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Register Now to Vote

Multnomah Dems open office on NE Killingsworth Street

Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

Where were you on the night of Nov. 4, 2008? Hundreds of Portlanders thronged outside the Obama for President office on Northeast Killingsworth Street, dancing, shooting off fireworks and driving in circles around the building – where the longest high-five line in Portland history slapped the palms of auto passengers circling the block to celebrate the election of the nation’s first Black president.

Colleen Davis and Roseta Akin – who on Monday opened the Democrats’ Northeast neighborhood Voter Registration Depot – want to bring that sense of excitement back to their storefront office, right across the street from the old headquarters.

The Voter Registration Depot, at 1615 NE Killingsworth (inside the old One Stop Records shop) will be open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. - 8 p.m., and Sundays from 1 to 8 p.m.

There you will find pins, bumper stickers and lawn signs for sale; voter registration information; and volunteer training.

On Sept. 9 the Depot hosts a grand opening celebration from 3 to 6 p.m., with refreshments and sign up sheets. Oregon Rep. Lew Frederick will kick off his new office there as well.

After Oct. 16, the entire operation shifts from a voter registration hub to a get-out-the-vote operation where you will be able to find “slate cards” to help you decide which candidates and ballot measures to vote for.

“People have been coming in, getting to know our office and all the things we’re planning,” says Akin.

“For the next six weeks we would like to register 75-100 people a day, until Oct. 16, which is the deadline,” Davis said.

Akin and Davis met at the Obama headquarters in 2008, and they share many happy memories of the experience – as well as strategies on how to register the maxi-

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DNC LIVE COVERAGE



PHOTO BY JOHN MORENO

Delegates openly wept with emotion as Michelle Obama headlined the Democratic National Convention kickoff in Charlotte, N.C. The president is expected to speak Thursday, in his official acceptance of the Democratic Party nomination. Catch live reports on the convention with video and photos on our website, www.TheSkanner.com.

Health Insurance Rate Hikes

Industry squares off against critics on public disclosures

Bruce Poinsette
Of The Skanner News

Regence BlueCross BlueShield’s announcement that some of its customers will face an average rate increase of 8.9 percent, starting Dec. 1, has drawn the ire of some consumer and small business advocates.

“I’m very concerned that Regence refused to try to justify its premium increase in public,” says Oregon Sen. Chip Shields, chair of the Consumer and

Small Business Protection Committee.

Regence’s rate increase marks the latest in a battle between consumer advocates, health insurance providers and the Oregon Insurance Division over the transparency of the rate increase process.

The Insurance Division recently approved a 12.2 percent increase for Providence Health Plans. Regence and Providence originally requested 9.6 and 15.7 percent increases, respectively.

The decision is part of a new approach to pricing health insurance premiums based on hospital based networks.

For example, Portland area residents can pick from one of five networks, depending on what suits them the best. Cheryl Martinis, the communications director for the Insurance Division, says they will be listing the different prices and rate increases on their site.

“We think, actually, the approach to pricing will foster transparency by showing people

the variance in rates that exist among hospitals and doctor groups that provide the same services,” she says. “We think that kind of transparency may actually help drive down medical costs.”

In the case of Regence, individual members who purchase health insurance on their own will be the only ones subject to the increase. According to Scott Burton, of Regence Strategic Communications, this will only affect 52,000 members out the

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\$100,000 Grant Will Fund Youth Leaders

Multnomah Youth Commission pulls down big bucks for programs

By Helen Silvus
Of The Skanner News

The Multnomah Youth Commission’s anti-violence initiative has been granted \$99,996 to expand its work. The grant comes from State Farm’s youth advisory board one of 68 service-learning projects to receive a total of \$3.9 million.

Youth Against Violence came together last

year, when six youth commissioners identified violence as a crucial issue affecting young people in Portland. Last April the group brought 200 high school students together for the 2012 Rob Ingram Youth Summit Against Violence. Now they are set to double that number at the 2013 Rob Ingram Youth Summit against Violence, to be held March 16 at the Ambridge Event Center, 1333 N.E. Martin Luther King

Boulevard.

“We’re all very thankful to have this support from the community,” said Ana Meza, a founding member of the Youth Against Violence group. “This takes a lot off our shoulders; we don’t have to think so much about how to raise money. We can focus on developing our vision for the summit and

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