



The



**Grammy Winner
Welcome**
*Esperanza
Spalding draws
crowd to PSU*
See page 3

Hoop Star

*Krystal Forthan
gains appointment
on two high school
all-American teams*
See page 17



Portland Observer

41
years of
community service

Volume XXXXI, Number 9

www.portlandobserver.com
Wednesday • March 02, 2011

Established in 1970
Committed to Cultural Diversity



PHOTO BY CLIFF PFENNING/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Angela and Jonathan Park are giving the Soul of Portland a new look by opening Yummy Mongolian BBQ at 7330 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Betting on the Neighborhood

Former Yam Yam's will re-open as Mongolian BBQ

BY CLIFF PFENNING
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Near the corner of Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Lombard Street, a pair of hearty business owners is preparing to open a family-style restaurant based on the optimistic view that the surrounding area can support it.

Forget about a tough image of the neighborhood, Jonathan and Angela Park are excited about the city's economic future and the ongoing revitalization of the busy street, which is promoted by the Portland Development Commission as "The Soul of Portland."

The one thing they're doing different is

paying for the property and four months of building renovations without any financial assistance from the PDC.

The former Yam Yam's BBQ site—a long-time neighborhood staple—doesn't fall within the governmental agency's Urban Renewal District which was set up to help businesses along the thoroughfare. That district ends at Rosa Parks Boulevard, less than a dozen blocks from the restaurant at 7339 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

The Park's Yummy Mongolian BBQ is set to open in the next two weeks with a unique and family oriented business plan.

"We're not going to serve alcohol, so we're aiming for families," Jonathan Park said Friday as the renovation of the building entered its final phase. "We're going to have a Lego area for kids to play, which we think will be attractive to families. We know what people say about this area, but we think it's

changing and it's ready for this kind of restaurant.

"Our bank, our financing, has looked at our plan and they're 100 percent behind what we're doing. Owning the land is a big part of that because we don't have to pay rent."

The business is across the street from Teriyaki Heaven, which features Oregon Lottery games and serves alcohol, and one block south of a Taco Bell, which doesn't serve alcohol, but has a drive-thru.

The Parks have looked into opening a Portland restaurant since buying Yummy Mongolian Grill in Vancouver, five years ago. They checked into sites in Tigard, Milwaukie and East Portland, but finally settled on MLK because of the availability of the property and its distance from other

continued ▼ on page 4

On NE ALBERTA ST Street

Last Thursday Consensus Still in Limbo

A plan to manage festive crowds eludes officials

BY CARI HACHMANN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

As soon as the sun parts clouds over northeast Alberta Street, so to emits the controversy of the on-going celebrations of Last Thursday, along with the renewed expectancy of rowdy crowds that will begin to accumulate along the bar-lined streets.

But one year after trying to address issues with the monthly festivities, a consensus on how to manage the crowds is still in limbo.

In recent years, Last Thursday has seemingly too often spun out of control as residents complain about an event turned frat party with increased noise levels coming from too many inebriated patrons, illegal parking, and morning after messes of trash and vomit.

Mayor Sam Adams and City Commissioner Amanda Fritz sat down with several Last Thursday stakeholders for public testimony a year ago. Hundreds of residents, business people, neighborhood activists, vendors and attendees, showed up to report the good, bad, and ugly sides of the event.

While some petitioned for more control and city authority over the event, others defended its organic nature, seeking aligned yet unstructured management.

But after 12 months of trying, no consensus has been found. The stagnated problem lies in the fact that Last Thursday is not run by a single entity, and no one party has taken full responsibility for its management.

Roy Kaufman, spokesperson for Adams, says the mayor's public safety director has

continued ▼ on page 10