



Allan wants you to like him (seriously)

See back page for details.

P.16

APRIL 2025/ VOLUME 38, NO. 8

FREE

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# Power couple sics cavalry

Carry a big stick, but don't give your name



Jonathan Cohen and Jessie Burke made like bystanders after triggering a massive police response to a Portland Free Store event in Old Town last month. Burke falsely claimed she was representing the Portland Bureau of Transportation in answering a question about her intentions.



BY ALLAN CLASSEN

Jessie Burke and Jonathan Cohen are Old Town's power couple. They own real estate, operate businesses and lead the political affairs of their community.

Burke chairs the Old Town Community Association and Cohen is its treasurer, but their reach goes well beyond their corner of the

city. Burke locked horns with Gov. Tina Kotek in 2023 over her appointment and dismissal from a task force to turn Portland's downtown around.

But the dominant duo melded into the background last month after calling the police on a free food and clothing giveaway on Northwest Second Avenue early last month.

Continued on page 6

## Near miss

### Portland almost snared a major league baseball team in 2001

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

Dreams of Major League Baseball in Portland are periodically reawakened by promoters who name desired ballpark locations and circulate enticing illustrations. For 30 years, none have gotten to first base.

Few may know that we ever came close to cracking the major league club. But Portland was on the verge of claiming the Montreal Expos in 2001 until a "double-cross" in the state Legislature nixed financing for a stadium, deflating the deal before the public knew

enough to invest their hopes.

Bud Selig, then the interim commissioner of baseball, had planned to publicly give the blessing of MLB to a future Portland team on July 7, 2001. But Steve Kanter called him that morning to call it off. The funding package had fallen apart in Salem after midnight and there would be no good news to announce.

"I had to pull the plug," Kanter said.

Kanter, the former dean of the Lewis & Clark Law School and now a Northwest Portland

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## Records requests get short shrift

### Reaction to violations mixed, nonexistent from city

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

A formal appeal by the NW Examiner to obtain public records from the Pearl District Neighborhood Association, though upheld in February, has produced no tangible results.

- The records sought—audio recordings of PDNA meetings—have been erased.
- The District 4 Coalition of neighborhoods, which upheld the Examiner's position that recordings are public records and must be available to the public and press, also adopted a policy that it would play no role in enforcing its decisions.
- The chair of the coalition, Jessie Burke, has since refused to turn over recordings of the association she chairs, the Old Town Community Association, in a mirror case of the violation the coalition board ruled against regarding PDNA.
- Five months after it dismissed the Examiner's complaint, the PDNA board finally heard the paper's side of the issue last month. A proposed policy requiring the recording of meetings and public access to those recordings will be presented for board action this month.
- The city of Portland's Office of Civic and Community Life has failed to respond to requests by the Examiner to address vio-

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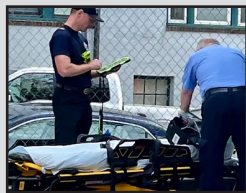
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"What's to hide?"



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Co-op leader sees the light



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Lincoln High School page

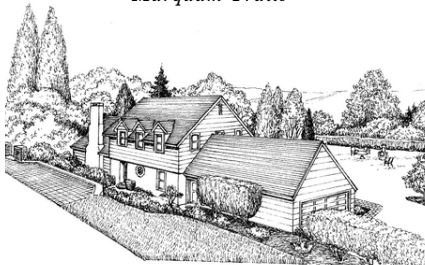


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Overdose crisis puts city on life support



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--Daniel Levine

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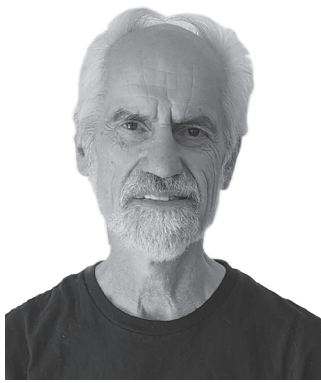


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# What is there to hide?

Some of our neighborhood associations are pushing back on compliance with Oregon Public Records and Meeting Law, saying it is too onerous for volunteers to administer and gets in the way of “speaking freely.”

To appreciate the significance of public meetings standards, it helps to consider why we have them, particularly why they apply to neighborhood associations.

Massive federal “slum clearance” and freeway construction after World War II dislocated thousands of households across America. Scenes of residents clinging to their doorways and porches as police officers dragged them into paddy wagons were broadcast over network television.

The redevelopment projects were welcomed by governors, mayors and city councils, who saw urban renewal as sweeping away derelict buildings and failing communities to build better and more modern cities. They dismissed the resistance as emotional overreactions by a few to projects that would benefit the many. Notorious New York City kingpin Robert Moses dismissed them as mere tenants who were losing nothing; they could readily find other apartments.

This was the Civil Rights era, and members of Congress representing targeted areas demanded a better way. The people impacted had to have a voice in federally funded projects that disrupted cities. To know who was impacted, there had to be a system in which residents of a community could be distinguished from others. In the language of the time, there was fear that “outside agitators” and communists exploited disruption

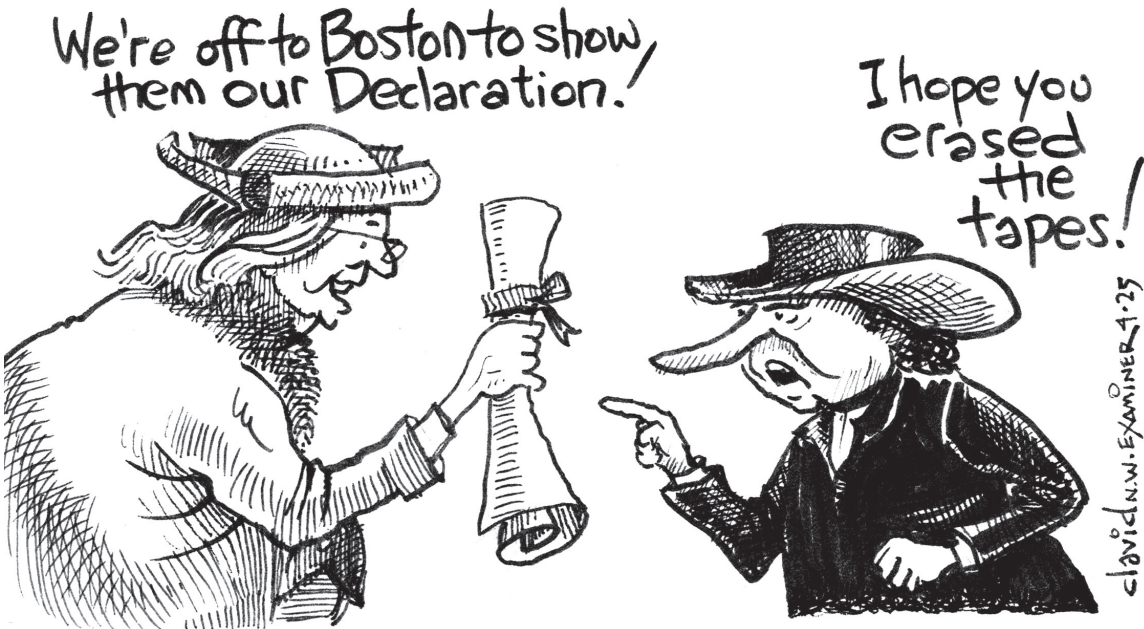
for their broader political purposes.

To ensure that organizations representing the people legitimately reflect the views of the community, there had to be rules and boundaries for membership, a democratic and open process in which all could participate and influence decisions.

In time, local governments came to see that such a system was valuable not only for federal infrastructure projects but as a permanent linchpin of local governance. In 1973, Oregon adopted a land-use planning system in which citizen participation was Goal One. The next year, Portland created the Office of Neighborhood Associations to not only recognize the essential role of local associations but also to provide funding to help them be effective.

In return for the money—distributed to coalitions of neighborhoods through contracts—the organizations had to operate as public bodies bound by state laws for transparency and accountability. It was not an unreasonable expectation. For all government spending, there must be a means to see that it serves the intended purpose.

Without such controls, including geographic divisions in which anyone may



exercise membership rights, government funds could fall into the hands of local bosses, political operatives or those with agendas beyond representing all of their constituents.

And without “paperwork,” how can it be established that meetings were properly announced, decisions were made openly according to bylaws and that all had the opportunity to participate?

Failure to keep adequate minutes, erasure of meeting recordings and decisions without meetings are glaring signs of the breakdown in democratic accountability. The worst cases of unilateral action almost invariably are revealed by missing links in the record.

To have power over others, to speak for “the people,” entails being answerable

to them. There is a duty to explain what has been done in their name and why. That mechanism restrains leaders from acting carelessly or for personal goals. No leader is perfect, but those who will not stand behind what they have done and invite the dissent or correction of their constituents are false leaders.

Some of our local neighborhood representatives do not believe they should have to face such accountability and are literally destroying the records that would reveal their words and deeds. There is a democratic solution to their usurpation if we exercise the authority we possess. ■

COMMENT ON NWEXAMINER.COM  
or email: [allan@nwexaminer.com](mailto:allan@nwexaminer.com)

## Readers Reply

Letters can be sent to: [allan@nwexaminer.com](mailto:allan@nwexaminer.com) or 1209 SW Sixth Ave., #303, Portland, OR 97204. Letters should be 300 words or fewer; include a name and a street of residence. Deadline: third Saturday of the month.

### Keep the recordings

As a former board member of the Pearl District Neighborhood Association, I find PDNA’s refusal to provide Mr. Classen with recordings of their meetings and their lack of transparency very concerning [“Failure to enforce public records law leads to recurring cycle,” March].

At its March 13 meeting, a board member suggested that one solution would be to just not record meetings. Another board member expressed concern that meeting recordings “could be used against us.”

If everyone is behaving appropriately, what possible reason is there to not record the meetings or not make the recordings available to the public?

Whether neighborhood associations

meet the definition of “governing bodies” as outlined in the Oregon Public Meetings Law is irrelevant when determining if the PDNA is required to make meeting recordings available.

Under City Code 3.96, neighborhood associations are required to abide by ONI Standards.

The ONI Standards require neighborhood associations to abide by the Oregon Public Meetings & Records policy.

Oregon Public Meetings Law states, “any minutes or recording of a public meeting that does not take place in executive session must be made available to the public.”

The law also states, “audio or video recordings must generally be retained until one year after minutes have been prepared and approved.”

City Code 3.96 states, “If a neighbor-

hood association or business district association fails to meet the minimum requirements of Chapter 3.96, the Office of Community & Civic Life may suspend partial or all benefits and may ultimately revoke formal recognition of a neighborhood association.”

The PDNA has established many programs to address public safety, trash and graffiti and help create a vibrant community. To risk losing the support and benefits and formal recognition of the city could jeopardize these programs.

I urge the PDNA to establish a policy that all board and committee meetings will be recorded and made available to anyone who requests them, and that recordings will be retained for one year.

Mary Sipe  
NW Northrup St.

### Don't forget KGW

In your March “Editor’s Turn,” you correctly state that “Two institutions did not fail us” in regard to the way the city has ignored the violence, drug use, and intimidation of neighbors living in the Alphabet District on a “Safe Route to School.” You point to the coverage of KPTV and to the reaction of District Attorney Nathan Vasquez.

I wholeheartedly agree, but I would also like to celebrate KGW, which has shown up in the neighborhood repeatedly to cover physical attacks, machete-wielding men threatening toddlers and their mothers in front of Metropolitan Learning Center, and the work of Friends of Couch Park to make

Cont’d on page 5

## The NW Examiner

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## Gregory Rasmussen



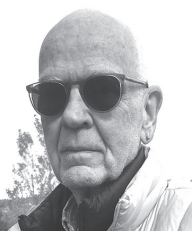
Gregory Stanton Rasmussen, the president of Don Rasmussen Co., died on Feb. 7 at age 80. He was born on April 13, 1944, in Tacoma, and his family moved to Cedar Hills in his youth. He graduated from Sunset High School in 1962. He received a degree in business administration from the University of Oregon in 1967. He served in the Navy Reserves during the Vietnam War. In 1970, he joined the family-owned car dealership, working with his father and brother. He served on several advisory councils for vehicle manufacturers and was named Oregon's Time Quality Dealer of the Year in 2010. He contributed substantially to charitable institutions. He carried the Olympic Torch in Portland for the 1996 Olympics. He is survived by his wife of 50 years, Jan; son, David; daughters, Amy, Erika and Kristine; sisters, Janet and Ann; and seven grandchildren. A celebration of life will be held from 1-4 p.m., on Sunday, April 13, at Portland Golf Club.

## Gregg Kantor



Gregg Steven Kantor, the former chief executive of NW Natural, died Jan. 31 at age 67. He was born on April 30, 1957, in Chicago and graduated from Corona del Mar High School in Newport Beach, Calif. He received a bachelor's degree from the University of California Santa Barbara in 1975. He received a master's degree in urban planning from the University of Oregon in 1981. Before joining NW Natural in 1996, he was a spokesperson for then-Gov. Neil Goldschmidt, and worked for Portland General Electric and Bonneville Power Administration. He helped establish the Lan Su Chinese Garden, was an adviser to the Portland Chinatown Museum and was on the board of Albina Vision Trust. He is survived by his wife, Diane Kantor; daughters, Sabrina Kantor and Olivia Kantor; his sister, Kim Noah; stepmother, Christine Kantor; stepsister, Taira Kantor.

## Ralph Wells



Ralph Wells, a Northwest District resident for 46 years, died on Jan. 22 of pancreatic cancer at age 77. He was born on June 23, 1947, in Berkeley, Calif, and grew up in Saudi Arabia and Tarrytown, N.Y. He attended the University of Oregon and Pacific Northwest College of Art. He moved to Portland in 1969 to perform alternative service as a conscientious objector during the Vietnam War. He was assigned to work at Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center, where he continued to work as a phlebotomist and as a pharmacy technician and manager. He was also a photographer for the NW Examiner, Oregon Journal and Willamette Week and an editorial assistant at The Oregonian. He is survived by his wife, Carol Wells; and sister, Marianne Wells Borg.

## Thomas A. Goldsmith



Thomas A. Goldsmith, who grew up in Arlington Heights, died on Feb. 14 at age 98. He was born on Aug. 26, 1926, and attended Ainsworth Elementary School and Lincoln High School. After serving for two years in the army, he received a degree in business administration from the University of Oregon. He spent his entire career in the business founded by his father and uncle, Goldsmith Co., a dry goods and textile company serving customers in the Pacific Northwest and Alaska. He married Carole McGilvray in 1957. They lived in Lake Oswego and had four children. He married Melinda Graydon in 1981; she died in 2002. He was a life-long member of the Multnomah Athletic Club, an accomplished water skier and continued to snow ski into his 80s. He is survived by his son, Randy; daughters, Cathy and Diana; and three grandchildren. He was predeceased by his daughter Mary Lee.

## Misao Yoshihara Minagi

Misao Yoshihara Minagi, a longtime seamstress at White Stag, died March 1 at age 105. She was born and received her early education in Japan. She immigrated to Portland, where she graduated from Girls Polytechnic High School. Her survivors include Hideyo and Kathy Minagi; Jay, Kim, Catherine and Zenith Yoshihara; Lynn Kanaya; Jennifer, Lillian and James A. Wright; and Michael and Ana Rosen. A funeral service will be held on April 6 at 11 a.m. at the Nichiren Buddhist Temple of Portland.

## William R. Haden



William R. Haden, a former resident of Northwest Westover Terrace, died March 15 at age 82. He was born in Beckley, W.Va. on April 29, 1942, and raised in Morgantown, W.Va. He received a bachelor's degree in political science in 1964 from West Virginia University and a master's degree in government from George Washington University in 1965. After serving two years as a military intelligence officer in the army, he began a career in higher education administration that included positions at West Virginia University, the University of Rochester, the University of Chicago and Reed College, where he was acting president in the early 1990s. He was president of West Virginia Wesleyan College for 11 years. He served on the boards of Oregon College of Oriental Medicine, Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette, Northwest United Methodist Foundation and Chamber Music Northwest. He chaired the board at the First United Methodist Church in Portland. He was a lifetime member of the Willamette University Board of Trustees. He was preceded in death by his wife of 30 years, Elizabeth Flanagan. He is survived by his daughter, Laura McKinney; son, Douglas; brothers, J. Richard Haden Jr. and James Haden; and two grandchildren. He is also survived by his longtime partner, Doris Huff. A celebration of life will be held on April 12 at noon at First United Methodist Church.

## Death notices

- SHERRY NELSON**, 77, Multnomah Athletic Club member
- PETER SCHOONMAKER**, 66, Pacific Northwest College of Art faculty member.
- MORRIS ARNTSON JR.**, 86, Multnomah Athletic Club member.
- RUTH "PATTY" (CARMONY) CROOK**, 82, 1960 Lincoln High School graduate.
- NANCY JOAN DRAKE**, 86, lived near Washington Park.

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Readers Reply

continued from page 3

the park a safe and happy place for everyone.

It takes organizers, local journalists such as yourself, large media organizations and individual politicians to effect positive change. We applaud you all.

Kerry Duff  
NW 18th Ave.

PGE decision a travesty

Such hypocrisy. A city of Portland hearings officer recently approved PGE’s terrible plan to cut through Forest Park for its Harborton Reliability Project [“It could happen here,” February].

This is a travesty, and not only because Forest Park is natural jewel beloved by Portlanders and tourists alike. With Portland having one of the worst heat indexes in the country, Forest Park provides essential tree canopy and a natural respite that all citizens can access and enjoy.

All this is happening at a time while the Bureau of Environmental Services and Urban Forestry can’t seem to figure out how to fix our disappearing tree canopy – a problem that reportedly mainly impacts low canopy, low-income areas and communities of color. Well, guess where PGE plans to slash trees in acres of Forest Park? In the park’s northern section, near manufacturing and blue-collar areas – areas that need trees the most.

PGE’s proposal is particularly egregious because it will kill off one of the last remaining stands of urban old growth trees. Mature and old growth trees are carbon-storage champions, helping slow climate change in ways young trees simply can’t. Some estimates show that fewer than 10 percent of old growth trees remain in Oregon. To thoughtlessly destroy what’s left right in our own backyard seems particularly shortsighted.

So the city greenlights a plan to chop down acres of old-growth trees while having no idea how to fix Portland’s tree canopy problem? The city’s approval of PGE’s plan is a clear-cut example of how Portland simply doesn’t work.

Darcie Meihoff  
S. Gaines St.

Don’t blame Trump followers

I was dismayed, but sadly not surprised, to see one of your readers express fear that Trump followers” would set Forest Park afire [Letter to editor: Sharon Joy, March]. And that fear she traced back to his previous term in office.

It continually amazes me that many Portlanders cannot see that the real threats of arson and other “direct action” forms of property destruction belong to the playbook of far left anarchy ideologies. This belief system can be traced to the Russian Revolution and its vilification of capitalism. Ergo, smash the windows of your local Starbucks, despite it being a very progressive corporation. Anyone who hasn’t witnessed these endless displays in Portland must surely live in or near Forest Park, far from the madding crowd.

Last May, the PDX Anarchists blog claimed credit for setting a dozen police cars ablaze after causing more than \$1 million in damages to Portland State University’s Millar Library. During our endless nightly rioting of 2020, it was Antifa and their ilk smashing windows of businesses. More recently, they smashed windows at the World Forestry Center. And they took credit for setting fire to a car in the driveway of Rene Gonzalez’s home during his mayoral campaign.

I contend that Gonzalez lost the election because of the woeful naivety of many Portlanders to such threats. I applaud Gonzalez for having labeled these radical left extremists as domestic terrorists. Wake up Portland. Trump and his followers are not the source of all evil. Certainly not in this town.

Karla Powell  
NW 11th Ave.

Great journalism

I just moved to Portland’s Northwest District, and one of the best parts of my month is the arrival of your paper. It is great journalism. Keep up the good work.

Shane Anna Bishop  
NW Irving St.

Harm reduction no solution

I am so thankful for your reach and thought regarding harm reduction and the drug/housing situation in Portland. I have lived here 21 years and have volunteered and expressed my exasperation at many of the approaches you also address.

Thank you so very much.  
Marjorie Myers  
NW Ninth Ave.

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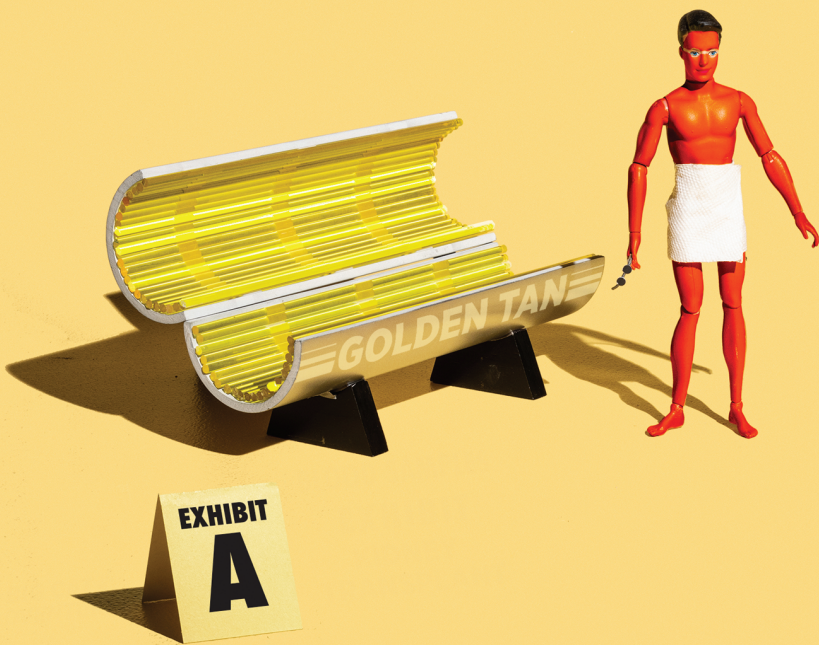


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Jessie Burke poster from last year's campaign.



Darlene Urban Garrett (center) said she attended the demonstration because the Old Town Community Association asked her to. Source: <https://www.instagram.com/fullrevmedia/reel/DHKuOE8uz5J/>

**“I don’t know. I just work in the community. ... I really don’t want to say anything.”**  
**—Jonathan Cohen**  
**Treasurer, Old Town Community Association**

*“Power couple” cont’d from page 1*

When they call the police, they get action. About a dozen officers lined the street, prepared for whatever disruption the Portland Free Store Project and its homeless beneficiaries might bring.

Burke and Cohen were accompanied by a similar number of neighboring residents and business people. An independent videographer known as John the Lefty also came. He asked the police why they were there, and they pointed to Cohen.

“The officer told me that you’re the spokesperson for the community. What’s going on here?” the videographer asked.

“I don’t know. I just work in the community,” Cohen said. “I don’t have any comment right now. I’m just here to support the community. ... I really don’t want to say anything.”

With that, the one-man news agency turned to a down-dressed Burke.

“In the yellow beanie: Do you have any comment about what’s going on?”

Burke shrugged her shoulders, then explained, “We want people to have permits.”

Video man persisted, and eventually she began talking.

“I’m doing this for the Bureau of Transportation,” she claimed (an assertion PBOT later denied).

Why did Burke not say she was acting as chair of the Old Town Community Association?

We asked her, but got no reply. We asked Cohen why he dodged his affiliation, but he did not respond either.

John the Lefty, holding a video camera in her face, was more successful in drawing Burke out.

“I have to have a permit for my A-frame sign on the sidewalk,” she said. “I have to get a permit for everything. The residents have to drive on the streets. The streets are not accessible because suddenly there’s a pop-up. If there were a permit, everyone would get notification, and we’re not getting it.”

Portland Free Store had taken over a block and a parking lot in Old Town on March 6, though on this day the organization confined its activities to the sidewalk as a bevy of police officers and neighbors looked on.

According to Burke, the demonstration was about the importance of city permits that would have forewarned the community of activities planned in the right of way.

Darlene Urban Garrett, executive director of the District 4 Coalition of neighborhood associations, which Burke also chairs, participated in the demonstration at her request.

“I was asked by a neighborhood association,” Garrett said. “If a neighbor-

hood association calls me for help, I’m going to be there.”

She did not fault Burke and Cohen for hiding their identities or roles as neighborhood officers.

“I kind of get it, because you didn’t want anyone to know who you were. I may have done the same thing,” Garrett said. “It was not a friendly group.”

Although police officers were present on that day, “there could be ramifications after the fact” had the Free Store people and their supporters known who they were, she said.

The videographer didn’t see it that way. “There were at least a dozen cops. This was an absolute waste of police resources.”

### Silence broken

After the NW Examiner made inquiries to City Hall agencies and participants about the anti-Free Store demonstration, Burke finally released her side of the story in a 900-word letter to Mayor Keith Wilson and members of the City Council on March 25. She did not send it to the news media, but the Examiner obtained a copy and posted it to its website.

“Over the last few months,” Burke began, “I have been getting calls from Lan Su Garden about Northwest Flanders being taken over with tents, making it impassable to vehicle traffic. Over time, residents started to notice

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The Portland Free Store and its customers moved down the street to avoid demonstrators.  
Source: <https://www.instagram.com/fullrevmedia/reel/DHKuOE8uz5J/>



The video can be seen at <https://www.instagram.com/fullrevmedia/reel/DHKuOE8uz5J/>

and get upset, feeling once again that Old Town was getting treated as the neighborhood where no rules apply.

“We checked with PBOT, and no permits were obtained to close the streets.

“A resident went over and asked the group back in November of 2024 if they had a permit to close the street, and he was told to ‘go home you f\*\$king NIMBY as\*\$%le.’ That same person told them they were coming every Thursday and Sunday. Attached is a picture of Northwest Flanders just one of the nights of these street takeovers. The other photos are when they moved into a Prosper Portland-owned parking lot without permission and none of the Blanchet House staff or volunteers could get their cars out.”

Burke wrote that a female police officer asking about permits was accosted by a “masked mob” and later doxxed, the names of her children and their school posted online with a threat: “I hope they will be safe tomorrow.”

“This week, we as a community wanted to show our support for law and order,” her letter continued. “We were met with

screaming slurs, calling us racists and asking if we had paid reparations. Our message was consistent and clear—we just want the rule of law to be consistently abided by and enforced.

“I’m disappointed that this group is being treated with any sort of credibility, when every community they show up in (they are also terrorizing Lair Hill) is raising the alarm bells.

“When law-abiding, civil citizens are being treated as equally credible as an organization and people who will gladly threaten the lives of children, call the elderly slurs and threaten to shoot up small businesses—all so they can continue to flout the law and be disrespectful to the community of which they are visitors—we have lost the thread, and that is why Portlanders are leaving in droves. And I have to say, as someone who has fought incredibly hard to save this city, I’m about to my breaking point.

While making the case for law enforcement taking her side, Burke denied inviting the police to the recent event captured on video.

By that time, the Police Bureau had already geared up to counter

Free Store disruptions.

“One particular incident on March 6 drew heightened concern,” wrote Portland Police Public Information Officer Terri Wallo Strauss in response to an Examiner inquiry. “Central Precinct officers were dispatched to Northwest Flanders Street and Second Avenue after multiple complaints that the group had set up vehicles and tables in a manner that blocked the street and entrances to private parking lots.

“A large number of individuals began surrounding and threatening officers ... This required a citywide response, leading to delayed handling of lower-priority calls.”

And what about neighborhood leaders denying or hiding their roles in advocating for government action? Burke made no mention of it. When the political heat rises, matters of transparency and accountability take a back seat. ■

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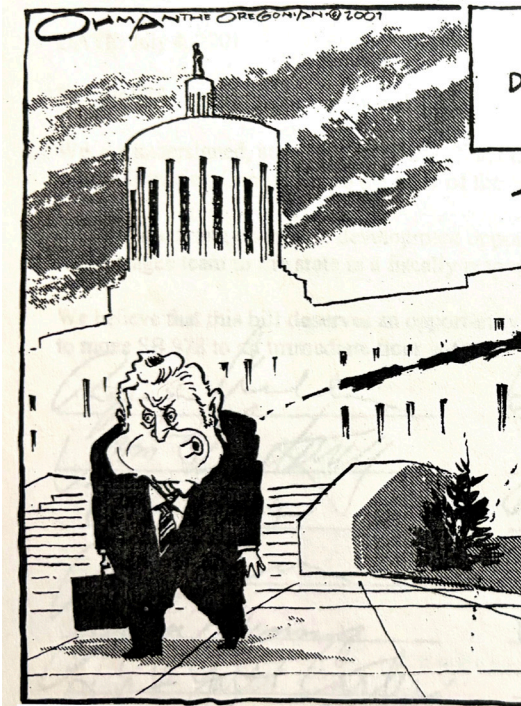
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The Oregonian cartoonist Jack Ohman had a h baseball fans.

Steve Kanter tells a story covering 30 years and the kingmakers of Major League Baseball.

"Near miss" cont'd from page 1

**"The most fun I had during this whole process was talking to George Steinbrenner."**  
—Steve Kanter

resident, was president of Portland Baseball Group, a group of political insiders, business leaders, citizens, lobbyists and architects who mounted what they thought would be a six-month mission to bring big league baseball to town.

Local architect John Vosmek prepared a redesign of Civic Stadium (now Providence Park) as an interim home should the Expos be coming. Vosmek also enlisted HOK Sport of Kansas City, the preeminent designer and builder of major league baseball stadiums since the 1990s, to create a design for a permanent stadium on the site of the main U.S. Post Office on Northwest Hoyt Street, a property recently cleared for mixed-use redevelopment.

An HOK official told the group that the post office site had everything—a central city location with ample transit links surrounded by walkable neighborhoods, great views of the river and mountains—and was among the best sites for a stadium he had ever seen.

The group had the right connections but had little time to generate broad public awareness. It was to be a sprint through the legislative session to get funding, which was to be a \$250 million bond program, \$150 million of which would go for a stadium and the rest for public education.

A window of opportunity had opened because the Expos franchise was in free fall, bleeding about \$30 million a year while losing its star players to free agency. MLB took over the team and operated it for two years while looking for a new home.

The Expos' predicament was only one of baseball's problems in the 1990s. A players strike had wiped out the 1994 World Series, steroids had distorted hallowed performance records, the game's public image had tanked and leadership was in the hands of an interim commissioner, who at the same time owned the Milwaukee Brewers, a conflict of interest if ever there was one.

Kanter just happened to have made an unlikely friendship with that interim commissioner by calling him unsolicited to tell him, "I know how to fix baseball." Surprisingly, Selig called him back, they had an "extremely candid" conversation, and before long Kanter was asked to write up his ideas as an application to become what Selig believed he could never be, the permanent commissioner of baseball.

### Red at heart

That was actually Kanter's second baseball dream. Growing up in Cincinnati, he hoped one day to become the shortstop for the Reds. It turned out that he was better at law and better still at talking himself into historic opportunities. Becoming the commissioner of baseball was a long shot, and he surmised that his only path would be through the power behind the throne, New York Yankees owner George Steinbrenner.

Kanter pulled out all of his connections, which included a beautiful woman who was a big Yankees booster, who lined up a call with "The Boss," Steinbrenner. Kanter, who found the man to remarkably resemble the parody of him played frequently on "Seinfeld," remembers the call vividly.

"He pounded his fist, and I could almost feel the pounding on his desk," Kanter said.

Steinbrenner wanted to "stop me mid-sentence so he could halt whatever it was that I was saying to tell me that I was from Ohio.

"Why yes, I am," I replied.

"He then told me he could tell anyone's birth zip code from their accent!"

Kanter said.

While that was theatric, Steinbrenner could have enhanced his exceptional sensory gift with a prior scan of Kanter's resume.

Getting down to business, Steinbrenner wanted to know what the prospective commissioner might do that could displease him.

"I would tell you no," Kanter said, a word Steinbrenner seldom heard.

While candor was in the air, the Yankee owner handed out a bitter pill:

"Buddy just bought 29 airline tickets."

That needed translation. Steinbrenner explained that Selig was going to visit every major league owner to sew up support for himself as permanent commissioner, and in that case, the job would be his.

Kanter's long shot had fallen short, but he sent Selig a congratulatory message the next day and retained a friend who would one day come in handy.

### Friendship renewed

Seven years later, Kanter knew the Expos problem was on Selig's desk, and he offered a solution: move the franchise to Portland, where he was drumming up support for a local team.

Kanter had assembled a dream team of insiders who had worked at high levels in Oregon politics. They came from both sides of the aisle. Kevin Campbell was a top lobbyist who joined the team. Randy Vataha, a former NFL receiver whose business was buying and selling professional sports teams, was hired to manage the project. Sen. Mark Hatfield and former Gov. Neil Goldschmidt were backers.

Campbell said it is unlikely he would have jumped into the project if not for Kanter, whom he praised for strategic insight, credibility and "contagious enthusiasm."

"Steve often used the phrase, 'if done right,'" meaning it had to make sense for taxpayers and the community as well as for baseball fans.

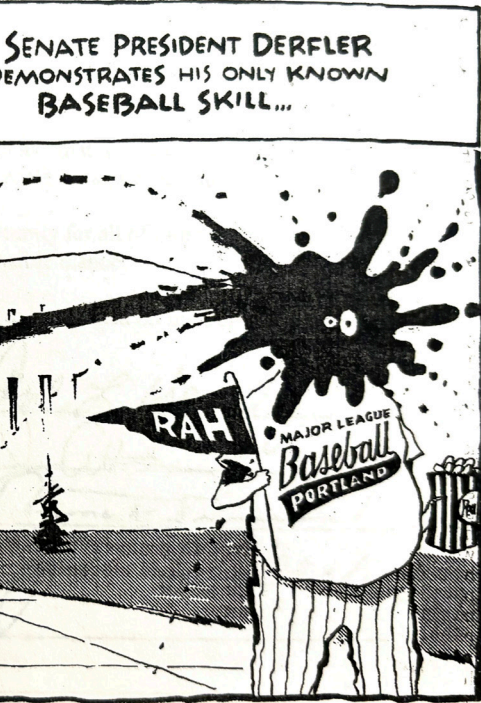
Vataha said Kanter's leadership was part of the reason he got him involved.

"He's a quality guy," he said. "We knew he wouldn't mislead us ... and it was clear he had the respect of all the local people."

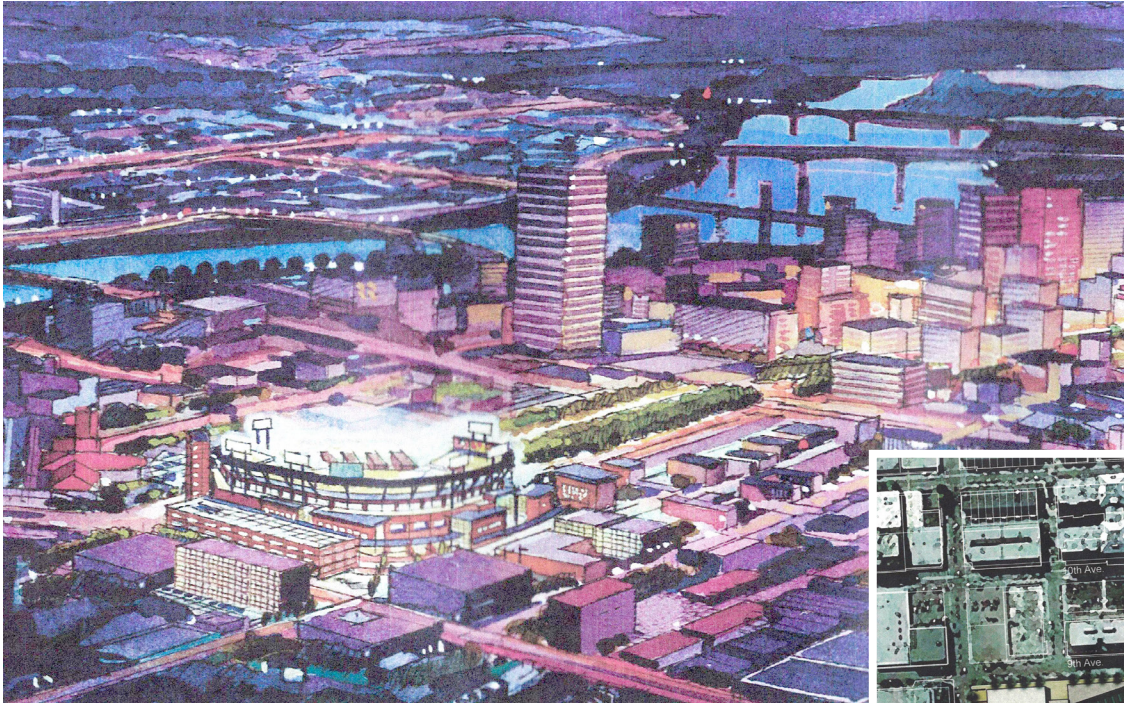
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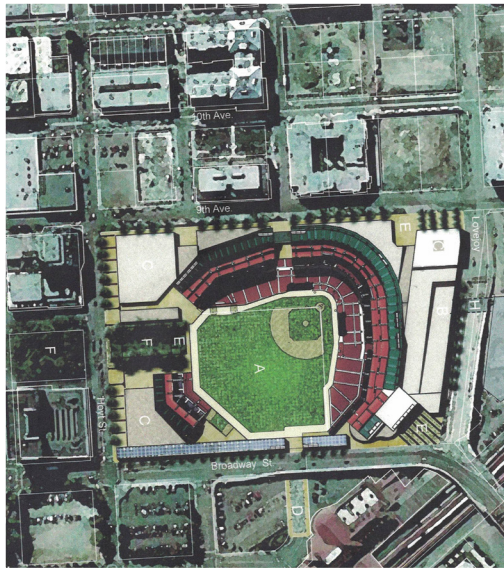


harsh take on the deed done to Portland



HOK Sport envisioned a Pearl District ballpark as a shining light for the entire downtown.

The proposed stadium would have supplanted the post office site north of Northwest Broadway.



The two remain friends to this day. The group persuaded then-Gov. John Kitzhaber to support the campaign. Twenty of 30 state senators supported a bill to allocate \$150 million for a stadium in Portland.

The bill, however, was in a committee chaired by Sen. Lenn Hannon, who did not support it. Senate President Gene Derfler did not like the bill either, but he agreed to bring it to a floor vote Kitzhaber got behind it. Passage now seemed probable. But in the last hours of the 2001 session, Derfler changed his mind and shelved it after all.

An Oregonian editorial cartoon showed Derfler throwing a bean ball at a Portland baseball fan. Lawmakers told Kanter that the senate president had double-crossed him.

The Expos instead moved to Washington, D.C., in 2005, and the team became the Washington Nationals, winners of the World Series in 2019.

“We almost pulled it off,” said Vosmek, the architect.

For years, Vosmek’s office was filled with drawings and a model of the proposed ballpark, all done pro bono.

Was it the highlight of your career?  
“Absolutely,” Vosmek said.

Kanter isn’t involved with the current effort to bring a major league team to Portland, though he testified in favor of enabling legislation sought by the Portland Diamond Project, which has designs for a new stadium proposed along Portland’s south waterfront. He wishes the current effort well, while noting that it will be a heavier lift than it was 25 years ago. In 2001, an existing major league team just needed a place to play, and no other cities were as well prepared as Portland. This time it would probably entail being chosen from a list of cities for an expansion franchise that could cost billions, in addition to a similar range for a stadium.

Memorabilia of the ill-fated campaign fills boxes in Kanter’s closet: a bumper sticker with an MLB logo doctored to show an umbrella in the hands of a batter, a jacket bearing the logo and unsorted documents, including the 1994 letter from the nery fan who wrote, “I know how to fix baseball.”

Kanter sheds no tears over failing to achieve the grand prize. He has million-dollar stories to savor and recount.

“The most fun I had during this whole process was talking to George Steinbrenner,” he said. “He was just like the character on Seinfeld.”

Kanter has a new mission. He

wants to talk to Mayor Keith Wilson about how to fix Portland. He strategized for months on how to get a meeting with Wilson, then ran into him in Salem when both went there to support stadium funding.

The chance encounter may or may not bear fruit, but, as his old friend Vataha affirmed, he can be very persuasive. ■

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David Dysert, who chaired or co-chaired the Pearl District Neighborhood Association since 2017, was accustomed to controlling the agenda.



Mayor Keith Wilson, speaking at a Downtown Neighborhood Association meeting in February, heard the complaint about access to meeting recordings and recommended a call to Assistant City Administrator Annie Von Burg, who did not return messages from the Examiner.

**“I don’t get it.  
[The decision]  
to erase records  
was never been  
brought up with the  
committee.”  
–Larry Mazer,  
Member of PDNA  
planning committee**

"Records request" cont'd from page 1

lations of city contracts that require Public Records Law adherence.

- To complete the picture of confusion and dysfunction, District 4 Coalition Executive Director Darlene Urban Garrett has been leading board training sessions at which a guest speaker asserts that recordings are not public records and need not be retained or shared.

The willful withholding and erasure of recordings have so far been approved or tolerated by the organizations where they have occurred. The Pearl board could break that pattern at its April board meeting, at which it will con-

sider a policy requiring the release of recordings.

Two people close to the association found its past practices unacceptable.

“In 2023, when I was PDNA secretary, I attended a PDNA Executive Committee meeting where Planning & Transportation Committee Chair David Dysert told the committee that he wanted to delete meeting recordings after the minutes were drafted in order to deny Allan Classen’s requests for meeting recordings,” Mary Sipe told the Examiner.

“The Executive Committee did not express any opposition to Mr. Dysert’s plan,” Sipe added.

Larry Mazer, a longtime member of the committee Dysert has chaired since 2017, said he was embarrassed to learn that the newspaper was denied public records.

“I don’t get it,” Mazer told the Examiner, noting that the decision to erase records had “never been brought up with the committee.”

Mazer intended to raise those and other questions at the March 18 meeting of the committee, which was canceled hours before its starting time.

He will not have the opportunity to clear the air with Dysert, who resigned his position late last month, explaining that “the demands of my personal and professional life have become too great.”

At the city and coalition level, progress has been scarce. At a February Downtown Neighborhood Association meeting attended by Mayor Keith Wilson, Garrett said the assertion that records are public records “is just Allan’s opinion” and not that of the coalition’s attorney.

Asked what the city would do to resolve the division, Wilson advised the Examiner to contact Annie Von Burg, the assistant city administrator who has oversight of the Office of Community & Civic Life. A month later, Vonburg has still not returned messages, nor has the director of OCCL, Amanda Garcia-Snell.

An aide to District 4 City Councilor Eric Zimmerman promised to intervene if OCCL did not respond, but so far hasn’t. Councilors Olivia Clark and Mitch Green have merely acknowledged receipt of the Examiner’s request for action. ■

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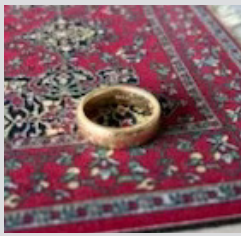
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# Co-op board member now sees what went wrong

## Sale of Food Front property still expected, though delayed

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

The secretary of Food Front Cooperative Grocery distributed a critique of the co-op’s collapse as a pending sale of its former store and real estate is postponed at the request of the buyer, K-5 Holdings LLC.

Kate Fulton, who joined the dwindling board last year, a year after the store at 2375 NW Thurman St. closed, blamed internal conflict, worker-management hostility and the naiveté of owners and past board members.

Fulton did not, however, point the finger at herself or her two remaining colleagues on the board.

“Within days of the first member meeting after I joined, I was confronted with suspicious and upsetting emails from members and neighbors,” she wrote. “The formula of maximum suspicion plus minimum communication equals crisis was reliably at play.

“I understand many things now that I did not then.”

That understanding drew her to broad assessments, such as:

“The worst outcomes possible happen when people are afraid to speak up, can’t come forward and can’t make suggestions—this is how flawed decision-making occurs and worsens.

“Of the many outside contractors that served as interim HR directors, one told me that it was one of the most dysfunctional workplaces they had ever served in—and they specialized and thrived in difficult environments requiring a steadfast mediator.”

Through it all, members kept the co-op afloat.

“I had no idea how many private lenders came together to provide over \$1 million in support to keep the co-op going,” she wrote. “Dozens of members withdrew from their life savings, took out loans against their retirement accounts or even their homes, in order to provide immediate and substantial relief to this struggling community project that was held so dear to their heart.”

As for the pending sale, Fulton is optimistic that it will close soon and is hopeful that a grocery store will lease the space. She has heard suspicions that K-5 is dragging out the sale, after exhausting two 120-day due diligence periods, in order to force the co-op into discounting the agreed upon \$2.55 million sales price, but she has seen no evidence of that.

Her 20-page history was compiled by poring through co-op records and correspondence, and by reading old editions of the NW Examiner.

“It was interesting to see how some of your early articles held accurate predictions,” she wrote.

A cover story in the November 2024 Examiner, “Co-op collapse,” was the first published report on the breadth of the economic and internal problems facing Food Front.



**CHAMPAGNE POETRY** (above), an Asian fusion restaurant owned by La Rose Patisserie owner Dan Bian, has opened at 1620 NW 23rd Ave., in The Benevento. The space has been occupied by New Old Lompoc, Killer Burger Northwest and Tap & Table. Champagne Poetry’s website describes “handmade bakery items, custom house-coffee blends and exciting cocktails.”

**TIN HOUSE**, an independent publishing company at 2617 NW Thurman St. founded in 1999 by Win McCormack, was sold last month to Zando Publishing. Zando is best known for marketing celebrity authors and has partnered with TikTok’s publishing arm. Tin House’s longtime editor, Masie Cochran, will remain in her position.

**FAT TIRE FARM**, 2714 NW Thurman St., will close permanently at the end of May after 40 years in business. The company’s Hood River store will remain open.

**RADIUS RECYCLING**, founded in 1906 as Schnitzer Steel, sold for \$1.3 billion to Toyota Tsusho Corp. Radius has 54 facilities in Central and North America, but lost money last year as U.S. manufacturing continued to decline.

**AMPERE**, an eight-year-old computer chip design company with 200 workers in the Pearl District, is selling to SoftBank Group, a Japanese investment firm with a focus on artificial intelligence.

# NOBBY NEWS

Vol. 31, No. 4 “News You Can’t Always Believe” APRIL 2025

## Who can you believe?

Reports of golf-ball-sized hail came to the newsroom at the Nobby News last month, but we were skeptical. In the past, such claims have not measured up.

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# The Cardinal Times

## Lincoln models gain skills and confidence

By SCARLETT DEMPSEY

Study halls to photoshoots. Science labs to scripts. Students at Lincoln have found passion and success in modeling and acting. Modeling agencies located in Portland include Q6 Model and Artist Management, The Option Agency, PDX Models and Reaction Models and Talent.

Senior Jenny Chen is a model signed to Reaction Models and Talent. She recently did a photoshoot with Doc Martens for their new 1460 velvet boots and was featured in their advertisements in-store. Her shoot was also posted by the Vogue Magazine Instagram account (@voguemagazine). Chen says the shoot is one of her proudest accomplishments.

For Chen, modeling has helped her boost her self-confidence. The desire to feel more confident was one of the things that inspired her to start her career.

"I didn't really like the way I looked just because I'm an ethnic minority, so I didn't see a lot of people that looked like me," said Chen. "After I started modeling, I realized that people actually liked the way I looked, so I should stop caring [about looks] and focus on caring about more important things."

Sophomore Coco Litch acts, dances and has starred in commercials, educational videos and short films. She found her passion for acting during the COVID-19 pandemic when she would spend a lot of time watching movies. She says acting is a form of art and self-expression.

"It is really important to share people's stories and their perspectives with the world," said Litch. "[Acting] is a cool and beautiful art form. A lot of people don't



Senior Kaili Olsson is a model with Q6 Model and Artist Management. She has been with Q6 for seven months and did modeling at three years old.

By NICHOLAS WILSON

think about the detail that goes into making movies or

commercials and it is really interesting to me."

One of Litch's favorite parts about acting is taking different classes about a variety of topics, including advertising and acting for film and television.

"Any time I'm in a class it helps me work on my craft and ... feel like I am improving. I like hearing feedback," said Litch.

Senior Kaili Olsson has been a model with Q6 Model and Artist Management for around seven months. She modeled when she was three years old and got back into it last summer. Her favorite moments in her modeling career so far have been her photoshoots.

"Taking the first digitals, photoshoots or practice photos was a change because I am not really used to doing that or being expressive in that kind of way," said Olsson.

One challenge that these students have encountered is balancing schoolwork with their modeling and acting careers. Litch has limited the amount of acting classes that she is doing to once a week and plans to increase that amount this summer.

"Obviously I'm going to be prioritizing school because that's my main priority, but it's just hard to balance everything," said Litch.

Chen and Olsson are considering modeling part-time after high school, and Litch is interested in possibly studying cinematography or film. Chen plans to go out of state for college.

"I'm probably not gonna go to college in Oregon, so wherever I go I'll see if I can also get signed there [with a modeling agency]," said Chen.

## Lincoln club focuses on addressing homelessness

By NIDHA EAKAMBARAM



The Students for Housing Initiatives Club participated in a lobbying event in Salem with Oregon House Representatives. The club aims to bring more focus to the issue of homelessness in the Portland community and discuss legislation to address food insecurity.

Courtesy of AUDREY FARRIMOND

A new club, Students for Housing Initiatives, is working to reduce the stigma surrounding homelessness and taking action to combat housing insecurity

by partnering with the Oregon Food Bank. Though the club only started in mid-February, they already prepared for a major lobbying event in Salem as well as planned community outreach efforts to address local housing challenges.

Junior Audrey Farrimond, the club's founder and president, started it after noticing a lack of awareness and empathy for the houseless population in downtown Portland.

"We don't get to hear from them about their own experiences," Farrimond said.

The club has been focusing on creating opportunities for direct engagement and advocacy. One of their key upcoming events is a dinner with members of the houseless community to discuss policy issues and identify areas where legislative support is needed.

The club also participated in Oregon Food Bank's Lobby Day on March 18, where students advocated for a bill ensuring access to the Oregon Food Bank's resources.

"Food insecurity is always going to be a source of housing insecurity in the community," Farrimond explained, as verified by non-profit organization Move for Hunger. "Getting the food might keep [people] in their house."

Sophomore Evie Richardson, the club's vice president, highlighted how important this work feels, especially given the negative attitudes she sees and hears toward the houseless community from some of the students at Lincoln.

"Every single day, you'll just hear people say the nastiest things about the people who live outside," Richardson said. "They make a lot of mean jokes and just generally dehumanize houseless people. They don't really see them as people."

Richardson emphasized the importance of shifting these perspectives through education and direct interaction.

"At my old middle school, Northwest Academy, we had Outside In come in once a month and talk about their experiences with homelessness," Richardson said. "That really changed my whole viewpoint on homelessness, and that's what I'm hoping to bring to Lincoln."

Farrimond also leads Flock Feast, a student club at Lincoln that partners with a local food pantry tied to the Oregon Food Bank.

"As a high schooler, I feel like I don't have a lot of sway," Farrimond said. "But what this opportunity from the Oregon Food Bank has given me, and I think it's given a lot of other people at the club [Students for Housing Initiatives], is the feeling that we can actually change things. We can actually participate in our local and state communities in an effective and convincing way."

Sophomore and member of the club, Isabella Tolba feels as though this is an important opportunity

"I've never been able to do anything like this before. I'm not close with the [Oregon] representatives and I feel like most people aren't. I think it's cool to talk to them face to face about what I personally want to see in the city," Tolba said.

## Is your yum our yuck?

By SYDNEY ISAAC AND SOPHIE MONAHAN



Dough Zone has two Portland locations; one on South River Drive and the other on SW Cedar Hills Blvd. One of the dishes we tried was the Chicken & Vegetable Wontons in Chili Sauce.

By SYDNEY ISAAC

One of the many great things about Portland is the variety of restaurants! We surveyed Lincoln students,

asking what their favorite local restaurants are, and we visited three of them to see if they were worth the praise: Dough Zone, La Bonita, and SeaSweets Poke.

Dough Zone, recommended by senior Everett Hoffman, has two local locations; one by the West Waterfront and the other in Cedar Hills. Hoffman recommended we try the soup dumplings and the wontons in chili sauce. We ordered the Pork Xiao Long Bao and the Chicken & Vegetable Wontons in Chili Sauce. The Xiao Long Bao was \$9.95 and came with eight in each order. They were extremely tasty, and had a light dough wrapping and a very flavorful soup filling. The chicken and vegetable wontons were \$7.30 – they had an excellent flavor balance between the chicken, vegetables and sauce. In our opinion, they were not spicy and could definitely be enjoyed by someone with a low spice tolerance. In comparison to other dumpling restaurants in town, we thought Dough Zone was affordable for students. Our overall rating is a 9/10.

Freshman Scarlett Shinn recommended the restaurant La Bonita because of its "delicious food, giant servings, [and] cozy atmosphere." Shinn's favorite dishes are their tamales and burritos. We ordered the \$11.75 grilled chicken burrito. We found that the burrito was delicious; it had a really soft and subtly sweet tortilla. The rice and beans had the perfect consistency and flavor. If we were to change one thing about the burrito, it would be the amount of chicken. We agreed that there was not enough chicken. As for ambiance, they played



La Bonita has three different locations SE Division St, NE Alberta St, and N Killingsworth. We got the Grilled Chicken Burrito.

By SYDNEY ISAAC

"Hoedown Throwdown" by Miley Cyrus at one point, which made the experience ten times better. Overall, we definitely recommend La Bonita to Lincoln students and we rated the burrito an 8/10.

SeaSweets Poke was recommended to us by an anonymous sophomore. We visited their SE 31st Ave location. SeaSweets offer a variety of different types of fish and sauces, various toppings, and plenty of options for vegan customers. We both ordered the Shoyu Ahi poke and got different toppings – the regular size cost us each \$14.75. The fish tasted fresh, the flavor was a great balance of umami and tang, and there was a good ratio between all the toppings, rice, and fish. Our favorite topping was the crab salad. Though it was a bit pricey, we think it was 100% worth it. We rated SeaSweets a 10/10.

Overall, we loved all of the restaurants we visited and we think other students should try them too!





BY MICHELLE MILLA

Today (March 30), I watched a man nearly die. A homeless individual overdosed right next to our home. Another unhoused neighbor administered Narcan and revived him. That person saved a life.

Within minutes, Fire Engine No. 3 and an ambulance arrived. I counted seven emergency service professionals on the scene, including someone from Central City Concern, all working with care, precision and urgency.

This is what is happening in our neighborhoods. It is nearly constant and

it's coming at a staggering human and financial cost. How many more of these calls can our system absorb before it breaks?

Emergency personnel are doing a damn fine job, but the volume of overdose calls—often preventable—diverts them from other urgent needs. Our safety infrastructure wasn't designed for this level of burnout and neither were our neighborhoods.

Portland's overdose crisis is one consequence of the city's culture of enablement, in which policies meant to reduce harm have instead allowed harm to multiply. Narcan is saving lives, and it is

also being used as a crutch for a system that refuses to intervene upstream. Day after day, emergency responders are dispatched to the same corners, treating the same individuals and often for entirely preventable overdoses.

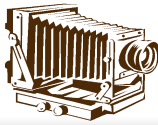
Normalizing drug use shifts the burden onto first responders and taxpayers alike. We're living in a city of harm deferral, not reduction. We are not helping people recover; we're helping them survive just long enough to overdose again tomorrow.

This isn't about blame. Let's get real for a minute. Compassion must be matched with accountability, and public

safety cannot be an afterthought. Each overdose call isn't just a moment of crisis, it is a ripple effect tying up resources pulled from a system operating in the deficit of unanswered and delayed calls across Portland and beyond. Our emergency and safety workers deserve so much better than this.

We must ask if this is the city we want.

[Michelle Milla chairs Stadiumhood Neighbors, a group formed last year to address livability issues near Providence Park.](#)



## Going Back



Folk historian Michael Jones explores tunnel under Northwest 23rd Avenue near Everett Street in 1992.  
Photo by Julie Keefe

Northwest District Association board members posed on the steps of the Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center, then known as the Northwest Service Center, in 1992.  
Photo by Julie Keefe



The produce crew at Durst's Market, now Trader Joe's, in 1991.  
Photo by Julie Keefe





Multnomah County's overnight warming center at Northwest 14th Avenue and Hoyt Street sheltered more than 100 people during the cold snap in early March. The county did not manage the spillover effects on the surrounding blocks, which included drug activity, vandalism, public defecation and sex acts, according to Chase McPherson, executive director of the Northwest Community Conservancy.



The Portland Bureau of Transportation is holding up installation of pedestrian-scale lighting at selected Northwest 21st and 23rd avenues intersections until a comprehensive streetscape study encompassing all future right-of-way improvements is conducted. Neighborhood representatives have balked at spending \$300,000 for such a study and recommend following the model of street lights installed in the Slabtown area. Pedestrian-scale lighting provides better visibility of people in crosswalks.



Portland Parks & Recreation has proposed a “nature patch” landscaping project in Wallace Park. The Northwest District Association has several concerns, including supplanting the natural amphitheater where summer concerts are held, so PP&R planners reduced infringement on that area. Still, NWDA is not sold on the overall benefits of the project. Friends of Wallace Park, on the other hand, has been advocating for the project.



Three local candidates who lost their races in November have formed an organization to advocate for “the majority of Portland residents who desire a safe, functional city in which to live, thrive and raise families.” Partnership for Progress is headed by Vadim Mozyrsky, Eli Arnold and Bob Weinstein. Mozyrsky ran for Multnomah County Council County Council Seat No. 1, while Arnold and Weinstein ran for City Council in District 4. For information, visit <https://www.partner4progress.org/about>.

The Portland City Council will hear an appeal of the Portland General Electric power line expansion project in Forest Park on Thursday, April 17, at 2 p.m. Approval of the project by a city hearings officer last month has been appealed by the Forest Park Neighborhood Association and by the Forest Park Conservancy. To testify (online or in person), citizens may sign up early and/or submit comments in writing, but no sooner than April 11. For more information, visit [portland.gov/council/agenda](http://portland.gov/council/agenda).





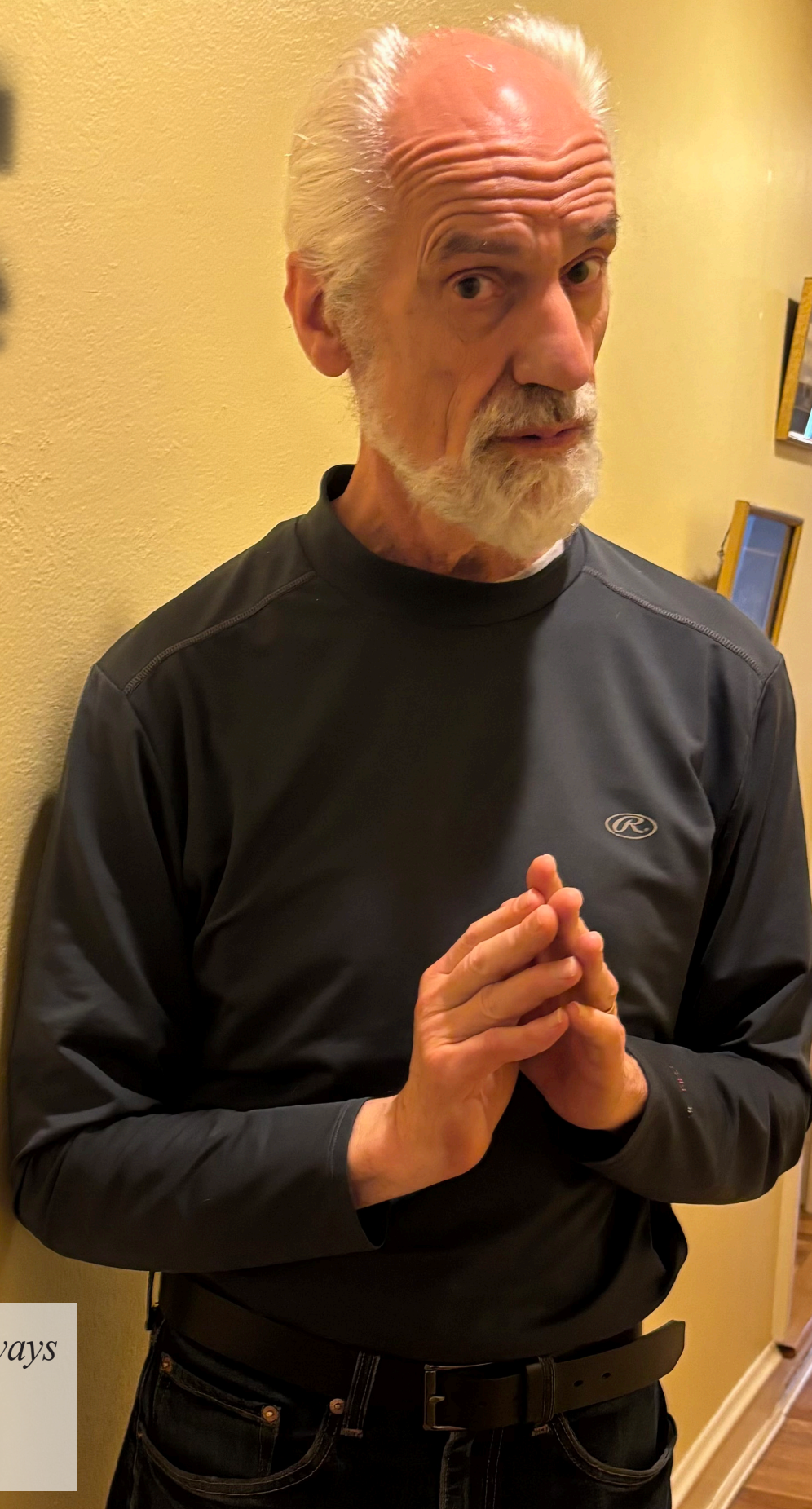
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