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Asthma Rates Increase

Activists work to raise awareness of air quality issues

Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

For asthma sufferers nothing is like the panic of an attack – you can't breathe, you can't control your body. If the attack is really bad, you can die.

The Centers for Disease Control reported this month that asthma rates are up for every demographic category they track – but it's rising fastest among African American children, 17 percent of whom live with asthma.

For activists around the country working to bring attention to the issue, the current state of environmental research and regulation are standing in the way.

"People know what's wrong with them – everybody has a nebulizer, everybody has asthma, they're preaching for cancer survivors in their church or in their mosques," said the Rev. Lennox Yearwood this week. "They know they have a problem, but they aren't connecting that sometimes with corporations who are not being regulated the way they should be."

Yearwood, founder of the Hip-Hop Caucus and the subject of a new documentary film on the Discovery Network, was in the Northwest last weekend for Seattle's Green Festival.

"It doesn't matter what color you are, Black or white, or brown or yellow – and mainly those in urban communities, people don't have the information or aren't quite connecting the dots."

A 2009 report in USA Today the newspaper drafted researchers and scientists at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, and the University of Maryland in College Park to dig into how deeply children across the country have been exposed to industrial pollution at their schools.

The report also named the nearby corporations specifically responsible for the air pollution emissions – as a separate factor from the car exhaust generated from the

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SEEZNINS



PHOTO BY HELEN SILVUS

Sam and Andre behind the bar at Seeznin's on 82nd Avenue

Life's Good At This Sports Bar & Grill

Former SEI mentor is serving up quality food, drink, entertainment

By Helen Silvus
Of The Skanner News

Sam Thompson says he wants his brand new sports bar and party lounge Seeznin's to be a friendly community space – kind of like a Portland 'Cheers'. Families and kids are welcome until 6 pm. Playing dominoes or card games is encouraged.

"I wanted it to be a place where people could come and hang out with me like it was my own home," he says.

This home sports eight television screens, a fully-stocked

bar, a menu of great eats and live entertainment Thursday through Sunday. Then there's Sam himself: your neighborhood youth worker, standup comedian and single guy around town turned bar owner and businessman.

"Running a business is like studying for an MBA," he says. "You're learning about everything all the time."

To give Seeznin's the true Portland vibe, Thompson has decorated the bar with articles, photos and basketball jerseys that showcase successful, home-grown athletes, such as former NBA star Terrell

Brandon; Terrence Jones the Jefferson High standout, who now plays for the University of Kentucky; Aaron Miles, who played for Kansas and now for the Reno Bighorns; and Michael Lee, another Jefferson High hoops star who went to Kansas, played in Europe and now coaches at Gardner-Webb University in North Carolina. And it's not all basketball. Check out Ndamukong Suh, the Detroit Lions defensive tackle featured in Weiden and Kennedy's new Chrysler ad. Like Suh, Thompson graduated from Grant High School.

That's why he painted his building Grant blue, an unmissable bolt of color on Northeast 82nd Avenue, just down the hill from Madison High School.

After graduating from Grant, Sam went to Columbia Basin College on a basketball scholarship, then to Grossmont College in San Diego, where he took business classes. He moved to Indiana before finishing, he says, along with his good friend Fred Jones, a Sam Barlow High and University of

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Metro Council Approves New District Map

Changes mostly affect representation of Maywood Park, Happy Valley

Last week, Metro Councilors approved changes to the regional government's representation lines.

According to staff, the new map, which shifted the government's six districts to meet the population movements catalogued under the 2010 census, won't change much in terms of daily operations.

Unlike districts at the state or federal level, Metro does not allocate resources

based upon population concentration within district boundaries, according to staff speaking on background.

Some of the changes include moving the city of Happy Valley into District 2; the city of Maywood Park and other portions of East Portland were moved from District 1 to North Portland's District 5; and the eastern boundaries of District's 4 and 5 now follow the boundaries of the city of Beaverton.

The council also sought to maintain the current "communities of interest" which include communities of 15,000 or less, as well as regional centers, town centers, school districts, neighborhood associations and organizations and other established community organizations

The new districts will take effect in

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