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Mayor Keith Wilson addressed a crowded auditorium and held firm on the centrality of shelters in solving the city's homelessness crisis.

Capacity armory crowd fails to nudge his shelter plan

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

Mayor Keith Wilson finally faced the folks fighting his proposed overnight shelter in the Pearl District, at least the 580 who filled the armory auditorium on July 28 to get some answers.

He drew polite applause and acknowledgment of his idealistic vision, couched along the lines of his campaign speeches.

The devil was in the details. Confirmation that the 200-bed shelter at Northwest 15th and Northrup will have only two showers did not go over well. When the audience learned that sex offenders will be allowed inside the low-barrier shelter because no one will be checking for IDs, many guffawed.

And when Wilson redirected a question about management of spillover effects on the surrounding blocks by launching into an anecdote about his neighbor in North Portland, the reaction was so negative that he never finished the story.

Wilson remained poised throughout his 90 minutes on stage and drew modest hand-clapping as he walked off. The key takeaway from the evening may have been the fact that the mayor offered no course correction or revisions to the plan he has outlined from the start.

While the mayor has said he is “grateful for the incredible support I’ve received ... from District 4 councilor members,” the trio came on stage for a 15-minute overtime period after Wilson left. Dutiful and conditional support might better characterize their positions.

Councilor Eric Zimmerman said his support has always been contingent on good neighbor agreements involving affected neighbors. No drug dealing, queueing or trash around the shelters should be tolerated.

Continued on page 6

Shelter lease raises questions

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

New light was shed on the city’s proposed 200-bed homeless shelter at 1435 NW Northrup St. by public documents acquired by the NW Examiner last month.

The city and property owner Vanessa Sturgeon of Sturgeon Development Partners signed a 12-year lease in May that Mayor Keith Wilson later described as a two-or-three-year deal.

The \$18,000-a-month lease covers the main floor and part of a basement, a total of 16,000 square feet, to be used “only for shelter for unhoused individuals and associated sheltering services.”

The lease term and limited-purpose stipulation would seem to undercut promises that Wilson expects to end the city’s homeless crisis soon.

The lease also states that the “tenant shall not record the lease.” Recording is a normal practice in commercial leases that protects tenants from eviction or losses should the landlord lose control of the property.

Robert Layne, a communications strategist for the city’s Portland Solutions program, told the Examiner that suspicions over the discoveries in the documents are unfounded.

Layne said the lease is effectively year-to-year

Continued on page 6



Kate Fulton speaks to television news reporters in front of a just-completed sign announcing the coming of Market of Choice.

Co-op members choose Market of Choice

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

For most of two years, Food Front Cooperative Grocery leaders blocked all democratic pressures to turn their former store at 2375 NW Thurman St. into Market of Choice.

Under new leadership committed to letting members finally have their way, Market of Choice received 92 percent of 688 votes cast in a vote announced on July 28.

Mark New, a local retail developer making no guarantees that he could find a grocery tenant, received 8 percent.

“We are so delighted that the majority interest of active members is clear,” co-op President Kate Fulton said.

MOC offered \$1.54 million plus a matching donation of up to \$100,000 to Friendly House.

Board Vice President Sue Harrison said Zach Wright, who

is leading the company after his father Rick’s unexpected death in June, is gratified by the show of support and pledged to complete the transaction promptly.

Fulton is thrilled “to honor Rick’s steadfast commitment to our members and the neighborhood.

“The loss of Food Front has been felt by so many, and putting in a local community-minded grocer in its stead is one of the closest replacements we can hope for. We are looking forward to the vibrancy that has been lacking since the closure.”

Former President Roman Shvarts and former Vice President Sanela Ruznic, who for months were the majority of a three-member board, favored New’s proposal.

Related story, page 12




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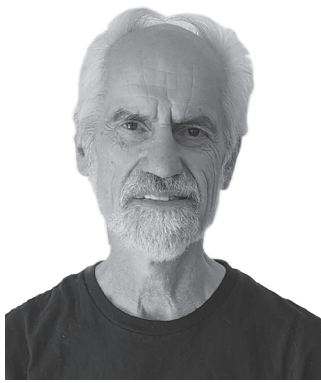
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It’s time for Plan B, Mayor Wilson

Neighborhoods are expected to accommodate overnight homeless shelters in their midst as the first step in overcoming the city’s most vexing crisis. Inserting enough of these shelters would fulfill Mayor Keith Wilson’s core campaign promise to eliminate unsanctioned camping within his first year in office.

But providing overnight shelter will not end outdoor camping nor rid public spaces of its impacts. Tents represent a home base for people living outdoors, not merely camping equipment to be packed up at sunrise. Tents endure because they may contain all of their owner’s worldly possessions and provide privacy they covet for purposes good or ill.

Even with overnight shelters, our streets will have the same chaos, crime, dangers and types of behavior we now see every day and evening. Getting people out of sight after dark may even do less to improve the public realm than day shelters would.

Some minimize the presence of homeless people and their effects as an aesthetic issue—offensive to some eyes but only as a matter of taste. I differ. Looks can kill. The sight of trashy encampments, scary people, used needles and excrement on the sidewalk spells death to retailing and restaurants, the harbinger of urban decline. Shoppers and neighbors avoid such areas, allowing crime, vandalism and garbage to proliferate. Drug activity also flourishes beyond the eyes of responsible citizens.

When retailers fail, they leave behind a dead zone taken over by destructive and lawless behavior, spreading the blight in a vicious cycle.

But the most destructive consequences



may be invisible ... for a time. Property devalues and investment withers. The city’s largest buildings—Big Pink, Montgomery Park, Ritz-Carlton, Broadway Tower—are falling into bankruptcy or selling for around 10-15 percent of their peak value. Major retailers, such as REI, have left. Smaller ones are failing too fast to keep count. Our major central city supermarkets are in jeopardy of closing. Many condominium owners want to move away but find they must sell for

substantially less than they paid. Tax revenues decline in sync. ECONorthwest called it a doom spiral, which is apt.

Wilson recognized the immensity of the crisis and promised to bring it under control. But his first action is seen as only making matters in the heart of the city worse. He claims shelters will improve the safety and livability of the surrounding neighborhoods—citing crime rates to prove it—but few trust the

numbers or his perceptions.

Almost a century ago, President Franklin Roosevelt faced a similar situation on the national level. The country was in a financial crisis that he had promised to fix. FDR attacked the problem with an array of programs to stimulate the economy and create jobs. Some of the programs failed and were abandoned, but most moved the country and the lives of the people in the right direction.

Humans will endure great deprivations if they believe things are getting better, particularly if they can grasp a grand plan at work. FDR may not have ended the Great Depression, but he set the country on an upward path, and the people believed in him, handing him four terms by landslide margins.

Wilson, by contrast, offers a brittle plan, the first step of which must be completed before ensuing steps and visible change can begin. Only at the end of a multiyear effort will it be possible to measure whether homeless people have made personal recoveries, overcome addictions, found stable housing and employment and left the streets. Only then, if all goes well, might recovery begin and we can get our city back again.

Wilson has little political capital left. What he has, however, are personal qualities—likability, humility, respect for others and the capacity to learn—that Portlanders admire. When strong leaders see that their Plan A stumbles, they move to Plan B. Good citizens who love our city will endure missteps if adaptations follow. ■

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Readers Reply

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Shelters have to go somewhere

I have been following the NW Examiner’s coverage of the proposed overnight shelters in our neighborhood. I live in Slabtown. Some thoughts:

1. The mayor was never going to get community buy-in for these shelters. So why should he spend time in lengthy meeting after lengthy meeting (the “Portland Way”) only to come away assured he will never get that buy-in? He’s decided to get to work instead.
2. All other actions to deal with the effects of hundreds of homeless

people wandering around overnight have not worked. If what you are doing is not working, you should stop doing it and try something else. This is the something else. The mayor campaigned on this idea, so it is no surprise that he is putting it into action.

3. The overnight shelters have to go somewhere. And since there are going to be a lot of them, they have to go to a lot of somewheres. We can’t ship all these people off to the outskirts of the city every night. That’s not practical or cost-effective. And people live out there too, so why is that a fair option?

4. We need hard data, not emotional reactions and anecdotes (understandable though they are). I advocate for more hard metrics and solid data collection to show whether it’s working and how bad the community impact really is after the shelters are up and running.
5. The process should be: Get it up and running while setting metrics and gathering data. In one year, reassess and make changes as needed based on the data.

Enough talk. Let’s get to work.

Elise Fulsang
NW Riverscape St.

Make park for dogs

Thank you for another great edition. I am a resident near Northwest Thurman and 28th and have been a longtime reader of the publication.

Related to the [July] article, “Could a park bloom in a shady area?” I have actually been saying for years that a dog park would be great to have under that freeway where the bike park was suggested. Currently, Slabtown residents need to walk all the way to Wallace or Fields parks for their dogs, so a dog run in this location would be highly

Cont’d on page 5



Dr. Diane Karl



Dr. Diane Marie Karl, who lived in Portland Heights for 30 years, died unexpectedly on Dec. 14, 2024, at age 78. Diane Richters was born on Dec. 28, 1945, in New York City. She enrolled at Bucknell University when she was 16 and graduated from Cornell Medical School in 1970 and became an endocrinologist. She married Richard Karl Jr., and after their divorce, she married Matthew Riddle II, and they moved to Portland. She hosted a weekly radio show on southern folk music on KBOO for many years. She is survived by her children, Alix Robinson, Brian Karl and Kelly Karl; her stepchildren: Matthew Riddle III, Ann Riddle, James Riddle and Sarah Riddle; brothers, Greg and Glenn Richters; sister, Elaine Richters; and eight grandchildren.

Dr. Paul S. Russell Jr.



Dr. Paul S. Russell Jr., a resident of the Council Crest area, died June 3 at age 93. He was born on Feb. 10, 1932, in Truscott, Texas. After graduating from medical school at the University of Texas, he served as a medical officer in the Army. He married Tomi Williams in 1954, and in 1966, they moved to Portland, where he established a dermatology practice at Northwest 22nd and Flanders, where he worked until retirement. He was also a clinical professor at Oregon Health Sciences University and he received the American Academy of Dermatology's highest honor, the Gold Medal Award. He is survived by his son, Steve; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. His wife, Tomi; and son, Bruce; predeceased him.

Evelyn Leshgold



Evelyn Leshgold, who lived on Southwest Vista Avenue for many years, died July 13 at age 103, in Mission Viejo, Calif. Evelyn Swerdlik was born on June 15, 1922, in Portland. She married Gerald Leshgold in 1942, and they lived on Northwest Overton Street in the early years of their marriage. She worked as a real estate agent selling coastal properties in the Gearhart area. She is survived by her children, Barrie Rosenberg, Lynn Rosencrantz and Carol Rosenthal; six grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren. Her husband, Gerald, died in 2020. Donations may be made to Congregation Beth Israel, Robison Home and Oregon Jewish Museum.

Roger Jennings



Roger Dennis Jennings, a resident of Willamette Heights since 1968, died July 21 at age 91. He was born on July 29, 1933, in Los Angeles, and graduated from Downey High School. He graduated from City College of San Francisco and the University of California, Berkeley, and earned a doctorate at the University of Colorado. He served as a submariner in the Navy during the Korean War. He married Jean Cottrell in 1958. He chaired the psychology department at Portland State University, where he was an emeritus professor. He served on the boards of the Western Psychological Association, Friends of the Zoo and the Northwest Neighborhood Cultural Center. He is survived by Jean, his wife; and their children, Robin and Rodney.

Death notices

CAROL SANTESSON, 86, graduate of Catlin Gabel School.
DONATA STEWART, 77, 1966 graduate of Lincoln High School.
DENNIS VAVROSKY, Multnomah Athletic Club member.
JOHN G. VLAZNY, 88, archbishop of Portland based at St. Mary's Cathedral.

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trafficked.

It is also nice that it is covered by the freeway so humans and pets would not get soaked during the rainy season. Plus, there would not be an issue with noise (aka barking) because the freeway is already noisy. Either way, I think putting something there is a great way to prevent campers.

Thanks again for all you do with the NW Examiner.

Brianna Finch
NW Thurman St.

Regarding the latest saga in Portland's endless homelessness crisis, I have to wonder: Who among those in the discussion chose to vote for Keith Wilson? If so, they are reaping what they've sown, especially in that the choice was between this man, who so obviously is not reality based, versus Rene Gonzalez, a battle-worn candidate who prevailed among the worst ugliness this city's anarchists can inflict, such as having his campaign office windows repeatedly shattered and a car set afire outside his home.

Gonzalez represented those hard choices that so many Portlanders run away from, not toward in a mature manner. He

was pro-business, God forbid. Any grown-up knows that no city can long survive without a thriving business community. Gonzalez also was pro-public safety. Again, in a city that thinks the Parks Bureau is more deserving than the Portland Police Bureau. As a former park volunteer, that agency has not earned our respect or our support, whereas our police put themselves on the line for us every day.

It was a close race, one that Gonzalez might have won were it not for ranked-choice nonsense. As someone who too has been horrified by these daily onslaughts brought on by a drug-fueled crisis, I can't abide hearing any more talk about affordability. I'm low-income and live in affordable housing. I realize not everyone is as fortunate. Yet the problem is foremost that of drugs, criminality and untreated mental illness.

It amazes me how this cycle not only continues, but escalates. The very definition of crazy is to keep repeating the same mistakes yet expecting different outcomes.

Karla Powell
NW 11th Ave.

Editor's note: In the first round of voting last November (which was unaffected by vote ranking), Keith Wilson had 34%, Carmen Rubio 22% and Rene Gonzalez 18%.

.....

Responses to our July editorial, "I don't trust you, but trust me,"
posted on nwexaminer.com:

The mayor gave little to no real consideration to the placement of this shelter. He ran on a promise to end unsheltered homelessness—but promises mean nothing without a thoughtful, workable plan. This is reactive policy with no real vision or care regarding what the fallout will be, something we unfortunately have grown very used to tolerating (to our ongoing detriment) in this city.

The term NIMBY has become a blunt weapon in Portland, used to discredit legitimate concerns. It's not unreasonable to expect safe, livable neighborhoods. Wanting basic order is not a lack of compassion—it's a call for accountability. There's a line between compassion and enabling, and this city crossed it long ago. If our current leaders can't see that, they aren't the right people for these jobs.

Mayor Wilson—who portrayed himself as a man of the people when he was campaigning—apparently has no desire to actually listen to us the people. His quantity-over-quality warehousing approach to homelessness doesn't address any of the underlying causes (e.g., drug addiction, mental illness, physical disability, joblessness) of this growing urban issue. And criticizing those who would protect their already challenged neighborhood from a city-imposed influx of often drug-using, littering, begging and/or mentally unstable people as NIMBYs adds insult to injury. As someone who's lived in the Pearl District for 25 years, I strongly object to Wilson's irrational and unwelcome plan for our neighborhood.

Once again voters were fooled by another candidate, misled by the platitudes that now-Mayor Wilson spewed during his campaign. He was not my first choice, but I was willing to give him a chance. I am clearly disappointed by his willful callousness for and disregard of our neighborhoods and its residents. The deterioration of Portland continues under his watch.

Well done piece; hit the nail on the head.

Neighborhoods where people live and

Continued on page 11



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#010 2 bed, 2 bath, 1082 sqft, Steps to Pool! **\$289,000** Active

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#611 2 bed, 2 bath, 2131 sqft, NE Views! **\$1,295,000** Active

#503 1 bed, 1 bath, 752 sqft **\$359,000** Active

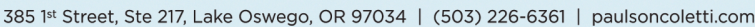
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Details of homeless shelter lease were not known to public



The proposed shelter site at 1435 NW Northrup St.

"Shelter lease" cont'd from page 1

and can be terminated early, though penalties may apply. If a homeless facility is no longer needed, the space could be used for other things, such as a community center or offices for additional city staff.

What about the ban on uses other than homeless services?

"We can renegotiate in the future," he told the Examiner.

As for not recording the document, Layne said that is customary for the city—only one of the last 18 city leases has been recorded—to avoid paperwork, undue delays and issues with the title.

Would failure to record the lease leave the city vulnerable in the case of a bankruptcy, losing a favored position among creditors and the ability to recoup expenses related to operating the shelter?

Layne said that would be of small consequence in that the city expects to spend only about \$15,000 for flooring and sleeping mats to convert the office space into a shelter.

Because the city and Sturgeon

concur that the lease rate is below market level, the agreement assumes exemption from property taxes, which have been a burden at this site. North Pearl LLC, the company Sturgeon created for this property, has fallen behind its \$42,000 annual tax obligation, owing a total of \$63,000 for property taxes in 2023 and 2024.

Others impacted

A lease between a city government and major property owner inevitably has consequences beyond the two parties signing the document. An exemption from property taxes cuts out the county and other jurisdictions that would otherwise share in the division of revenues, for instance.

Based on another public document obtained by the Examiner, the lessor in this case has a \$6 million line of credit with Northwest Bank in Lake Oswego. The terms of that loan prohibit a "leasehold interest of greater than three years."

Leases longer than three years require the bank's prior written

consent, or the lender can call the entire loan due or impose new terms.

Was the prohibition on recording the lease sought by Sturgeon to prevent Northwest Bank from learning that she had signed a longterm lease? Did the bank know and grant a written exception?

We left messages with officers of Northwest Bank and received no reply.

While comments from key players were hard to come by, Examiner readers offered their opinions more freely.

"If Mayor Wilson told the neighborhood it was a two-to-three-year lease, and then without any public engagement the city approved a 12-year lease—and threw in a \$42,000 property tax exemption to boot—he needs to have a town hall meeting and explain this discrepancy," wrote Bob Weinstein.

"The multimillionaire real estate heir Sturgeon won't timely pay the real estate taxes," wrote Jim McLaughlin, "and her buddies in the mayor's office are going to work out a 12-year real estate tax exemption for her."

"I wonder if Keith Wilson knew about this?" wrote Paul Douglas. "If not, who agreed to 'Tenant shall not record this lease'? Since the mayor supervises the city manager, I'm sure he will want to get to the bottom of this."

"The very rushed way in which this whole deal has unfolded stinks, quite frankly," wrote Jan Newton, "almost as much as the lack of any public input smells." ■



The armory was filled with neighbors hoping for answers.

"Mayor's stand" cont'd from page 1

"Camping is not tolerable," Zimmerman said. "We must get out of this craziness ... which has ruined our neighborhoods."

Councilor Olivia Clark said she supports the mayor's plan, though she wishes an alternative to the Northrup site could be found.

Councilor Mitch Green said he has supported funding for the mayor's plan, but he also takes seriously his responsibility to provide accountability over its implementation seriously.

Pearl District Neighborhood Association President Bruce Studer, who moderated the event, drew the loudest applause of the evening by suggested that the real problem is addiction, not lack of housing or shelter.

Studer said the credible fear of violence is a problem unaddressed by providing overnight accommodations.

"People walk in fear today," he said, mentioning a Pearl woman who was punched in the nose by a passing stranger, a scene captured on a widely circulated video.

Alan Evans, founder and president of Bybee Lakes Hope Center, a privately run shelter and recovery program operating on a 17-acre site in North Portland, sat in the front row at the forum. None of the elected officials mentioned this facility as a possible alternative site. ■

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Mayor provides answers . . . same as before

The NW Examiner requested an interview with Mayor Keith Wilson last month for the purpose of writing a profile of his first months in office. While I did not receive a direct answer to that request, his deputy chief of staff, Taylor Wyatt, and Portland Solutions communications specialist Rob Layne II asked that I provide a list of questions as a preliminary step.

No interview has been granted, but Layne said the answers below were written by the mayor.

Your campaign promise to end unsanctioned camping was well received by mainstream voters on all sides—from the homeowners to social service agencies to progressives. Was that because each sector saw the promise in different terms, differences that would inevitably rise at the implementation stage? Did you hope to overcome that natural divide with quick success that would be obvious to all? Is so, why did that quick success not materialize?

My campaign was open about my goals, and shared the successful methods found in cities we sought to learn from and ultimately duplicated. I also shared hundreds of pages of research and planning, debated with other candidates, interviewed with local and regional media outlets, and engaged daily with thousands of future constituents across the city. Since my election, I've participated in interviews, public testimony, the city budget process, public safety ride-alongs, facility walkthroughs, listening sessions, community meetings, shared progress updates and provided details about my plan to end unsheltered homelessness. While public questions and disagreements remain part of the landscape, I've found a community ready to embrace the best practices from across the nation. There is no quick solution to any of the work before us. We do, however, have all the ingredients needed to repair, restore and revitalize Portland.

If there are 1,500 shelter beds by Dec. 1, would you consider that fulfillment of your promise to end unsanctioned camping?

We have committed to providing a safe bed for every person, every night, but that is only one piece of a larger strategy. Unsheltered homelessness is a humanitarian and public health crisis, and my promise was an emergency response that would end it in Portland.

Why must 1,500 shelter beds be available before the camping ban can be enforced if there are more than enough beds to offer the particular individuals who are found to be camping illegally?

We are still scaling to reach the necessary capacity. While reaching 1,500 beds remains an important goal, we likely don't need to fully reach this goal to begin enforcing existing laws. We do, however, require adequate shelter capacity to always give someone a better, lifesaving option than living on the streets.

Has any camper to date been given the ultimatum to accept a shelter bed or face arrest?

No answer from Wilson, but Layne suggested that the Portland Police Bureau could better answer this question.

Do you expect more support from City Council members for your shelter rollouts? District 4 representatives have said they want your program to succeed, but they have not specifically addressed the resistance you are facing from westside neighbors.

I am grateful for the incredible support I've received, not just from District 4 council members, but from the state of Oregon, Metro, Multnomah County and everyday Portlanders across the city. We're now in the early days of our shelter rollout. The anxiety many feel is understandable, even against the backdrop of an unacceptable status quo that serves neither the housed nor the unhoused. I'd like the opportunity to stand by my word and deliver on the assurance that these shelters will contribute to tangible benefits for shelter neighbors and a better Portland.



Mayor Keith Wilson delivered statements at the July 28 forum similar to written answers provided to the NW Examiner a week earlier.

Are neighborhood activists entitled to any concessions or accommodation when they do not have legal or procedural standing to block your mission?

A safe and empowered neighborhood is a strong neighborhood. I strongly believe our neighborhood activists play a critical role, and conversations about their interests are welcome and ongoing. As mayor, I have a short memory for conflict, and a long memory for compassion and teamwork. A year from now, I hope to stand shoulder to shoulder with many of those who currently oppose this project as we reflect on what we accomplished together by listening and working with each other. ■

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The guy on the street

Feeling helpless, not entitled

BY JOE MCAVOY

I heard him before I saw him. Rosie and I were enjoying our 5 p.m. “constitutional”—my Old Fashioned and her bowl of water—at a sidewalk table outside of McMenamins Tavern & Pool.

An explosion of slammed brakes, skidding tires, broken glass, scraping metal and rolling aluminum cans caused us to jump reflexively. Rosie crawled under my chair. A man was swirling, swearing and swinging his arms in the middle of the intersection at Northwest 23rd and Xavier streets. A witness told me that the guy decided to cross diagonally from the southeast to northwest corners without bothering to check traffic.

He almost got hit and his caravan of bike and supermarket cart filled with empty bottles and cans went over. It was a mangled mess. The assemblage of bike and cart lay prone on the street. The cans and bottles scattered in a wide circle like a bag of dropped marbles.

Traffic was stopped in all four directions. The guy pounded his fists on the hood of a car whose driver had beeped, swearing and threatening the woman behind the wheel before turning his attention to anyone and everyone observing this mini tragedy unfolding in front them.

His words were profanity-laced and his behavior menacing. I looked away when his eyes found mine. I didn't want any part of him. In September of 2022, a wild-eyed man attacked me while I was walking Rosie and my son's dog, Junie, on Northwest Raleigh near Wallace Park.

My hands were preoccupied with the dogs' leashes when he coldcocked me on the side of the head as we strolled by. When I fell to the ground, he kicked me hard in the shoulder. I was still bruised and sore when the police responded to my 911 call and police report a full two days after I made them.

So, yeah, I'm wary. The urge to help the guy pick up bottles and cans was far outweighed by that experience and all the others that I see repeatedly played out on our streets these days. There was no way I would leave Rosie leashed to the table alone.

I wanted the guy gone. I didn't care where to. The cars veered around the mess causing more expletives and swinging fists from the man until his rage subsided. He got everything repacked and rode north.

Rosie and I returned to our somewhat compromised blissful recapping of the day—my writing with her head resting on my knees or feet, for the most part. I felt the presence of someone or something nearby. The guy was standing next to his bike about 10 feet away from me on the sidewalk. He must have looped back when I stopped following his departure from the scene on the other side of the street.

I braced for an attack.

“Can I pet your dog?” he asked.

I hesitated. If I allowed him to pet Rosie, maybe he'd go away. If he got too close, maybe he would hurt one of us. There was no real time to consider the pros and cons.

“Sure,” I said.

I was anything but sure. Be ready, I told myself.

He knelt on the sidewalk, petting Rosie's coat for over a minute. His scalp and hands were scabbed, his skin red and scratched raw, his fingernails caked with dirt and his clothes ripped, stained and reeking of urine. I just wanted him gone.

I wasn't prepared for the moist eyes when he looked up at me. “More love than I've felt in a long time,” he said to me.

Yeah, it sounds melodramatic and made up. But those were his words. I can't unhear them. After a few more minutes, he got up and rode away once again. No thanks, no goodbyes. Just pedaled off into the concrete sunset of a beautiful Portland evening. I never got his name.

The mayor won his election with the promise to get the homeless off the streets within the first year. I voted for him. It didn't occur to me that anyone misunderstood what the “homeless problem” was in Portland. Lack of a bed isn't the primary issue here. The growing population of mentally ill and drug addicted people on our streets is the problem. Misdiagnosing the obvious will lead to “solutions” that are bound to fail. The mayor wants to concentrate these people into massive shelters smack dab in the middle of our once thriving neighborhoods. His solution puts them back on the streets during the day. No treatment, no sanitary facilities or medical support. Just like today.

We may see fewer tents but the tragedy unfolding before us on the streets will continue. Let's be honest; at best, there is significant risk that the mayor's plan will fail; at worst, it will be a disaster of catastrophic proportions. There are lives in the balance. An economic spiral looms if we don't.

We've got to get it right the first time.

This isn't a political issue. It is a pragmatic one. But politics are getting in the way. The “left” prefers that the mentally ill and drug addled remain on the streets to rub our noses in it. They talk about rights and the Constitution. They call those who object to shelters in the middle of our neighborhoods NIMBYs.

The “right” just wants them out of sight and out of mind. Don't get me wrong. There are volunteer efforts out there; caring unsung heroes (from all sides of the political spectrum) who roll up their sleeves and do our dirty work every day without recognition or financial reward. But it's not nearly enough.

Any solution to this problem must be comprehensive and driven by the



Author Joe McAvoy

powers that be. It's going to take decisive and, probably, divisive action. It's gonna be expensive. It will invite some constitutional scrutiny. We can't wish the suffering on our streets away. We can move away, I guess. To Lake Oswego or Beaverton or Idaho or whatever. But these individuals are worth saving. Portland is worth saving.

Mr. Mayor, your solution lacks depth and credibility. The drug addicted and mentally people will not be healed on our streets. Security and livability issues are at critical inflection points. You will hit the metric that you won your election upon, but you will not solve the real problem unless you define it as more than “homelessness.”

That guy on the bike who gave me a momentary look into his tortured life isn't homeless. He's either mentally ill or drug addicted or both. And fully human. A bed for the night will do little to help his real issues, and if that's the entirety of your fix, he and the city will degrade further.

That old guy at the table with his dog isn't an entitled white male NIMBY. He, like many out here, feels helpless and unsupported, wary at politicians who are afraid to make tough decisions that take the WHOLE problem into account and citizens who sit in their self-righteous corners screaming at each other.

Your city, Mr. Mayor—and mine, and ours—is suffering. Deeply. Vera Katz and Bud Clark are turning in their graves. Get a spine. Go back to the table. Sharpen your pencils. Be fearless. Miss your one-year goal. Get a real plan that addresses the whole problem. Withering criticisms will be directed at you. Ignore them as best you can. Do the right thing for those who suffer on both sides. Fix Portland. All of it. Many of us out here will rise to help you.

Please listen. ■

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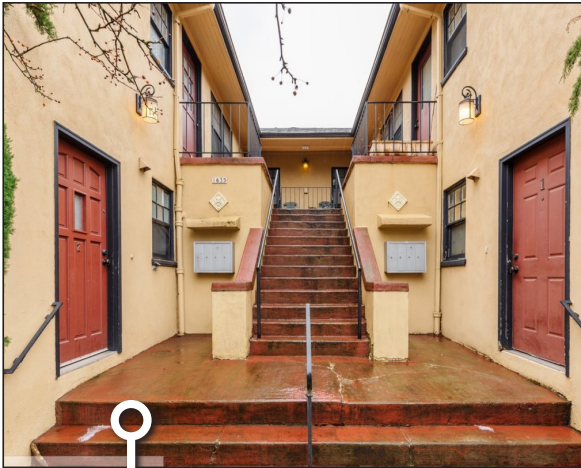
SCHOOLHOUSE ELECTRIC

The headquarters of a home decor company at 2181 NW Nicolai St. is for sale. Built in 1910, the four-story brick building contains 125,000 square feet of space. Schoolhouse Electric & Supply Co. has been here since its founding in 2003.



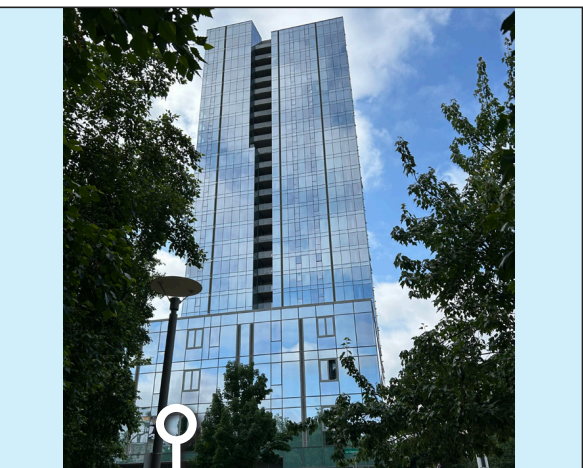
SAVIER COURT

The seven-unit Savier Court apartments at 1635 NW 25th Ave. are for sale for \$1.25 million (\$179,000 per unit). The average unit size is 627 square feet. The building was built in 1924.



COSMOPOLITAN

A \$30 million-plus HVAC replacement project at Cosmopolitan on the Park, 1075 NW Northrup St., will begin in October. Homeowners in the 28-story condominium tower are underwriting the work while suing the developer and construction contractors over a system causing perpetual heating and cooling breakdowns.



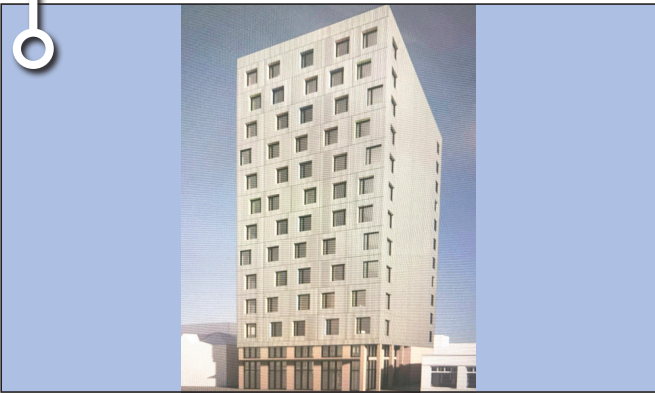
CRACKERJACKS PUB

The former home of Crackerjacks Pub at 2778 NW Thurman St. is being stripped down to its historic origins. Old 7Up logos and old-growth timber from 1914 are being exposed. Developer Erik Opsahl is considering offers from local bars to lease the corner space.



NOB HILL APARTMENTS

The owner of the Nob Hill Apartments on Northwest 24th Avenue between Irving and Johnson streets seeks to divide the property into two lots, which would allow a higher percentage of the site to be converted to parking. The Northwest District Association wants runoff problems from the parking lot corrected before the city approves the subdivision.



THE KEARNEY PROJECT

Details of an 11-story hybrid timber apartment building at 1959 NW Kearney St. were shared with the Northwest District Association last month. It would have 110 units, all affordable to households earning less than 60 percent of the area media income. It would not infringe on the outdoor eating area of Cafe Nell directly west.



For an interactive and continually updated version of this map, visit: NextPortland.com
Also see the development map maintained by the Goose Hollow Foothills League: goosehollow.org/images/GooseHollowDevelopmentMap.pdf



Homemade noodles are the specialty at Noodle Dynasty.



Kaleido Coffee adds a range of color at Northwest 21st and Quimby.

Briefly . . .

Berkeley-based **NOODLE DYNASTY** is coming to the Pearl District by September. It will take the former **SUPERDELUXE** burgers space on Northwest Kearney Street between 12th and 13th Avenues. Noodle Dynasty's original location is in Beaverton's Tanasbourne Center, where it is known for large quantities of fresh, hand-pulled noodles, dumplings and soups at reasonable prices.

ROSELINE COFFEE has leased two former ground-floor office spaces at Montgomery Park, where it plans to open its sixth Portland location.

BAR RIONE closed recently after seven years at North-

west 12th and Johnson Streets. Owners Gino Schettini and Kevin Gorretta also own **PIAZZA ITALIA** next door.

KALEIDO COFFEE, offering coffee blends from Thailand, has taken over the space at Northwest 21st and Quimby streets formerly known as **QUEUE COFFEE**. Kaleido also has a shop in Southeast Portland.

CHEERFUL BULLPEN, 1730 SW Taylor St., will close in September. **CHEERFUL TORTOISE**, 1939 SW Sixth Ave., which is also owned by Amy Nichols, remains in business.

PLUSH, featuring tattoo, intuitive arts and Reiki energy

balancing, has opened on Northwest 23rd Avenue near Johnson street. Founded by Amber and Toni Brennan, the shop warns, "no tattoos for racists or homophobes."

NAM TAO HUU, billed as Portland's first Thai desert shop, opened in June at 921 NW 23rd Ave. after extended delays. Owners Pat and Art Tantipattanawong feature creamy slushies made from soy milk and tofu pudding with fresh berries.

CYCLEPATH PDX has taken over the space of Fat Tire Farm, which closed in March after 40 years in business at 2714 NW Thurman St. Cyclepath has another shop on Northeast MLK Boulevard.

NOBBY NEWS

Vol. 31, No. 8 "News You Can't Always Believe" AUGUST 2025

Turning 40 is special

July 31 marked the Nob Hill Bar & Grill's 39th anniversary.

For the next year, Nobbys will be offering 40 specials leading up to a 40th anniversary bash.

Special #1 1 free onion ring, steak fry or tot with each order

Special #2 free ice for all cocktails

Special #3 free grilled onions on the famous Nobbys sliders

Special #4 5 extra chips on our large in-house-made nachos

More specials to be announced in upcoming months.

Save the day, July 31, 2026, when we roll back our prices from the 1986 menu.

BURGER COUNT

1,353,234

Enter your name for a monthly drawing.

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Sausage Feed



Sunday, August 24th, 12:00pm - 3:00pm

Dinner Plate: Sausage, Potatoes, Sauerkraut, Dinner Roll and Drink (water, coffee, tea or lemonade) - \$15

Sausage on a Bun and Drink - \$10

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Protesters with the Portland chapter of Direct Action Everywhere, an international animal rights organization, protested the serving of foie gras at Bistecca, 2145 NW Raleigh St., on July 27. Protesters held banners toward diners inside the restaurant and chanted so loudly they could be heard more than a block away. DAE has 18 chapters, five of which are on the West Coast.

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Online comments cont'd from page 5

are out cleaning and fixing things that the city hasn't stepped up to do have the right to be a stakeholder when the mayor wants to make a significant change to the neighborhood. Plain and simple.

Instead of a no barrier congregate shelter, if the mayor chose these locations for treatment centers I believe there would be far more backing. Otherwise I see this as another version of Measure 110's missteps—just make it easier for people to continue to use and not have the resources to truly help them ... and the city as a whole.

I feel we are caught in Mayor Wilson's bold campaign promise and he will do whatever it takes to give himself the gold star for doing what he said he would do. We were looking for a fresh start in leadership with real solutions, not a bold promise that would be fulfilled regardless of the cost.

Jessica Christ

I've spoken at length with the mayor's office, the city manager of shelter services and Rapid Response concerning my many questions as a longtime Pearl District resident.

They all seem to have a clear understanding of how they will manage the implementation and operations of the new shelter. As someone who has been impacted by camping at the entrance of their building, within stairwells, and community spaces I've been looking forward to any type of solution beyond the sweep-and-displace method that has been agitating the situation for years.

Well over 1,000 children live in the district. They deserve the safety to

wander and explore without dodging syringes and human waste. The shelter is a step in the right direction and social services and Rapid Response will be there to make sure that every inch outside of the shelter is enhanced with better livability.

Mechanic

You summed up the issues that frame the lack of citizen involvement—lack of trust.

Will the government trust me when I decide not to pay salaries—i.e., taxes that support decision-makers who do not trust me enough to participate in decisions that affect me, my safety, my quality of life? To say nothing about the people who need help the most?

Joan Neice

Wilson is claiming to balance the interests of the homeless vs. the community, but he's putting the homeless first. That's a group that will not or cannot contribute to the community's best future and should not have a veto over those who do.

Thank you all for writing about the state of affairs of the two new proposed shelters in and near the Pearl. You are giving voice to democracy and the very dangers that Mayor Wilson is perpetuating.

Unfortunately, this Mayor is intentionally putting blinders on and is not following some of the basic tenets of what has made his own life and business successful. He seems to be in over his head and out of control while the interrelated crises of homeless, drugs and crime increase.



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Food Front members gave rapt attention to Kate Fulton, who took over the stage and the organization with a 15-minute, tell-all account.

Back to the beginning with Market of Choice

BY ALLAN CLASSEN

I approached Friendly House boldly last month knowing I was banned from the Food Front meeting scheduled inside but prepared to make a scene should anyone—most likely Food Front Cooperative Grocery President Roman Shvarts—attempt to block me.

I was armed with an iPhone, ready to record possible resistance. But before I reached the door,

Shvarts greeted me warmly, acknowledging that I might as well be there since I was going to report on events anyway.

From my front row seat, I checked the room, where soon the four others whose memberships in the co-op had also been revoked for defying Shvarts’ rule book took their seats without incident.

Although the Food Front Five may have sensed the earth was shifting, none suspected the

earthquake awaiting.

Opening remarks were delivered not by Shvarts but by board Treasurer Kate Fulton, though “opening remarks” would be an understatement.

For about 15 minutes, Fulton delivered a testimonial that toppled the cabal controlling the organization for more than a year.

“The current board iteration is completely unfit, and unwilling to acknowledge the fundamental democratic principles that this cooperative is based on, including transparency to member/owners and the responsibility to present all viable options to members for a vote on major decisions, such as the sale of the property,” she began.

If Shvarts thought of cutting her off, he reconsidered and remained frozen in place.

No board member had spoken like this before. Fulton’s courage was obvious, but few of the 100 or so in attendance knew her vulnerability. The targets of her condemnation, the board president and vice president—both sitting a few feet away—had been trying for days to vote her off the board, a result she felt was inevitable. She eluded the chopping block by claiming schedule conflicts so that a quorum of three could not be achieved to take official action.

So she had the stage, and nothing could stop her.

In a tense but earnest voice, Fulton delivered her bombshell while barely looking at the 2,000-word transcript she had written that afternoon.

“The only decisions that can be made for the co-op must be in alignment with our owner/members’ wishes,” she continued. “Therefore, I feel it is an obligation of my position to inform owners of recent events that have been intentionally obscured by board members Roman Shvarts and Sanela Ruznic.

“Democracy dies in darkness, and members deserve to know the goings-on of the board that has been elected to represent them. Your presence here represents a light, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have enough illumination here in this room for the truth to shine.

“In a member survey distributed in December 2023, prior to my joining the board, it was determined through feedback that owners had a few strong priorities:

- 1) They did not want to re-open Food Front.
- 2) They wanted a grocery store in the space and
- 3) They did not necessarily care about getting top dollar for the property sale.

“These facts were explicitly acknowledged in an email by Roman Shvarts dated Jan. 16, 2024.”

She spelled out a process in which members were never given the opportunity to approve a plan most of them favored—selling to Market of Choice—while the board stopped the clock for 20 months to explore general schemes by two other contenders that did not fulfill those goals.

“In the past week,” Fulton continued, “this friction has become unbearable, which brings me here today. Once this meeting was scheduled, Roman and Sanela made it clear that they absolutely would not present any other options but the highest price. ... I am committed to my responsibility of ensuring that members have a choice in the outcome of the sale. I knew that Market of

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Choice was putting together an offer, and that Roman and Sanela were attempting to rush the process to avoid the possibility of an additional option.”

She said Shvarts and Ruznic had called a meeting for June 26 to approve by executive action a sale to local property manager Mark New of Development Company of the West, Property Services, Fulton said.

“Roman and Sanela vehemently refused to consider the membership’s priorities,” she continued.

“They spent the best part of two hours publicly screaming at me at the food carts on Northwest 23rd Place. I have never in my adult life been so verbally assaulted. Sanela ... shouted, ‘There is no democracy in this co-op! Democracy is dead! We make all the decisions here!’”

Fulton said the attacks were so personal, criticizing her voice and appearance, that she left the meeting in tears. She tried in vain for days to find someone who overheard the fracas and perhaps had taken photos or videos. In the end, she was her only witness, but that was enough.

“Their behavior was so egregious and unacceptable that passersby started recording the incident. I was shocked and disgusted by their behavior. I am still exasperated thinking about it. I have lost every shred of respect from this incident, and demanded that they designate replacements and resign, as dictatorial leaders do not belong anywhere near a cooperative board. They have refused.

“Since that incident on [June 26], Roman and Sanela have threatened me via email and phone; they have held multiple secret board meetings that do not meet the quorum minimum of three members, and have done so without recording minutes or content.

“They illegally added an additional board member without my attendance, knowledge or approval. This board member resigned less than 12 hours later after being informed of their plans.

“They have indicated to their friends that we are able to ‘donate’ the entire co-op property, despite the nearly million-dollar lien against it. These directors are out of touch with our members, and frankly, out of touch with reality.

**“They could be doing so much more with that space”
—Jon Lindquist**

“I cannot work with these unfit and deceptive unprofessionals who are unwilling to acknowledge their mistakes, and I should not have to endure a toxic and hostile environment simply because

I am trying to do my job and listen to members and act democratically. The whole reason this meeting was made a last-minute ‘unofficial’ meeting—which I formally objected to—without record or remote access is another attempt to oppress membership and subvert their ability to choose and play a role in their co-op.

“This co-op belongs to the members, not the board of directors. There have been so many public, valid, continual and repeated criticisms of the board that I don’t think I have to go into too much detail to make this clear: We have a problem.

“Therefore, I am publicly and formally asking you, Roman and Sanela, to resign.”

Members clapped and cheered loudly, some standing, in a show of gratitude and support.

Shvarts took the microphone to explain that that there was another side to the story. But in a rambling talk cluttered by details about Fulton evading a meeting, he never contested the central criticisms Fulton levied. Ruznic attempted to speak several times, but Shvarts waved her off.

Without motions or official actions of any kind, Fulton simply assumed leadership of the rest of the meeting.

The next day she told the NW Examiner that Shvarts and Ruznic agreed to resign as soon as a board meeting could be called to install their replacements. Two

weeks later, the board met again, three new directors were appointed and a vote to sell to either Market of Choice or Mark New issued.

On July 28, Market of Choice was favored by 92% of 688 voters.

MOC has 45 days to finalize the purchase, which will be for \$1.54 million. In addition, MOC will match a donation to Friendly House up to a maximum of \$100,000.

As for the Food Front 5

If only as a footnote to history, I asked some of my exiled colleagues why they dared attend a meeting at which they were not allowed. What pushed them to their “I’m mad as hell and I’m not going to take it anymore” moment?

“I was planning to join the Zoom meeting only because I didn’t feel up to leaving my apartment,” Autumn Sharp said, “but I was NOT going to miss this meeting.

“Then Brent [Douglas] called about an hour before the meeting was to begin and said he was going in person, so I figured I’d join in person as well, and—yes—mostly to defy authority. Very glad I did!

“A group of five who spontaneously decide to defy authority is company I’m happy to keep,” Sharp said.

“I suspect that each of us who had been cast into the outer darkness by the prior board viewed our expulsion as fundamentally illegitimate,” Dan Anderson said.

“Based on what I have seen thus far, I am encouraged by the initiatives of the new board. I am particularly impressed by Kate Fulton. The challenges the board faces are significant and the wreckage they need to contend with is significant. ■

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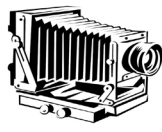
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 **Northwest District Association**



St. Mark: The interior is even better

BY FRED LEESON

Unlike houses and commercial buildings, churches are less susceptible to abusing their original architecture with trendy makeovers or so-called upgrades. As time passes, churches often become sentinels that represent continuous stability as neighborhood landmarks.

A key example is the Parish of St. Mark, now celebrating its 100th year in its red-brick basilica and bell-tower at Northwest 21st Avenue and Marshall Street. While its presence on the street is unmistakable, the interior, with its muscular, thick Norman arches, is an even more remarkable architectural statement.

The interior also is graced with murals, stained glass windows, two organs and a variety of religious relics that predate the church's arrival in Portland. Regardless of one's religious beliefs, anyone interested in architecture should visit the interior, either for a regular service or when the church is open for other events. Visit stmarkportland.org for a schedule of events in 2025.

Photographs provide at least some evidence of the artistic treasures inside.

St. Mark was designed by Portland architect Jamison Parker, whose brief career was cut short by the Great Depression. In just a few years, he also designed First Unitarian Church downtown and many residences for

affluent clients. Parker began his career in 1912 at age 17 in the office of A.E. Doyle. He opened his own firm in 1921 after serving in World War I.

Parker's design of St. Mark was modeled after the Church of the Evangelists in Philadelphia, which in turn had been patterned after Italian basilicas dating as far back as the 10th century. Architectural purists will no doubt quibble about generously borrowing from earlier precedents. Nevertheless, examples like St. Mark give a taste of architectural history and a chance to enjoy the amazing engineering pioneered by brick masons centuries ago.

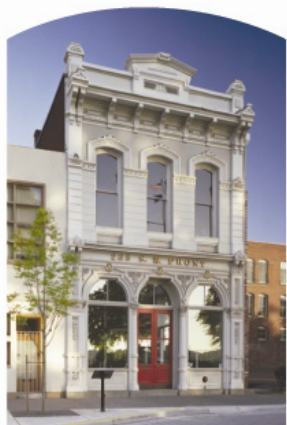
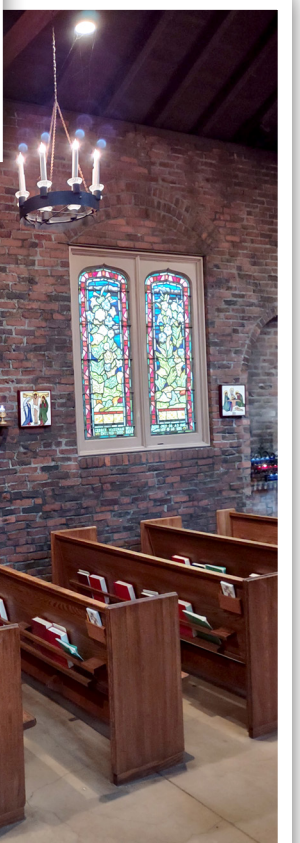
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Art and architecture combine at the Parish of St. Mark, but those who only see the exterior don't know the half of it.



Natural and artificial light blend in the sanctuary, which receives morning sunlight through a round stained-glass window.



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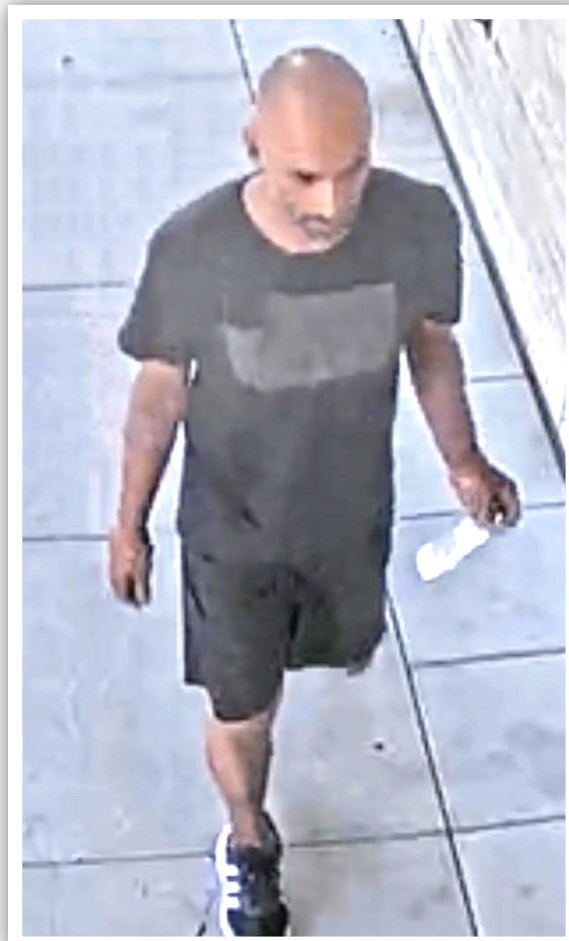
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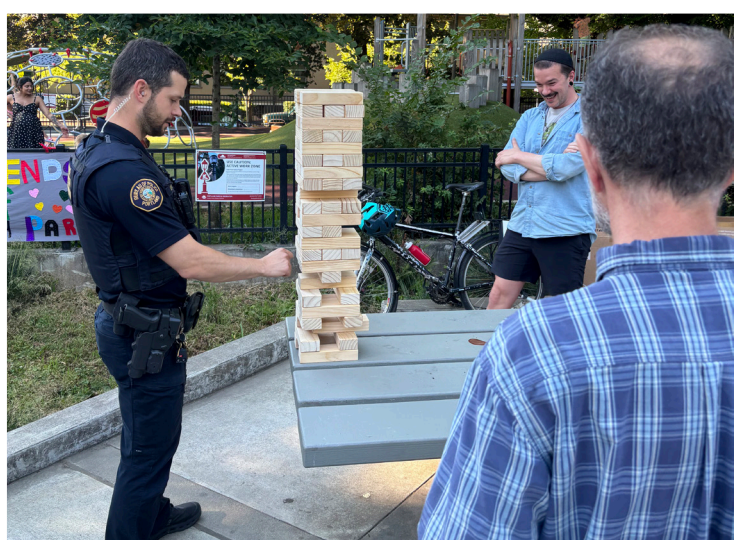
RichEarthOrganicSpa.com | NW 23rd Avenue
Welcome by appointment



Scaffolding envelops the Thurman Street Bridge, which is being repainted and repaired and street lights added. About 70% of the \$4.9 million project is covered by a federal grant. Buses and westbound traffic is detoured during the repairs.



A Pearl District woman was punched in the face by a man later identified as Eder Ruizhernandez near the Metropolitan Condominiums on July 11. The incident was captured on the building's video security system, leading to his arrest within an hour. He was released from the Multnomah County Jail the same day, however. There is a warrant for his arrest.



Neighbors mingled with Portland Police officers and park rangers at Couch Park last month for Games in the Park, organized by Max Steele and Friends of Couch Park to demonstrate that support for policing and parks are not exclusive goals, as a recent funding clash at City Council implied.



Water tower atop the last major Centennial Mills building is thoroughly covered in graffiti painted by a colony of young men living in the structure.

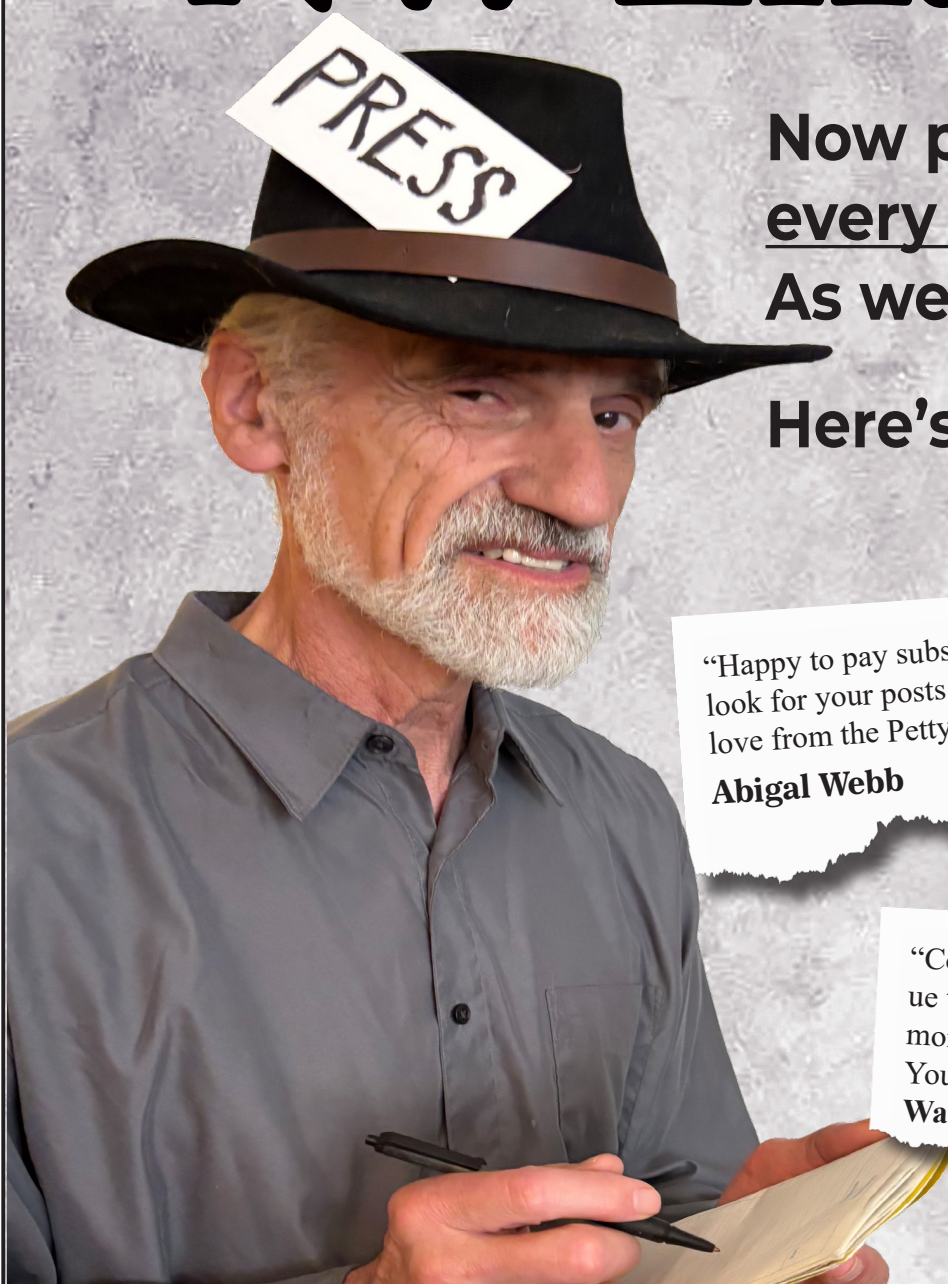


An application to rename Balch Creek to remove association with the first person legally executed in Oregon was rejected by a 12-9 vote by the Oregon Geographic Names Board in June. Northwest Portland resident Nancy Helmsworth proposed renaming the stream Kulla Kulla Creek to honor indigenous people of the area. Kulla Kulla is the Chinuk Wawa word for bird.

The Portland Environment Management Office has approved fencing off the bike parking alcoves at ASA Flats + Lofts at 1200 NW Marshall St. The alcoves have fostered camping, garbage and criminal activity in recent years, but Portland Bureau of Development Services insisted that the public bicycle parking areas were required as a condition of the building's land-use approval.



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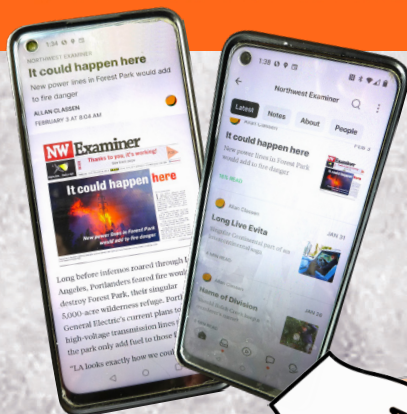
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