


Digging Deep ... Shining a light

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lefties upended


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taste of Nepal


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Development
Map



A line forms at Northwest 15th and Northrup awaiting the 8 p.m. opening of the Northrup Street Shelter.

Portlanders see progress under mayor's shelter plan

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

Is Portland getting better? Do we see progress toward unraveling the Gordian knot of homelessness/addiction/mental illness? Is normal life and commerce returning?

We've been asking ourselves these questions daily, leaning on our personal optimism or pessimism but finding few benchmarks on which to measure our course.

Leaving ambiguity behind, large numbers of Portlanders went on record last month with a clear

conclusion: Things are getting better.

It was not an opinion poll, nor a representative sampling of the population. It flowed from engaged citizens attempting to influence a policy at the heart of the conundrum: Should sweeps of homeless camps be defunded?

Results of in-person testimony during a three-hour hearing on Nov. 12 as well as written comments were solidly against defunding, but they also spoke of faith in the city's future, which may be of far

Continued on page 6

All clear on the shelter front?

Not so fast, say images and neighbors of Safeway area

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

Mayor Keith Wilson may have taken a figurative bow after leftwing attacks on his program to end unsanctioned camping sputtered out at City Council in mid-November. Praise for the program and its success on the ground was broadly expressed at a Nov. 12 council hearing, where hardly anyone suggested the opposite in three hours of testimony.

Continued on page 8



A 46-second video showed clusters of apparent drug activity across Northwest 13th Avenue from the Pearl Safeway.



To Montgomery Park or bust

Streetcar extension plans have quietly moved along

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

While some may have wondered whether the proposed streetcar line extension to Montgomery Park had died, it has been advancing quietly in the background. It may take years and the right mood at the Trump Administration to get there, but the project keeps rolling, ticking off stops along the way.

Surveyors were seen around Northwest 23rd and Northrup streets in late November, the project's first visible stirring, as part of preliminary engineering work funded by a \$250,000 Metro grant approved in July.

Continued on page 13



The 23-acre former ESCO property north of Vaughn Street has been idle since its sale in 2017. Photo by Walden Kirsch.

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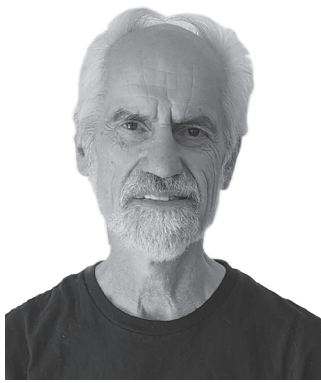
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Self-righteous lefties upended

Few things compare to the self-righteousness of youth, especially a young member of the Democratic Socialists of America elected to the Portland City Council.

City Councilor and DSA member Angelita Morillo attempted an end run around the normal budget process by introducing an amendment to defund homeless camp sweeps via a midyear technical budget adjustment process.

Her cause was clear (at least to her camp): removing camps does not solve homelessness. Of course, letting campsites grow and fester does not solve homelessness either, but who has time for a deeper dive when you’re fresh and eager?

Morillo filed the proposal after 4 p.m. on a Friday with a council vote set for five days later. She apparently believed the necessary seven votes were in her pocket, making any delay just an opening for unwelcome surprises. Speed and stealth were on her side.

There would be only one intervening business day for those not in on the deal to take it in, assess the predicament and somehow mount a plan to head it off at the council meeting.

Morillo, 30, may not have planned the scheme herself, but the five other members of the council’s progressive caucus have a record of hatching political strategies in private, public meetings law be dammed. Seven votes make anything legal, in their eyes.

Hijacking the midyear budget tweaking process was their ploy. The full annual budget creation process takes many months, beginning with the release of a proposed draft in February and ending with council adoption in June for a fiscal year beginning in July. There is a reason for going slow. Public education and mobilization take time, as does assessment of ramifications and consideration of alternatives, not to



ChatGPT illustration.

mention political compromises.

While a technical adjustment ordinance sidesteps all those niceties, no rule prevents its use for major policy reconsideration. Nothing other than common decency, a respect for the citizenry and for democratic fair play.

Mayor Keith Wilson responded in the usual way one reacts to a live hand grenade thrown onto one’s lap. He hurried back from an overseas trip on Saturday, gathered his troops and began contacting constituencies threatened by changes in the 149 budget line

items affected by Morillo’s amendment. The mayor’s team identified several unintended victims of the budget bomb, and some of them got to Councilor Loretta Smith, the precious seventh vote Morillo needed to pull off the blitzkrieg.

Outmaneuvered, Morillo couldn’t even retain a sixth vote. All she had left was her microphone and her indignation, which she played to the hilt. She unleashed a 15-minute tirade full of attacks against the mayor for his supposedly unethical reaction to her backroom stratagem.

After sitting patiently through the whole ordeal, Wilson responded resolutely but with decorum.

“While you may criticize the administration,” he said, “My job is to make you successful. My job is to make the city successful. I do that by thinking slow.

“It is time to measure what we are trying to achieve, to analyze it with a group, with the administration as our partners, building trustful relationships. We need a professional, disciplined executive.”

It may have been Wilson’s finest hour in his uphill campaign to end unsanctioned camping. Though it has been broadly and intensely criticized, many who testified at the council hearing praised his plan for making the city and their communities better.

Only 31% of the 84 witnesses supported Morillo’s alternative plan. The same percentage of the 1,100 who submitted written comments supported it. If local socialists have tapped into a vein of resentment at the way the city is being run, they opened a torrent of disdain for their ideological and divisive alternative.

Partisanship was the great fear of our nation’s founders, as well as those who created Portland’s nonpartisan charter. Yet we now have partisanship everywhere, including what functions as a political party attempting to run our city.

The existence of one party tends to beget another, so in response to the Democratic Socialists among us, I would propose another. It might not be sexy. It may not even be better than average, but it would be so much better than the alternative. I’d call it The Adults in the Room Party.

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Readers Reply

Letters can be sent to: 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.

Housing First not flawed

The headline in November, “Housing First flawed strategy,” is inaccurate and misleading. The strategy of Housing First has from its inception included the provision of services along with the housing. The fact that these services have not been provided is a failure of implementation, not strategy.

The concept of Housing First is based on the need to place people under roofs while they are receiving services. Try-

ing to provide these services to people living on the street is difficult, if not impossible. Place the blame where it belongs—on government’s lack of effort to help those with mental illness or drug addiction after placing them in housing, not on the act of giving them shelter.

Stephen Kafoury
NW Couch St.

Comments from NWExaminer.com

Housing First strategy

Dr. Thomas Dodson

"No to housing first. It will lead to more of the same and is unsustainable and dangerous."

Ending camp sweeps

David Mitchell

"I thought Portlanders were fed up with illegal outdoor camping, open-air hard-drug use, trash on sidewalks and streets, random property crime, graffiti and widespread antisocial behavior. But then came Charter Reform and a chance

Cont'd on page 5

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Keith P. Garnett



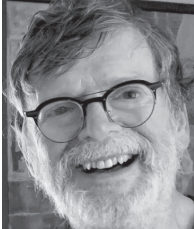
Keith P. Garnett, a former Northwest District Association resident, died Nov. 9 at age 76. He was born on Oct. 6, 1949, at St. Vincent Hospital, which was then on Northwest Westover Drive. He grew up in Beaverton and attended Saint Cecelia School before moving with his family to Palo Alto, Calif., in 1959. He received a degree in geography from Portland State University and worked as a surveyor and cartographer. He worked for the U.S. Forest Service before retiring in 2009. He moved to Portland's Northwest District in 1971 and lived many years in Willamette Heights and later on Northwest 28th Avenue. Survivors include his daughter, Elizabeth Levenson; son, Michael Garnett; sisters, Kathleen, Jean, Erin and Nancy; brothers, Mike and Dennis; and four grandchildren.

Georjan 'Jan' McMurphey



Georjan "Jan" McMurphey, a former Northwest District and Goose Hollow resident, died Oct. 29 at age 87. She was born on Jan. 30, 1938, in Portland and graduated from Grant High School in 1955. She received a bachelor's degree in English from the University of Oregon in 1959. She performed at Portland Civic Theater and Firehouse Theater and appeared in television commercials. She married Thomas Carstensen in 1960, and they had two daughters. After divorcing, she received a master's degree in counseling and became a therapist for Lutheran Family Services before going into private practice. She is survived by her daughters, Jeanne Carstensen and Carol Carstensen Burg; and four grandchildren.

David E. Judd



David E. Judd, a former resident of Willamette Heights, died on Nov. 1 at age 79 of ALS. He was born on Nov. 9, 1945, in Oregon City and grew up on a farm in Clackamas County. He attended Molalla High School and Willamette University. He worked for City Commissioner Mike Lindberg and was a parks administrator in Portland and Vancouver, Wash. He lived in Willamette Heights from 1989 to 2007. He is survived by his wife, Kathryn Fitch; sons, Aaron and Andrew; sister, Trudy Kayser; and two grandchildren.

Jay C. Rollins

Jay C. Rollins, a resident of Northwest 18th Avenue, died on Oct. 15, of cancer at age 62. He was born on Oct. 27, 1962, in Oklahoma and grew up in Texas. He was the technical director at Skyworks Solutions and worked in the field of wireless technology in both California and Portland, where he moved in 2004. He coached youth teams in Lego League FIRST Robotics. He is survived by his wife, Kerry Duff; sons, Rowan and Alistair Duff-Rollins; and his brother, Michael.

Peter Lovely



Peter Scott Lovely, a Northwest Northrup Street resident since 1984, died on Oct. 22 at age 80. He was born on Feb. 12, 1945, and grew up in Springfield, Vt. He studied physics and chemistry at Harvard, the University of California, Berkley, and in Oregon. He worked as a physicist, specializing in optics. He is survived by his wife, Sherrie Wolf, daughter, Sarah Wolf; siblings, Rod, Tom, Candace and Charlie; and one grandchild.

Raymond Johnson



Raymond Johnson, a co-owner of BASCO Appliances in the Pearl District, died on Nov. 21 at age 94. He was born in 1931 in Portland and graduated from Lincoln High School. He served in the Army during the Korean War before returning to Portland and attending the University of Oregon. He worked for BASCO for more than 30 years and became a co-owner. He was a gifted pianist who performed at many local events. He is survived by his wife; two children; seven grandchildren; and one great-grandchild.

Death notices

CURTIS DAHL, 93, 1949 graduate of Lincoln High School.

PATRICIA DEMENT, 79, nurse at Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center for 40 years.

JOHN HABER, 85, Lincoln High School graduate / Member state championship basketball team

MOLLY HOLSAPPLE, 77, 1966 graduate of Lincoln High School.

CAROL LOMAX, 91, decorated swimmer at the Multnomah Athletic Club.

JAMES W PERKINS, 90, Multnomah Athletic Club member.

ROBERT D. PERRY JR, 81, longtime member of the Anglican Parish of St. Mark.

BARBARA SPENCE, 80, Northwest District resident since 2007.

DIANA STEGNER, 88, former resident of Portland Heights.

The Northwest Examiner publishes obituaries of people who lived, worked or had other substantial connections to our readership area, which includes Northwest Portland, Goose Hollow, Sauvie Island and areas north of Highway 26. If you have information about a death in our area, please contact us at allan@nwexaminer.com. Photographs are also welcomed. There is no charge for obituaries in the Examiner.

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to elect a City Council with the guts to tackle these issues and produce results. ... But Portland remains stuck in some leftist ideology where elected representatives place a higher priority on those who contribute little or nothing to the community over those who bust their butts working and dutifully paying the highest civic taxes of any major city in the United States. "

Ruby Reichardt

"I have a new shelter in my neighborhood, and I was just mentioning to my daughter how bad it has gotten in the Pearl. People screaming aimlessly into the night, defecating, doing drugs, sleeping and camping out around Jami-son and Tanner Spring parks, people randomly yelling and throwing stuff at you, and nobody answering the phone for any of the recourses provided. In the meantime property values are consistently going down and property taxes are rising."

Powell's Books

Chuck Duffy

"I lived in NW for 40 years and now live in Charleston, SC. I had countless dealings with Powells every year. And I still order books from there sent to me in Charleston. Carpe Libre."

Kate Fulton's causes

Paul Douglas

"What a remarkable human being. May she continue to pursue her passion for justice."

Preschool For All

Cormac Burke

"Thanks for the thoughtful article. It was really infuriating to see Jessica Vega Pederson's and others response when Gov. Tina Kotek pushed to revisit how Preschool For All should be managed. The pushback saying that indexing to inflation would lead to bankrupting the program was particularly galling when they had such a surplus. I absolutely support PFA, but the unwillingness to objectively review how it's going is crazy."

Northrup Shelter report

Jonathan Blatt

"Outside Safeway is sometimes crowded with transients just before or after dark and almost always especially in the dark alcove opposite Sisters Coffee on Marshall. I think there should be a bright light in that alcove, and it would be fair if the city should pitch in to give Safeway extra security guard hours. Same for extra security at Fred Meyer on Burnside, some of the ample money from the ballot initiative or other city funds might help them too."

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Citizens rallied on Nov. 12 against a proposed ban on camping sweeps. After a seven-hour City Council meeting, the measure was rejected.



The proposed budget cut would have reduced outreach to homeless people near shelters under the city’s Impact Reduction Program.

"Staying the course" cont'd from page 1

greater consequence.

City Councilor Angelita Morillo introduced the defunding amendment five days before the council vote. Despite the late notice, 84 people testified and 1,108 submitted written comments. The amendment ultimately died because one promised supporter, Councilor Loretta Smith, reversed her position the day before the meeting.

The same result would have been reached if representatives were listening to their constituents.

Only 31% of speakers supported defunding, the same percentage as those submitting written comments. The primary reason given against blowing up Mayor Keith Wilson’s broad plan of shelters and adjacent nuisance abatement is that citizens believed the system is working. They said Portland is getting better.

Almost 40% of those opposing defunding said they think conditions on the ground are improving and/or the Impact Reduction Program is helping. Most said nothing one way or another on that topic, but it is notable that none said that things have gotten worse since the shelter and mitigation system was instituted.

“Two years ago, I was daily cleaning human feces, needles, burnt foil and chasing drug addicts and violent offenders out of the back alley,” said Laura Curry, who lives next to Interstate 405. “Because of what is now currently happening with the mayor’s overnight sheltering system, my neighborhood is getting safer. ... This is progress that’s happening in the city of Portland.”

Downtown resident Sandeep Divakar said, “Because of the Impact Reduction

Program and the responsiveness from Shelter Portland and the mayor’s office, the neighborhood is much safer than it was two months ago. I wasn’t a fan of Mayor Wilson and his shelters before, but I am now.”

“The good news is that Portland is slowly and surely beginning to shed its reputation as a city in trouble,” Pearl resident Stephen Kafoury said. “The mayor’s actions have laid the groundwork for its reemergence. Streets are being cleaned, graffiti is being removed, shelters are being opened.”

“Since the IRP increased its presence, our neighborhood has never been cleaner or safer,” said Katherine Applegarth, administrator of the International School of Portland in downtown. “We see it: our families feel it. The promise of renewal is working. The IRP isn’t just about garbage removal or campsite assessments. It’s about dignity, safety and keeping hope visible for the next generation.”

“[This] is a dismantling of one of the few programs that’s actually working—the Impact Reduction Program,” said Bruce Studer, president of the Pearl District Neighborhood Association.

“For the first time in years, we have seen real and measurable progress on our city streets, progress that has improved public safety for both housed and unhoused residents since the program’s implementation,” said Matthew Sweitzer, a Realtor and District 4 resident.

“We are seeing a difference,” said Rachel Clark, owner of the Goose Hollow Inn. “The city is on a course that is reducing the impacts of camping on the people who walk, run and play in the city.”

“I had become more and more of a

prisoner in my own condo,” said Pearl District resident Yasmine Sahul, “and last week, for the first time, I felt safe. Thank you, Mayor Wilson, that I felt safe walking from Safeway to my doctor’s office on Kearney and 18th.”

These and other glowing progress reports found no disagreement at the council hearing. That does not mean the conclusion is unanimous.

Linda Witt, who chairs the Pearl District Neighborhood Association Shelter Oversight Committee, has been leading a meticulous project measuring livability changes brought on by the 200-bed Northrup Street Shelter that opened on Sept. 2. In a series of five reports to date, nuisances and safety/livability incidents have been logged alongside reports of effective work done by the Impact Reduction Program and other agencies.

Witt’s reports, based on daily inspections by volunteers in 10 zones across the district, have chronicled the good and the bad, as well as offering suggestions for improvement.

Her assessment? In a report to the PDNA board last month, Witt said, that despite diligent work by the Impact Reduction Program, “It really does feel like one step forward, two steps back.”

The citywide program to end unsanctioned camping by Dec. 1 might be having the opposite effect locally.

“We’ve seen an explosion of people sleeping outside in the Pearl,” she said.

How does she explain the rosy reports shared at the council hearing?

“Not everyone can see everything,” she said.

Witnesses may have accurately

reported what they saw, but without a methodical system of observing and logging findings, they faced limits.

“They may not see the hot spots,” Witt said.

Another factor perhaps leading to the comments of Portland on the rise could have been the mission of the speakers. Advocates for continued camp sweeps and nuisance abatement might have been less persuasive had they said the plan is not working.

“We need the Impact Reduction Program to continue—that was their play,” Witt said.

John Hollister, a Pearl resident devoting hundreds of hours to the homeless issue in the past five years, concurs.

“I don’t believe it’s gotten better in the Pearl District,” he said. “I think there is a high increase in drug activity around Safeway ... and Jamison Park is getting worse.”

The bike parking alcoves around ASA Flats remain troublesome. People leaving the overnight shelter in the morning spread out across the neighborhood, impacting a much larger area, Hollister said.

“This largely tracks with our observations in Old Town,” said Kevin Guinn, an Old Town resident and member of the Old Town Community Association board. “Maybe a baby step forward, but not much more than that.

“[There is] drug use in vestibules, little coteries of users fanning out from Oasis [day center at Northwest Glisan and Broadway]. They do aggregate a lot of people at the Oasis, some of whom are being bused in from the Eastside (which hardly seems fair). They’ve effectively made Old Town even more of a camping/

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Isaiah 9:6, circa 750 B.C.

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Clean and Safe crew member Ryan O'Brien cleans streets and removes litter as part of the Impact Reduction Program. Photo by Walden Kirsch.



Central City Concern collects trash from hot spots in the Pearl District seven days a week.

trespassing “oasis.”

But even some involved with the Shelter Oversight Committee see a brighter side.

Matt Zmuda makes two loops along the Western edge of the Pearl District daily while bicycling his daughter to school. He used to report a couple of incidents per day, and now the usual count is zero.

“I’ve been canvassing the southeast side of the Pearl since Sept. 23,” Glenn Traeger said. “At that time, I typically saw seven to 10 tents, graffiti, and occasionally someone laid out on the sidewalk.

Since Nov. 1, when the mayor’s new tent policy took effect, I’ve seen a reduction to about one to three tents, fewer instances of people passed out on the sidewalk and less graffiti. ... The area is looking better than it has in the past.”

Another member of the Shelter Oversight Committee is Stan Penkin, who was president of the Pearl District Neighborhood Association for seven years.

“Contrary to what some others have been observing, I have not seen a significant difference in day-to-day livability issues since before the opening of the shelter,” Penkin said.

“Having made many reports when I do see a tent or a poor condition, the city shelter team has been responsive. Had PDNA not spoken up as it did and continues to do, I am not sure that the city would have paid the same level of attention to the Pearl.”

One downtown resident took a deeper dive into why some say things are looking up.

“I think part of the reason is the very beneficial effects the expansion of Clean and Safe and GuardaWorld (a private security firm hired by the city) is having on western Downtown,” he wrote. “We have seen remarkable improvement in our area; far from perfect, but improvement.

“But the problem is we just are upping the cost and sophistication of moving the problem rather than solving it. It will result in spending more money to move things without ever solving the problem while using up problem-solving resources.”

Another message, though unspoken, could be drawn from the council hearing in which many affirmed the city’s direction.

No one speaking in support of Morillo’s amendment offered an opinion on that topic. Incremental progress or decline was not on their minds.

Their position—repeated by many—was that homeless sweeps do not work, while causing further suffering for those uprooted. As to whether the city itself works in the current disequilibrium or whether there’s a light at the end of Portland’s long, dark tunnel, they had nothing to say.

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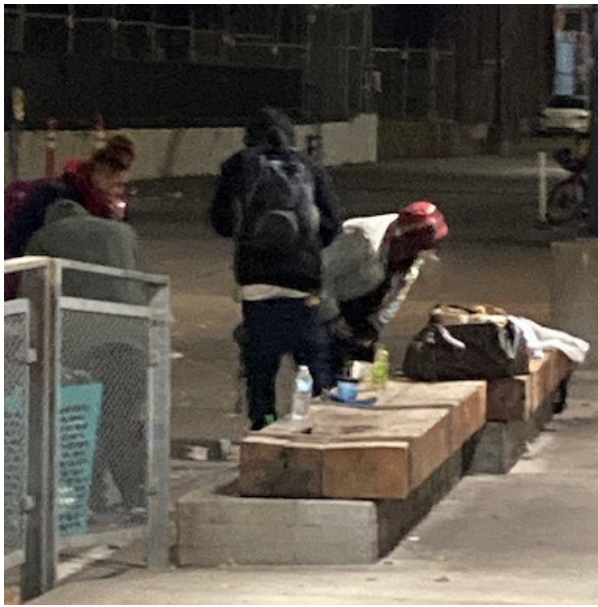


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The streets around the Pearl Safeway are increasingly gathering places for loitering, alleged drug use and sleeping since the Northrup Shelter opened, according to many neighborhood observers, some of whom take photographs.

"All clear" cont'd from page 1

But a 46-second video of apparent drug users on Northwest 13th Avenue by Safeway published by the NW Examiner on Nov. 26 punctured claims that things are fine in the Pearl District.

The clip shows more than a dozen individuals on the covered sidewalk across the street from the store, most huddled around or lying amid litter and gathering up small items as the camera approaches. The video was obtained by Waterfront Pearl resident and activist Joan Neice, who told the Examiner it was sent to her by a friend, who in turn got it from the videographer, who insisted on anonymity.

District 4 City Councilor Eric Zimmerman reviewed the video and responded immediately.

"It's an absolute disaster and something

we can never let go unchecked," Zimmerman replied in an email. "I'll ensure this gets in front of the mayor and plead with him to deploy police. Our police need to intervene, and they have my full support to do so."

"No neighborhood deserves this, and I'll do everything I can to deploy crime prevention design for this area."

He has also heard reports that Safeway may close this store.

"Safeway is one of the most important tenants and services in the neighborhood," he said.

The Examiner post was its most viewed entry since launching its website last spring, with more than 10,000 views. Comments were submitted by 24 paid subscribers.

"Sometimes I feel like Zimmerman

is the only councilor who listens and is willing to do more than just listen," was the first comment. "Whoever filmed this: Thank you."

"I recently wrote a letter to the mayor begging him to have a real police presence here, as this has without question worsened since the shelter opened and is completely contrary to his promise that the neighborhood would improve. The video says it all, and I would hope it stops the NIMBY accusations."

"I'm glad to see a high-level city official finally noticing what has been the norm at this site for nearly a decade," wrote David Mitchell, who recently moved out of the Pearl. "Many days, the scene on the sidewalk in front of Safeway looks the same way. When I was installing the cigarette butt receptacles around the Pearl in 2018, walking along 13th on either side of

street adjacent to Safeway was always a scene right out of San Francisco's Tenderloin District."

"When the North Pearl District started developing, I sort of was envious that I didn't live there," David Metzler wrote. "These days, not so much. ... It is very depressing to see the decline of what was once the finest 'big city' urbanized neighborhood in Portland."

"It's this way early in the morning as well," Dan Berne wrote. "Last week, I could not walk on the sidewalk ramp or steps on Northwest 13th going to Safeway because individuals were strewn across, actively taking meth or just having taken it."

"Even [Portland Police] Commander Brian Hughes has seen this video and said he was appalled," wrote Linda Witt, who chairs the Pearl District Neighborhood



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Look for details soon on Instagram and in the NW Examiner about our next Neighborhood Mixer. See you soon!



8 Northwest Examiner, DECEMBER 2025 / nwexaminer.com



The Pearl District Neighborhood Association Shelter Oversight Committee has collected 75 photos of unwanted activity around Safeway, and other residents who have taken plenty more.

Association Shelter Oversight Committee. “In the same breath, he said they don’t have the resources to deal with this. Even worse, the 9 p.m. to 3 a.m. window—when the worst of the drug use happens—is the least policed shift.”

Pearl resident Patricia Anderson wrote Zimmerman directly.

“I very much appreciate your reaction to the NW Examiner article and video on the area surrounding the Safeway at Northwest 13th and Lovejoy. Thank you for recognizing the plight of the once-vibrant Pearl. I hesitate now to say where I live; once I was proud.

“Our Safeway is already struggling with widespread, blatant theft. However, it is a valuable neighborhood resource, especially for elders who do not drive or are infirm. But as it stands, it is dangerous for them, especially after dark.

“More police please! And please request that they patrol the whole area surrounding the Safeway and the shelter, including the parks,

lest the dealers and users simple move to another block.”

While videos may not lie, without knowing who took it, why they did so and what was left out, a misleading impression can be created.

The Examiner asked several Pearl activists for their photos and observations.

Witt sent 75 photos of “loiterers, trespassers, trash and general mayhem” within two blocks of Safeway.

Several others sent smaller batches of photos.

The mayor’s office did not respond to the Examiner’s request for comment or to Zimmerman’s call for action.

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**OREGON
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Brothers bring a taste of Nepal to Nom Nom Wings



Chef Joseph Han was trained at Le Cordon Bleu culinary school in San Francisco. Photo by Walden Kirsch.

Asian fusion tapas restaurant and bar takes flight

Sameer Shrestha and Ivash Dongol aren't brothers in the usual sense. In their native Nepal, a good friend is called brother, explained Ivash from behind the bar where he and Sameer work shoulder to shoulder, sometimes chatting in Newari, their original Nepalese language.

The two recently took over Nom Nom Asian Tapas and bring a steady presence to their fusion restaurant at 524 NW 14th Ave. They've tweaked the lighting and interiors, pleasing both chef Joseph Han and the patrons, said Sameer.

"Phase by phase" is how the blood and sweat of getting a restaurant off the ground is done, said Sameer, who has lived in the United States for four years. "I make some money, I spend some money."

Changes since taking over the space include lunch (there's a \$10.99 chicken or pork curry rice bowl, and

dumplings) and expanded hours. They often stay later to feed soccer fans after Timbers games.

Chef Han did the "corporate cooking thing" for eBay and Nike before finding the creative freedom and stability he craved here. Try his garlic shrimp with carrot ginger puree and tiger sauce. As a boy, Han said his Korean-American father shooed him from the kitchen, which he considered a woman's realm. But his grandmother shared her skills with him anyway and he studied at Le Cordon Bleu Culinary School in San Francisco.

Dishes are shareable and served tapas-style. Himalayan-style dumplings, called "momo" are a handmade standout, as is the Nepalese chow mein. All the spices are imported and freshly ground, and there's even a Tibetan beer, Barasinghe. "We're the only place that has it, it's a lager-style pilsner. Back home everyone loves it," Sameer said.

People think of Nepal as all mountainous, said Ivash, but "there are mountains, and hills and flatlands." Since moving here, he's noticed how independent Americans are, almost solitary. "In Nepal you are very attached to your family and friends."

Nonetheless, he said he dreamed of coming to America since he was a boy. As the only son in a family with four other sisters, he sends much of what he earns back home. He studied computer science in Missouri before coming to Portland two months ago to join Sameer.

Sameer studied engineering as an undergraduate but became obsessed with cooking in recent years.

"It's now or never," he said of his venture. "It's both a struggle and a new beginning."



Not nearly ready to Powell's carries as many

Powell's City of Books is one of my through lines. More than libraries, it's always been Powell's. Living near it, as we do in Northwest Portland, must be what people who live close to the Smithsonian or the New York Public Library feel like. Richer by proximity.

My dad used to say Powell's was open on Christmas Eve and Christmas for the "poor bastards" who had nowhere else to go. The hours changed a long time ago, which is good for staff but sad for the loners.

The last book I purchased at Powell's was "A Spy Among Friends" by Ben Macintyre for \$10.98. I had just streamed a series based on the book and had to take another, slower lap around the fascinating story of British double agent Kim Philby. I hunted it down, got my hands on it and felt that familiar Powell's rush as I breathed in the smell of dust and paper.

NOBBY NEWS

Vol. 31, No. 12 "News You Can't Always Believe" DECEMBER 2025

The Duck says stay strong

While University of Oregon football players have prodigious appetites, their mascot needs to load up on calories too. All those pushups after each score add up, and Duck fans don't consider the job done until he's flexed his elbows for each point.

That's why you'll often find him at the Nob Hill Bar & Grill loading up on burgers. The Duck (he's not supposed to say his first name, although we all know it's Donald) has been up to the task, so far. He also knows the faithful would like nothing better than seeing him squeeze off 70 or so against Miami, so he's staying around the training table.

Fans can also prepare for the grueling playoff bracket with all kinds of good food and beverages at the Nobby. Do your part to push the Ducks over the goal line.

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turn the page *memories as it does books*

News of the layoffs of 31 employees at Powell’s makes me anxious for the staff and for the rest of us. There are many examples of local institutions teetering, like Higgins Restaurant and Next Adventure. But if Powell’s folds, we might actually be well and truly done for.

I’m not as interested in the economics of what’s happening at Powell’s as much as the cultural, personal reasons that could be at play. I used to go to Powell’s and page an employee who ran the small press department. Calling Kevin Sampsell to the Blue Room. If he was there, he’d meet me and I’d say, “What’s good? I need something to read.” His tastes ran different than mine, but I loved seeing what he came up with. I don’t talk to anyone at Powell’s anymore, but he’s still there in charge of the small press section and hosting most of the author events.

When I go to Powell’s, I overhear tourists ask unintentionally funny things like, “What is this place, a bookstore?” They don’t seem to be buying much, but they’re taking photos to post. Plants and candles—not books—were for sale on tables in the Home and Garden room over the summer. So maybe the tourist’s question isn’t so dumb, and I’m just a condescending local.

When I worked at the Powell’s on Hawthorne after college, it felt at the time like a fresh take on what a bookstore could look and feel like, with its poured concrete floors and clean lines. Many books on art and architecture. It connected to Powell’s Books for Cooks, which then led to City Market. My coworkers and I lived on their Parmesan breadsticks. Many

Briefly . . .

X NOODLES AND DUMPLINGS, 870 NW 13th Ave., is about to open. For real this time. The sign is up on the corner of Northwest 13th and Kearney Street (the former home of SuperDeluxe), and the new interiors have been completed.

HUNT & GATHER PROVISIONS, 1203 NW Glisan St., is open for morning foraging at 8 a.m. Tuesday-Saturday. The French-inspired menu has a few down-to-earth options in addition to the elevated French cuisine. A slice of ham and gruyere quiche lorraine (\$8) with pate brisee crust is decadent, so just get it and don’t look back. Chef Andrew Biggs and team also offer a chorizo breakfast burrito (\$12) with sides of sour cream and hot sauce; avocado toast (\$10); and bread pudding French toast (\$12). A full pastry case displays croissants, pear frangipane,

years later, Powell’s on Hawthorne is pretty run down, and not in a pleasing, louche sort of way.

Walking by Powell’s downtown, I glance at the red and black Burnside marquee most days and calendar myself to go to a reading. “Born to read, forced to work” is a sticker I saw that pretty much says it all when planning stuff for my spare time.

Recently, I read an article about the Louvre jewelry heist in which experienced thieves were asked to hypothesize about the crime and speculate whether they thought it was an inside job. One of the ex-cons was Joan Hannington, author of “Joan, How I Became Britian’s Most Notorious Diamond Thief.” Her method was to swallow the diamonds she nicked. I sprinted to Powell’s to find the book but came up empty.

Next I contacted Patrick Leonard, who runs **Postcard Bookshop**, a tiny travel-themed place about the size of a postage stamp with titles organized by geographic area. He ordered it. It was done. It was personable. So maybe he’s my next supplier, and like other readers, I’ve found a different way to score books.

This is a roundabout way to get to the point. The **Portland Book Festival** is Saturday, Nov. 8, and will take place on 10 stages in six venues. The annual event is produced by Literary Arts , which recently bought a building on 716 SE Grand Ave. and moved its offices from downtown. About a year ago, Literary Arts opened a bookstore and cafe there.

The family of Ursula K. Le Guin has donated her old house in Northwest Portland to turn it into the Ursula K. Le Guin Writer’s Residency. From its second floor she wrote “The Books at Earthsea,” “The Dispossessed” and “The Left Hand of Darkness. “

Right across from Literary Arts’ new home is **Mother Foucault’s Bookshop**, an acutely cool place with a small gas fireplace, conversation nooks and books stacked every which way. Here, the intellectually curious can immerse themselves in books on philosophy, poetry and literature.

Mercifully, no cellphone usage is allowed.

a monster cinnamon roll and a savory house puff with leeks and mushrooms.

FISHERMAN’S DAUGHTER VINTAGE SUPPLY, 931 NW 23rd Ave., will open soon in the former Alotto Gelato space next door to Nob Hill Tavern. They plan to hock all the good old scruffy stuff: worn denim, secondhand workwear, and according to a Facebook page, “treasures that feel like the Pacific Northwest itself.” So while loggers and shipyard workers are scarce these days, we can still dress like them.

CAMBRIA HOTEL, 165 NW Park Ave., is a new dog-friendly hotel on the North Park Blocks just a hop, skip and a jump from Powell’s City of Books. The hotel restaurant, Recess, is named for the jungle gym out front and in honor of the Emerson School that came before it. Recess has a happy hour from 4-6 daily.

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GREATER NORTHWEST PORTLAND DEVELOPMENT MAP

2245-2255 NW OVERTON

Raja Daggula, a real estate agent based in Gaston, bought two circa 1900 now-vacant rental houses on Northwest Overton Street last June. He plans to remodel at least one of them for continued use as a rental property.



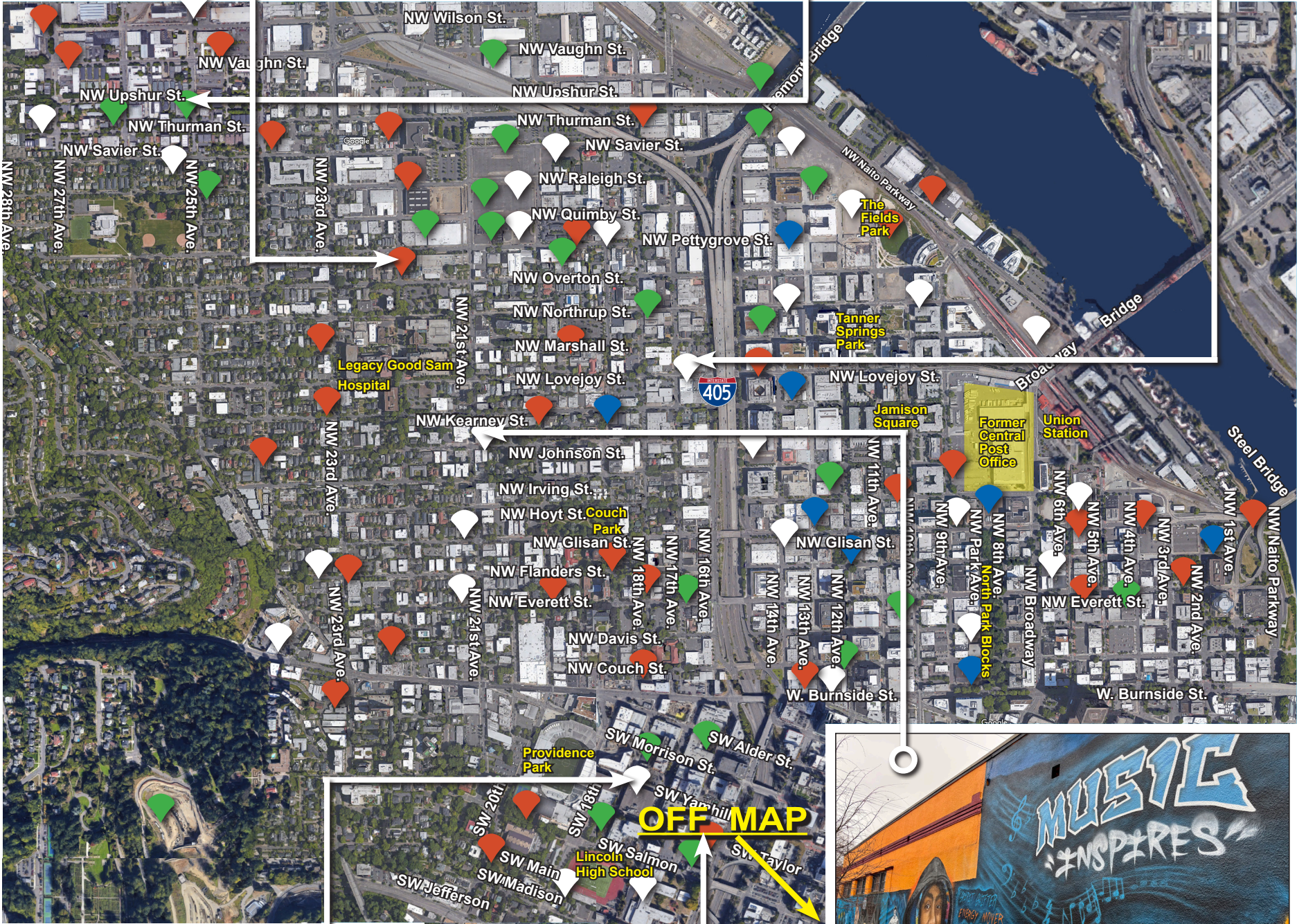
2375 NW THURMAN ST.

The sale of the Food Front Cooperative Grocery property at 2375 NW Thurman St. to developer Mark New closed Oct. 22. The transaction retires the co-op's \$1 million loan and provides for the paying off remaining co-op suppliers. Remodeling will begin as soon as city permits can be processed.



BETHANIE'S ROOM

Bethanie's Room, an overnight women's shelter at Northwest 17th and Lovejoy intended to open in September, is now scheduled to open in early 2026, according to the Blanchet House, its owner and operator. It will close at 9 a.m., when Rose Haven Day Shelter five blocks south opens.



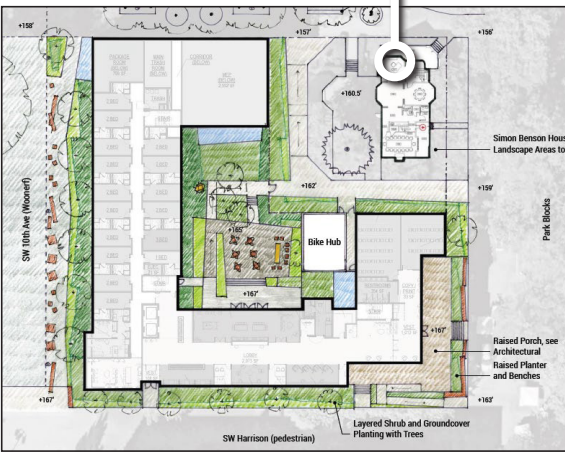
735 NW 21ST AVE.

The derelict and long-vacant former City Market building at Northwest 21st and Johnson streets is looking better these days thanks to a mural by Portland artist/skateboarder Jaymeer. The "Music Inspires" mural is a tribute to local musicians Christian Lucas (1990-2022) and Chaka J. Bloodsaw (1976-2025)



THE BYLINE

A soft opening for the 24-story office/residential/retail tower at 1640 SW Yamhill St, will be held on Dec. 9. It will have 341 apartments, from 1,800-square-foot penthouses renting for \$9,000 to studios starting at \$1,815 a month.



PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY

Portland State University representatives have scheduled a design advice meeting with the Portland Bureau of Development Services on Dec. 18 for a five- or six-story student residence that would replace the historic Montgomery Court (1802 SW 10th Ave) and Blackstone Hall, which are slated for demolition next fall.



The proposed streetcar extension would have tracks in both directions on Northwest 23rd Avenue and a loop to Montgomery Park using Roosevelt and Wilson streets.

"Montgomery" cont'd from page 1

Northwest District Association President Todd Zarnitz, who calls the project a “boondoggle,” reported the sigSting to his organization. NWDA has for years questioned the project’s value, particularly the route favoring future development over service to the existing neighborhood.

“I presumed the federal support would have evaporated,” said Steve Pinger, who represented NWDA on an official citizen oversight body that stopped meeting four years ago.

Neighbors thought last year’s collapse of ambitious redevelopment plans for Montgomery Park that included high-density housing on current surface parking lots might throw a damper on things. It didn’t seem to matter.

“It has gone through at least three administrative approvals since the first of the year,” Pinger said, though none involved the level of community outreach he expected.

The recent approvals include Portland City Council’s adoption of the route and associated zoning changes last December. Metro added its blessing this summer, and in October, the council authorized requests for proposals for infrastructure design and streetcar vehicles.

A \$30 million grant from the Portland Clean Energy Fund for additional streetcar vehicles has been awarded.

Another grant application to the Federal Transit Administration could bring another \$30 million, with a decision at least two years away

Tracks would occupy both lanes of Northwest 23rd, the first time Portland Streetcar would have two-way service on the same street. The route would extend from Northwest Northrup to Roosevelt Street, then turn westward toward Montgomery Park at Northwest 27th

Avenue.

Portland Streetcar Inc. Executive Director Dan Bower has been through this process before in his nearly 12 years at the helm, a period in which the system has expanded to the Eastside.

As for the perception of all action and no talk, the Portland Bureau of Transportation explained recent delays in citizen engagement to “unforeseen procurement delays at the city” and promised email updates about every three months.

The route, however, is unlikely to change no matter what citizens say, according to Bower, in that the “locally preferred option” has been approved unanimously at every local jurisdiction.

Unico Pro-perties’ sale of Montgomery Park last year for 13% of what it paid for the 18-acre site only five years earlier laid to rest a spectacular vision for a mixed-use urban center with mid-rise housing, retail, office space and even a pedestrian bridge linking to Forest Park. Local buyer Menashe Properties has yet to announce any plans for the site.

If the proposed urban center and resulting ridership justified the Montgomery Park destination, what is the consequence of that vision deflating? If it remains primarily an office facility, potential growth would be more limited.

But who is counting?

“Ridership is modeled on adopted zoning, and the zoning at that site has not changed between ownership transfers, so our future projections remain static,” Bower said.

PBOT and the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability give the same explanation. Because the 30-plus acres in the

Continued on page 14



Nearly all structures have been removed from the 23-acre former ESCO property. Revised zoning allows residential and retail uses. Photo by Walden Kirsch.

“I presumed the federal support would have evaporated.”
Steve Pinger,
Northwest District Association

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Left: Montgomery Park is looking for tenants, and its new owner, Menashe Properties, has announced no plans for the property, which it acquired at a fire-sale price last year.
Above: Northwest Wilson Street could have a streetcar line but currently lacks uses that generate riders. Photos by Walden Kirsch.

"Montgomery" cont'd from page 13

Montgomery Park Area Plan have been rezoned to allow residential and a wider spectrum of commercial uses, future growth can be counted on.

“Over the next 20 years, the broader Montgomery Park study area is expected to grow by up to 14,000 new households and 1,500 new jobs,” according to the plan adopted by the city. “Within the core project area, more than 2,000 new households, and hundreds of new jobs could be accommodated. The existing transportation network would be unable to support this future growth if residents, workers, and visitors travel by driving alone.”

The plan assumed the streetcar extension would draw an additional 3,300 daily riders, a 60 percent increase over existing ridership on the North-South streetcar line.

The total budget for the streetcar extension project is \$190 million, which includes rebuilding Northwest 23rd, Wilson and Roosevelt streets as well as installing tracks. Adding new and replacing aging trains would cost about \$60 million, of which the Federal Transportation Administration will be asked to provide a 50% match or \$30 million.

Ultimately, property owners along the route will be asked to tax themselves through a local improvement district (LID). The amount of that tax and which properties will be assessed are unknowns, Bower said, that cannot be estimated until the main funding streams are in place.

The current Portland Streetcar system has been 14% funded by LIDs, according to the Federal Highway Administration, but Bower said that gives no indication of the share Northwest Portland property owners would be expected to pay.

“It’s not particularly instructive to compare what was done 25 or even 15 years ago,” Bower said. “This conversation will evolve as we learn more about project scope and budget and we have a better sense of our partnership with the FTA.”

Nor can it be known which properties will be bound by the LID. Because a majority of property owners within a proposed LID must vote affirmatively to create the taxing district, those boundary lines must be drawn strategically to exclude those likely to vote no.

Zarnitz has spoken and testified repeatedly about the unfairness of this process, which could tax homeowners deriving little benefit from a streetcar line equally with property owners standing to receive a substantial boost in their development potential.

“Why should businesses and homeowners, in an already thriving neighborhood, be compelled to make a major investment in infrastructure whose primary and obvious beneficiaries will be the developers of vacant land tracts?” he said.

Before LID discussions can begin, the federal grant application must play out.

Bower considers that decision pivotal.

“Hypothetically it could go forward with 100% local funding, or other federal or state grants,” he said, “but I would consider that unlikely at this time. There isn’t really any place to significantly reduce scope within the existing plan.”

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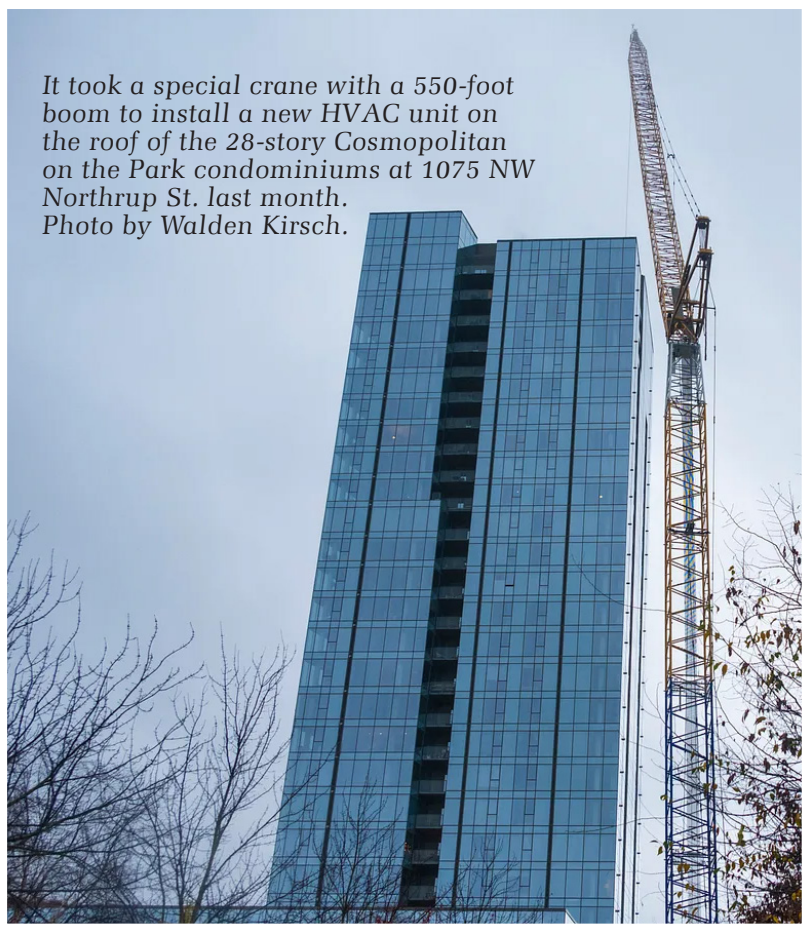
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It took a special crane with a 550-foot boom to install a new HVAC unit on the roof of the 28-story Cosmopolitan on the Park condominiums at 1075 NW Northrup St. last month. Photo by Walden Kirsch.



The Joinery, 102 NW Ninth Ave., custom-built and donated a meeting table to CityTeam, the residential recovery program that recently moved to Old Town. Zena Forest Products donated the certified white oak. The project came together after Levi Arzie, The Joinery shop manager, volunteered at a CityTeam event. In the photo are CityTeam Executive Director Lance Orton (L-R) and Arzie, Dustin Jacondino and Brian Hall from The Joinery.



Washington Examiner reporter Amy DeLaura interviewed Friends of Couch Park officers Kara Colley and Max Steele last month, reporting on the group's two-year history bringing safety and positive activity to the park.

Chelsea Power, Jacek Brown and their dog Addy are fine now, but a raccoon bit Power and Addy on Halloween night along Northwest 21st Avenue, necessitating rabies shots for her and the dog. Photo by Walden Kirsch.



Windermere Real Estate offices will be collecting donations of gently used adult-sized coats, blankets, scarves, gloves, hand warmers, knit caps and new adult underwear to benefit Transition Projects through Dec. 19. Items may be dropped off at 733 NW Johnson St., 1220 NW Lovejoy St., #130, or 2424 SW Vista Ave. Alexa Miller (L-R), Joe Kennedy and Dan Powell from the Pearl office are helping manage the Share the Warmth program.



Lincoln High School senior Kirin Cowell-Shah is the Portland Pearl Rotary student of the month for November. He lived with a host family in Indonesia last summer through National Security Language Initiative for Youth, calling it "by far the most life-changing experience I've had." At Lincoln, Cowell-Shah participates in choir, a student-led a cappella group, Model United Nations, cross country, mock trial and the Cardinal Ambassador program. He has also sung in the Pacific Youth Choir for 13 years, and is a member of the Portland Flag Association.

Santa Classen could use your help!



Editor and publisher Allan Classen does not oversee a sprawling corporate media empire—just the proud, independent and scrappy NW Examiner, which thousands of you read every month. And have since 1986.

Why the goat? Allan runs a tight ship. During this holiday season, there's no extra money to feed a herd of reindeer or to charter a sleigh.

In fact, Allan and his friend-for-a-day Whiskey are hoping you can lend the NW Examiner a hand during this season of giving.

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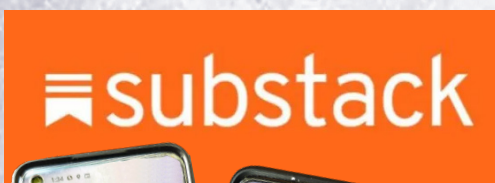
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Thank you so much for your continued support. And happy holidays from Allan and Whiskey!

Allan Classen
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