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Big River Float July 29

Advocates say Willamette is cleaner, thousands agree

By Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

Last year, Willamette River advocate Will Levenson spearheaded the Big Float, a first-time event that saw more than a thousand people cross the river on inner tubes and other floatables.

For this year's Big Float, which is Sunday, July 29, Levenson is thinking bigger.

"This community is going to really start caring about the Willamette," he says. "It's going to be more than the river you drive over - it's going to be the river of fun and enjoyment."

A benefit for the Willamette Riverkeeper, the Big Float 2012 is expected to attract up to 3,000 people, and organizers hope to break the world record for the number of people simultaneously floating in "water rings" that are connected together "with something other than hands."

The event is \$5, and this year life vests are required for all participants in addition to your "personal floatation devices."

Levenson says that there is no current on this part of the river and that the water is warm, "like a lake."

Registration kicks off starting at 10 a.m. Sunday morning, on the east side of the Willamette River near the Hawthorne Bridge. At 12:30 p.m. a parade of inner-tubers walks across the bridge, then the group puts into the water on the west side after each participant gets their water gear safety-checked.

A barge holding a live band is docked in the center of the river for the event; participants are expected to spend an hour and a half in the water as they paddle their floats across to the other side.

On the east side of the bridge is a community after-party with food carts, a beer garden by the Kona Brewing Company, and children's activities by the Confederated Tribes of the Grande Ronde.

Early weather reports say to expect partial

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FOOD AND FAITH

The Farm to Congregation Program is focused on increasing access to healthy, affordable produce for everyone while providing opportunity for small farmers, especially new and immigrant farmers. It is one of several projects of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Interfaith Food and Farms Partnership and includes the weekly Farmers Market at Muslim Community Center, 3801 NE MLK Blvd, Fridays 1:30-2:30 p.m. The little market is open to the public and features produce, berries, and honey from Great River Farm on Sauvie Island. For more information, contact Alison Warren at awarren@emoregon.org. cut line



PHOTO BY SUSAN FRIED

Effort to Promote Breastfeeding

ICTC plays key role in bringing moms together for focus groups

Julie Sullivan-Springhetti
Of Multnomah County

Most Oregon moms breastfeed their babies. But African American parents stop breastfeeding sooner than others and fewer choose to start breastfeeding at all. Now a community health partnership is working to understand why.

Parents of children under age 5 are invited to a series of focus groups on barriers to breastfeeding in the African-American community.

Although breastfeeding rates among Oregon's African American population exceed those at the national level, the percentage of those who start breastfeeding and continue breastfeeding to one-year is lower than Oregon's population as a whole, according to state surveys.

The focus groups are a collaboration of the International Center for Traditional Childbearing, Women, Infants and Children (WIC) program of Multnomah County, the Urban

League of Portland and the Healthy Birth Initiative, Multnomah County.

"We want the black community to see breastfeeding as everyone's business," said Shafia M. Monroe, the International Center for Traditional Childbearing president and a midwife for nearly 30 years. "Some people think it's personal. You bring it up and everyone becomes quiet. But there needs to be more dialogue. We all care about our babies."

The Center will host two

focus groups in Portland with women and an event for men.

"We know the many benefits mother's milk has on the growth and development of the baby, and it's free!" said David Brown, WIC program manager. "Breast truly is best."

Jamaal Jensen, owner of Champion Barbershop, is one of the partners hosting the men's focus group. He says men have questions about how to support the mother while breastfeeding.

Health experts recommend

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Jordan Center Gala a Family Event

Retired parks official to be celebrated with food, music, fun

By Helen Silvis
Of The Skanner News

Ice cream, music and family activities will headline the festivities at a rededication celebration for The Charles Jordan Community Center. The celebration is set for 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. Sunday, July 22 at 9009 N. Foss Ave. Open to everyone, the event is free and will be followed by a con-

cert in neighboring McCoy Park.

Portland City Council voted unanimously to honor Jordan for his contributions to Portland. As a twice-elected city commissioner, and later as Parks director, Jordan literally changed Portland's landscape. During the 14 years he was Parks director, the bureau added 44 new parks and natural areas.

There's not a place where you can look in

this city and not see his footprint," says Michelle Harper, who worked with Jordan at the City and at Portland Parks.

"Portland's living room, Pioneer Courthouse Square, would not have existed if not for his leadership. And he was the first to call it Portland's living room. In so many ways, he was ahead of his time."

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