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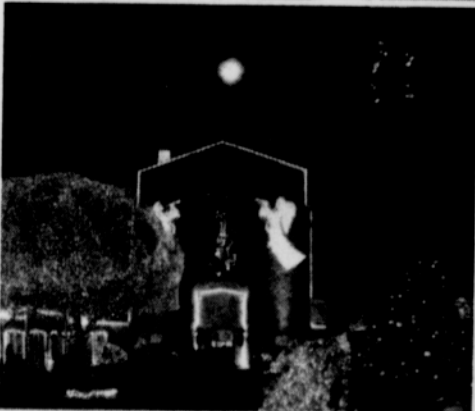
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What's on your list today?

LOCAL NEWS

'NORTHBOUND'

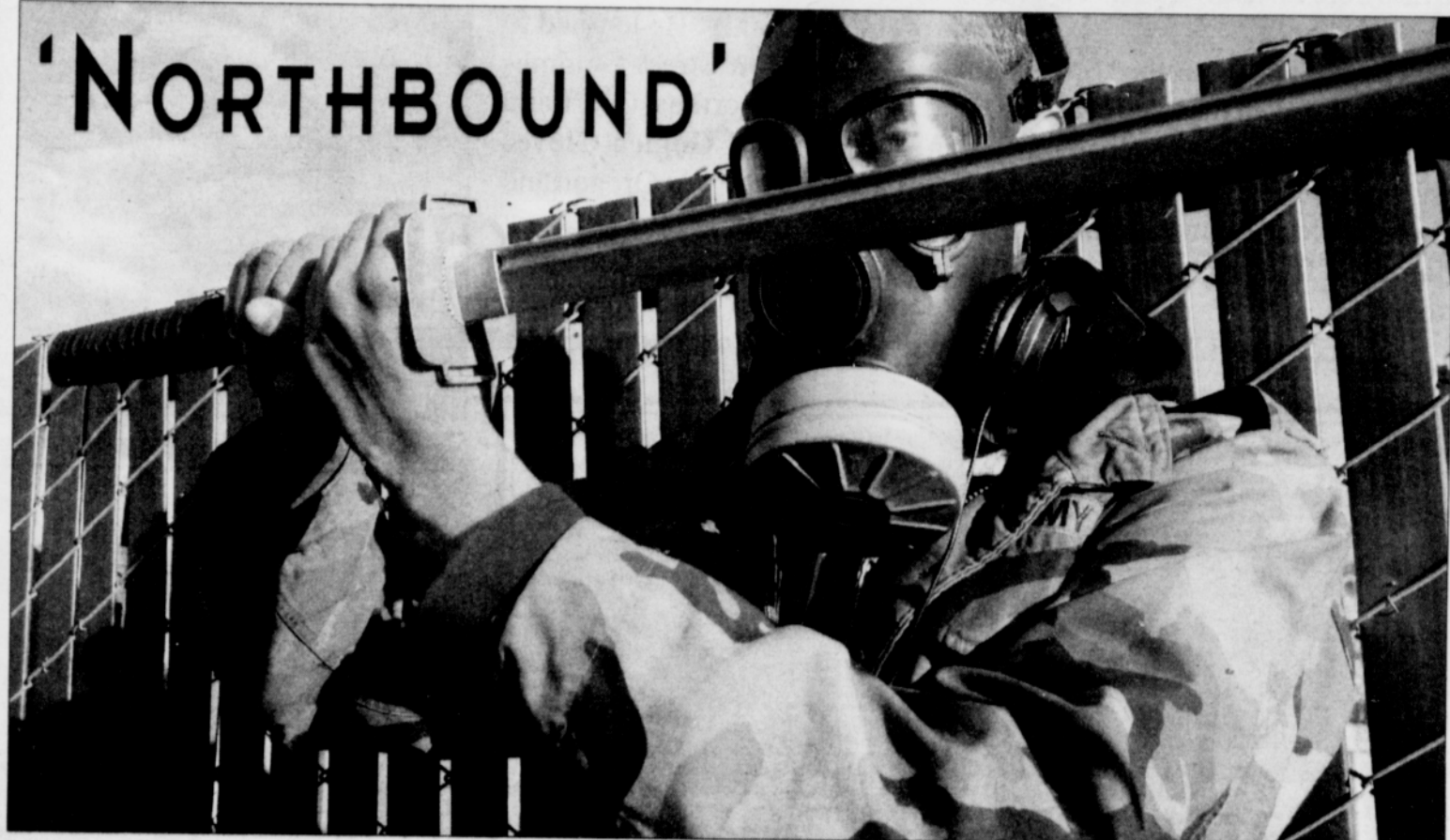


PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

North Portland rapper Glenn Waco, whose real name is Dracey Ware, wears a gas mask he purchased from Israel as a symbol in his music, filtering negativity into positivity. He also calls himself the 'Dirty North Kid' a young hip hop voice who is flipping stereotypes about his urban surroundings.

Young rapper voices a different side of the Rose City

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A collage of news reports detailing shootings in north Portland with a haunting chant of "bang! bang! bang!" is how Glenn Waco, an upcoming young rapper in the city's hip-hop scene introduces listeners to his second project, fittingly titled "Northbound."

Untrained ears may hear glorification in such a chant, but a closer listen to the entire project reveals the tale of a 21-year-old man balancing the struggles and joys of coming from what was once treated as a forgotten part of town.

"I want people to look deeper

than the music, and really piece together the story. I don't wanna give away too much," says Waco, whose real name is Dracey Ware. "I like ambiguous art that allows people to make up their own conclusions, and interpretations of stuff."

A kid that was bound to a small St. Johns neighborhood apartment with up to 13 people living in it at a time, he says life here wasn't always easy, but there was always love.

Northbound, will sound familiarly unique to Portlanders, with references to the city and state scattered throughout the tape.

A good example in on his track 'Summer Madness' a temperature-

rising and introspective re-invention of the Will Smith hit 'Summertime.' Waco raps on Oregon's history with the KKK, and gives nods to streets like Fessenden, Greeley and Alberta:

*"Last Thursdays on Alberta's always full of f*****g drama. There's no escape/ Fights with hoodrats and they mamas. Hippies fill up they pockets (ah do business). N*****s fill up the squadron cars to prison. That neighborhood used to be ours back in the day. Tales from the Crip Lil' Smurf lingers on the K."*

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School District to Raise Benson Cap

Portland School Superintendent Carole Smith announced Monday that the school district will expand the cap on Benson High School's enrollment with a final decision coming with the New Year. The school board also approved plans Monday for the remodel of Roosevelt and Franklin high schools.

Smith said multiple options are on the table to expand access district-wide to the career-technical education focus at Benson while continuing to support the strength of all neighborhood high schools.

"As part of our report on high school system design, we said we would look at geographic enrollment adjustments in year three, which we are in," Smith said. "And we know that there is strong community demand to increase access to Benson's programs."

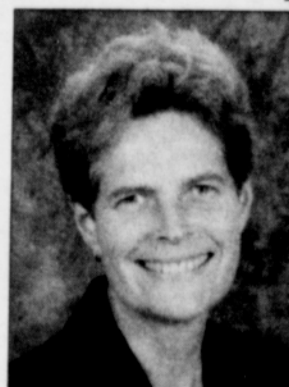
The approval of master plans for a modernized

Franklin and Roosevelt high schools keep both projects on track for construction to begin in the summer of 2015 with completion anticipated for the fall of 2017.

The plans determine the overall layout of a school's learning spaces such as the gymnasium, theater, common areas and classrooms. They preserve historically significant portions of each school's buildings while adding new buildings to promote 21st century learning, officials said.

The school board also voted Monday to approve a new K-5 charter school in north Portland's Kenton neighborhood with the goal of closing the achievement gap for students of color.

One goal of the Kairos PDX Public Charter School will be to eliminate race and income as predictors of success, said Marsha Williams, one of the school's organizers.



Carole Smith