

Clean Slate

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SHIELDS: INSURANCE REGULATION AGENDA CONTINUES

Sen. Chip Shields said this week that although the divided House of Representatives made Salem a contentious place this session, he's not giving up on his quest to increase public oversight in insurance industry practices.

"There was a sense that we needed to find compromise and come together to solve Oregon's problems as best we could," he said. "There were certainly some disappointments, but I think that particularly the North and Northeast Portland delegation — Representative Kotek, Rep. Frederick and I — came together to get some good things done."

All of Shields' bills — to require public hearings on proposed insurance cost hikes and to bring the industry under regulation of the Unlawful Trade Practices Act for the first time — were put down, largely by the targeted efforts of lobbyists.

Nevertheless Shields says he will stay focused on making insurance companies justify their rate increases, and he will also keep working to remove the exemption that insurance companies enjoy from the state's unfair trade practices act — a situation he says hits small businesses and government agencies particularly hard.

"Insurance is the only line of business that has a free pass," he said.

"I was just looking through the state budget and the Oregon Department of Corrections is increasing its health care budget for inmates by 5 percent."

"I think what's great about Project Clean Slate is that it's bipartisan," said Sen. Chip Shields, who helped pass state funding for it during the last session as a member of the House Ways and Means Committee.

"If you want to be tough on offenders or have more of a rehabilitation focus, either way I think Republicans and Democrats agree that people should be able to get on with their lives and make a living once they've atoned for their mistakes."

Jay says the African American Chamber of Commerce's state lobbyists Gary Oxley and Evan Jarvis were key in securing bipartisan support for state funding — in a budget session that saw many worthwhile programs go without.

"Some time we strike out and some times we hit a home run, but if we aren't at the table we are the appetizer," he said.

"I think that Roy Jay and the Board of Directors of Project Clean Slate really get the major kudos for just telling their story, and I think that at the end of the day their outcome really spoke for themselves," Shields said this week.

Diversity Wall



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

The 25-foot-long commemorative wall was unveiled Wednesday June 29. It chronicles significant events in OHSU's history that recognize diversity within the university's workforce. "OHSU is committed to being a diverse organization," said Norwood Knight-Richardson, M.D., M.A., M.B.A., vice president and chief administrative officer at OHSU. "This week we will observe OHSU's past milestones in becoming an organization that values diversity on several levels. These milestones include the many firsts that helped transform the makeup of OHSU's workforce. In addition, because we are an academic institution, we also celebrate the diversity of ideas that are generated by an organization that seeks to be inclusive." About 100 people attended the ceremony.

Event

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start lending a hand."

Zylawy, who died in a traffic accident on his way to work in January, 2008, was one of the most respected officers in the Portland Police Bureau, with many friends

in the Northeast Precinct where he worked for almost 17 years.

Said to have earned the respect even of the individuals he arrested, Zylawy's memorial service was held at the Maple Mallory Apartments in Northeast Portland even though he lived in Vancouver. He was known affectionately to all as "Z-Man."

Also in his honor, the Portland Police Bureau every

year gives "Z-Man" full-tuition scholarships for students at De La Salle North Catholic High School. Collins says his group is looking for donations of any kind of books in good condition, from children's to teens and adult books.

The noon party includes prizes and giveaways, hamburgers and hotdogs, community awards, and live music. More volunteers for the tournament and community clean-up are always welcomed.

This year's event honors long-time community coach Phil Walden

For more information about Officer Mark Zylawy and the Z-Man Scholarship, go to www.zmanscholarship.com. To volunteer at Re-Tilling the Soil, call 503-839-8676.

Z-Man Basketball Tournament and Service Day July 16

Garden

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Grow assists.

"I have never seen so many excited, engaged students," Patterson said. "It's like they're discovering science for the first time. They're discovering laws that can't be

tions," she said.

Dan Bielenberg, who runs the program at Santiam Correctional Institution, says he sees "the light switch go on" when inmates take the class and get hands-on training in the gardens, which are all organic.

"My expectation is that they'll make their community a better place," he said of gardener inmates when they're released.

The gardens are also making the prisons better places.

More than about 60 percent of the produce from gardens is used in the prison

'Lettuce Grow' Brings Gardens, Classes to Oregon Prisons

broken. Mother nature."

And just last month, the class at Columbia River graduated their first Master Gardener, who earned a 97 percent on the exam. She says that the class at Columbia River has formed their own study group and one inmate student has created a bulletin board where he posts articles and other information about gardening.

They've encouraged inmates to bring in tough questions about gardening for Master Gardeners to answer — and then showing them without internet connections in the institutions how to go about connecting with other Master Gardeners to get the answers.

"Inmates bring in some really tough ques-

cafeteria. The rest is donated to the Oregon Food Bank. Ahlstrom said without Lettuce Grow volunteers to pick up the extra produce to take for the Feed the Hungry program, there wouldn't be a way to make the

Program allows inmates to produce food for themselves, local food banks

delivery. Before the program began operating at Columbia River, he'd make a call out to other state agencies to pick up the extra produce.

"There are years when I've grown way too much," he said.

Last year, with a nearly non-existent summer, crop yields were down by several thousand pounds. This year, the garden project administrators are all hoping for more food — for the inmate's stomachs as well as the community.

Right now, Ahlstrom is growing a lot of vegetables that will store well such as beans, zucchini, and squash. Over at Santiam, Bielenberg and the inmates are growing garlic, potatoes, chives, shallots, tomatoes, and have experimental plots with corn, beans and squash.

Looking forward, Patterson would like to expand the program to more prisons. Other prisons have their own gardens and she'd like to assist them by expanding those gardens and the Master Gardener classes. She says the nonprofit organization needs more volunteers, including an executive director who could write grants and help raise money from the community. She's also trying to develop a protocol for establishing a garden

program for prisons in other states.

"How many cherry tomatoes do you need to grow to give each inmate one tomato," she asked.

With 60,000 pounds of food produced for Lettuce Grow institutions and 20,000 given to local food banks, it seems this nonprofit has it figured out.

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