max Infill Stalls Again Block sits idle for years

BY JAKE THOMAS
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Nearly a decade ago, when the housing market was booming and economy humming, the Portland Development Commission hatched plans to erect brand new mixed-use structure featuring a patch of condominiums, rentals, and retail space on the corner of North Killingsworth Street and Interstate Avenue.

But with the housing market in a sag and credit frozen, the commission is still barreling along with its plans, even though questions abound whether or not the project is feasible or necessary.

In 2000, the PDC began acquiring properties on the northeast corner of North Killingsworth Street and Interstate Avenue for a project dubbed, "Killingsworth Station." The commission planned to use subsidies to woo a developer into erecting an \$18 million, mixed-use structure that would maximize use of the new Interstate Max Light Rail line.

PDC shelled out over \$1 million in land acquisitions. It razed several homes and an upholstery shop for the project.

However, Killingsworth Station hit a snag in 2005 when developer Max Kemper bailed on the project, citing rising construction costs and an un-



PHOTO BY JAKE THOMAS/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A sign marks a temporary flower garden across from the Killingsworth Max Light Rail Station where an entire block was demolished years ago for a Portland Development Commission transit oriented development that has never materialized.

stable market.

"I guess in the first go-around, the ambitions for the site were more than the market could bear," said Matthew Collier, project manager for the PDC. After the project's initial collapse,

the PDC stepped back to retool the project by scaling back on the size, nixing all rental properties, and pulling in a new developer, Winkler Development Corp. PDC's latest vision for

Killingsworth Station is similar to the last. The government agency envisions a four-story, mixed-used, transit-oriented, structure. But this one will feature 54 one-bedroom condominiums, three two-bedroom condo-

miniums, and 9,000 square feet of commercial space.

However, the start date for construction has been delayed several times. Now shovels won't hit the dirt until March, which the PDC blames on poor market conditions and lack of credit.

Sixty percent of the new condos will go for \$160,000 to \$180,000, which Collier explained are geared toward people making 80 percent of the median income for the Portland area, and will be well-suited to first-time homebuyers.

Making the project happen won't be cheap, and questions remain if it's feasible or even necessary.

According to a PDC board report on Killingsworth Station, the commission will offer up \$4 million in loans and grants to the developer and financial assistance to people buying the new condos. Additionally, the developer will be granted the land valued at over \$1 million.

PDC justifies the project on grounds that it will provide good housing for the up-and-coming neighborhood, and it'll be a positive presence once the economy rebounds.

But since the recent housing col-

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Week in The Review

Grilling Begins

The Senate Judiciary Committee began hearings this week on the nomination of Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court. Sotomayor, the first Hispanic nominated to the nation's



highest court, began fielding questions over past judicial decisions and the controversial "Wise Latina" remark.

Bill Clinton Backs Marriage Equality

Speaking at the Campus Progress National Conference in Washington DC last week, former President Bill Clinton said he favored same-sex marriage. His comment is



a departure from his previous stance on the issue. As president he signed the Defense of Marriage Act.

Oregon Unemployment Bottoms Out

Oregon's unemployment rate for June held steady at 12.2 percent for June, the same as May. The ranks of the unemployed have steadily swelled in Oregon ever since the economy began tanking. It eventually became the state with the highest unemployment rate. The latest numbers may mean the

state might be on the road to recovery.



Potter Back Recall

Former Mayor Tom Potter came out in support of the recall effort of his successor, Mayor Sam Adams. Potter made the announcement on his wife's Facebook page.

Franken Sworn In

Al Franken wore a straight face last week when he was sworn in as junior senator from Minnesota. Franken, a

former Saturday Night Live writer and comedian, was finally seated after a marathon senate race.

39 years of community service