

► **Operetta 'H.M.S. Pinafore' sets sail for Multnomah Village**
– Page 4



► **Kids love summer at Mittleman Jewish Community Center camps**
– Page 5



► **Casa Vaca Taqueria opens in Multnomah Village**
– Page 7



The Southwest Portland Post

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Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

June 2016

Mayor Hales decides to close Sears homeless shelter in Multnomah

Menashe family offers temporary housing for 180 people downtown to fill the gap

By Erik Vidstrand and Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

Mayor Charlie Hales announced May 24 that the city of Portland will be opening an additional 180 beds in the existing Peace Shelter, in downtown Portland.

The beds will be available for women and couples. Transition Projects, Inc. is contracted to operate the Peace Shelter, which is open overnight from 6:30 p.m. to 8 a.m.

The opening comes in time to accommodate those who were staying at the Sears shelter in Multnomah Village.

Per the mayor's commitment to the neighborhood and an agreement with the federal government, which deeded the building to the City, the temporary shelter for women and couples was scheduled to close May 31.

The Peace Shelter is a temporary location provided by Menashe Properties. Before the expansion, the space provided 80 beds for homeless men. The Peace Shelter will now provide 260 overnight spaces for homeless men and women. It closes in July.

Initially, the Menashe family offered the space after Mayor Hales declared a state of emergency in housing and homelessness, answering the call for a community-wide response to a

housing crisis that has priced people out of their homes.

"The Menashe family is the embodiment of the spirit that makes Portland special," Hales said. "I thank them for their commitment to the community, and to helping those in need. Their generosity is incredible."

Under the state of emergency, the Mayor's Office continues to identify properties for shelters and city-sanctioned campsites.

Over the past six months, 575 new beds have opened and two new camping areas were formed. Mayor Hales' goal is to have 800 more shelter beds open by the end of the year.

Multnomah holds emergency meeting

An emergency neighborhood meeting was held May 19 at the Multnomah Center to discuss the Sears shelter. Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury began the meeting requesting the shelter stay open for



After convening an emergency meeting, Portland mayor Charlie Hales (far left) decided to close the Sears homeless shelter on May 31. Also pictured are Stacy Borke, Marc Jolin and Deborah Kafoury. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

several more months.

A deed between the former owner, the Department of Defense, and the city of Portland explicitly said that the former Sears Armory could only be used as an emergency shelter for six months. The city would have to get special permission for any extension.

Approximately 70 neighbors packed the room and were joined by local television and newspaper photographers. "I'm sure you don't want the residents to go back out on the street," Kafoury said.

Kafoury initially was joined by Transition Projects manager Stacy Borke and Marc Jolin, the director for A Home for Everyone. The panel presented a transitional plan where the residents would go next.

A site on Southeast McLoughlin Boulevard would house couples and single women, an inner northeast site near transit lines would house others, and a third site would provide single women a safe place at a downtown site.

"These will not be ready for a few months," explained Jolin, who was hired by the county to provide housing solutions. "We have been working on the details."

"We've never done this before," confessed Kafoury. "We don't do shelters."

Wapato (the \$58 million county jail that never opened) was brought up as a solution as it was six months earlier. "First of all," Kafoury explained, "the decision to build Wapato didn't happen on my watch. The building

was never fully completed and would take at least \$10 million to bring it up to standards.

"It doesn't have an egress, the place is meant to keep people in, and besides, it's 23 miles from Gresham—far from any services." Kafoury explained that the state is still paying off the bonds.

Hales, who arrived a bit late, explained additional solutions for the homeless situation.

"We budgeted \$350 million over the next ten years for affordable housing, and more money for park rangers and for the Office of Neighborhood Involvement," he said.

As the meeting was happening, it was reported that there were six police cars in the lot of the shelter. A tent was set up on the lawn.

Police and fire personnel have been constant fixtures at the site, according to neighbors. They deal with overdoses and fights. Safeway has recorded higher levels of theft.

"West Hills Christian School padlocked its gates to their athletic field," reported a woman who used to walk her dog on the track.

Comments varied from person to person, depending on the proximity to the site. Some community members have packed sack lunches and served up occasional dinners.

Neighborhood House executive director Rick Nitti said that out of compassion neighbors should give the Sears homeless shelter three more months.

(Continued on Page 3)



The former Sears Armory building has served as a homeless shelter for the past six months. (Post file photo by Erik Vidstrand)

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Letters to the Editor



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Don Snedecor, *The Post*, May 2016.

There has been a lot of discussion over the years of the need to try to maintain the rather unique and original character of Portland's Southwest area, particularly its immediate sense of greenery, trees, "ruralness" and nature.

As a resident of Multnomah Village, I share the view with other locals that it is the actual lack of curbs, sidewalks and pavement that in many instances very effectively helps generate that special natural feeling and distinctive character.

Their absence also helps to return and retain water in the soil and reduce the sense of barrenness and radiated heat a street can possess when so much concrete is in put in place.

But yes, there is also a greater need for pedestrian safety in many instances. How to reconcile the two?

Our proposed solution, when the city has consulted residents over the development needs of the Southwest area, is to deliberately install sidewalks on the major identified access and arterial roads that locals most often use to make relevant pedestrian connections, but to intentionally leave all the quieter side roads untouched, and just as they are.

Blanket or "one size fits all" approaches, through the setting of standard requirements for all (and potentially involving undesirable or unnecessary compulsory spending and expense to residents on dubious "improvements") are not a good idea.

Particularly if such key aspects to what keeps the Southwest beautiful and different are overlooked and ignored.

Bruce Dickson
Multnomah Village

the Tryon-Stephens Plan is the first collaboration between the transportation and environmental bureaus at the neighborhood scale.

Tryon-Stephens furthers the application of new street and stormwater designs that are more flexible and more affordable than the traditional street and stormwater designs that were the only option until a few years ago.

And the plan lays the foundation for cross-bureau collaboration and for creative thinking about street and stormwater infrastructure.

For more information about the Tryon-Stephens Plan visit <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/transportation/65574>.

Build sidewalks along arterials but leave quieter side roads untouched

RE: "From The Editor's Desk: New construction should automatically trigger creation of a local improvement district," by

HOW THE CANDIDATES PRONOUNCE "OREGON"...



Don Snedecor responds: Thanks for your letter, Bruce. I understand your concerns about a "one size fits all" remedy for local street improvements.

But siphoning money from local streets to pay for sidewalks, bike lanes and other necessary improvements along arterials doesn't solve the problem.

The Tryon-Stephens Headwaters Neighborhood Street Plan recently passed by the Portland City Council provides a framework for improvements that maintain the rural character of local streets while tackling serious erosion, flooding and infrastructure needs.

To paraphrase the introduction,

Closure of Sears homeless shelter insisted upon by vocal minority

As a Multnomah resident, I am saddened to hear that the city of Portland and Transition Projects will close down the temporary Sears homeless shelter, potentially throwing vulnerable homeless citizens back on the streets.

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales, Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury and their staffs have worked diligently over the past months to open hundreds of new permanent shelter beds across the county. [Hales and Kafoury] recently came to our neighborhood in good faith to request

(Continued on Page 3)

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general email: news@multnomahpost.com
web address: www.swportlandpost.com

Editor & Publisher.....Don Snedecor
Contributors.....KC Cowan, Janet Goetze, Jack Rubinger, Erik Vidstrand
Copy Editor.....Rich Riegel
Advertising Sales.....Rich Riegel, Don Snedecor
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Hillsdale shoppers share how they voted in informal post-election poll

By Erik Vidstrand and Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

Post reporter Erik Vidstrand and editor Don Snedecor interviewed folks shopping in Hillsdale on the Saturday after the May primary election to inquire about voting choices. Out of the seven people interviewed, six were Democrats and one was an independent.

Six of those interviewed voted for the city of Portland's proposed gas tax which won narrowly, 52 percent to 48 percent (rounded). The ten-cent per gallon tax will pay for road maintenance and safety improvements throughout the city, including crosswalks and sidewalks along arterials.

The measure would include helping pay for long-needed sidewalks and bike lanes in Multnomah along Southwest Capitol Highway from Garden Home Road south to Taylors Ferry Road.

Carolyn Gazeley, 57, of Garden Home, said nothing stood out to her on the Washington County ballot. She voted for Hillary Clinton for president.

"Governor (Kate) Brown did a pretty good job with the Malheur occupation," she commented, "so I voted for her to remain governor."

Gazeley also voted to re-elect Ron Wyden and said the U.S. senator is poised as a high quality candidate who represents people like her and her business.

"Joanna," (not her real name), 42, shared her decisions while holding her infant. Joanna voted for mayoral candidate Sarah Iannarone. A Bridlemile resident, she voted for Bernie Sanders for president.

Joining Joanna and also holding an infant was "Kathy," 37, of Hillsdale. An independent, Kathy could only vote for non-partisan candidates.

"I did vote for the gas tax... hesitantly," Kathy said. "There wasn't an independent candidate for president so I couldn't vote for anyone for that office."

The Post asked Kathy about Oregon holding open primaries allowing anyone to vote for any candidate

regardless of party affiliation. She would be a resounding "yes" vote.

Pat Kaszmarek, 62, from Hillsdale, voted for Ted, Amanda, Steve, Ron, Hillary, and Kate, ticking them off on a first-name basis. She encouraged her adult children to vote.

"My daughter is 18," she shared, "and since it was her first time voting, she was excited about Bernie." "But she didn't end up voting," Kaszmarek sighed. "She didn't even look at it. I told her you could just vote for Sanders and forget the rest, but in the end, she didn't vote."

A 62-year-old gentleman from the Southwest Hills Residential League neighborhood voted for Fred Stewart for mayor. He said he voted against Steve Novick, but again couldn't remember who he voted for. A Hillary Clinton supporter, he was asked about the many non-partisan candidates for judge running unopposed. He felt they should be appointed, not elected.

Charlie Williamson, 72, of Bridlemile, said he voted for Hillary Clinton for president. He was surprised that Portland mayor-elect Ted Wheeler received such a large majority. As a friend of Novick's, Williamson was surprised Novick didn't get more votes and that Bernie Sanders won the presidential election in Oregon by so much. Sanders won every county in Oregon except Gilliam County, and that was by one vote.

South Portland resident John, 46, sported a gray ponytail. He said he was recently from Missouri. It was his first time voting by mail.

"I could take my time with my voters' pamphlet and research the issue without feeling the pressure in the voting booth," he said.

John, who advises college student government students, shared his frustration about the difficulty of people voting in some areas of the country. He said that fewer than 100 voter fraud cases have been documented throughout the nation. "I'm a big proponent of voting by mail," he said.

One woman had lost her ballot and didn't vote in the end. Note: If your ballot arrives damaged, you make



Oregon state treasurer Ted Wheeler was elected mayor of Portland in the May primary election. (Photo courtesy of the Ted Wheeler for Mayor campaign)

a mistake, spill something, lose your ballot, or for any other reason, contact the proper county elections office for a replacement.

Since Steve Novick didn't win more than 50 percent of the votes cast for city commissioner he will face a

runoff in November with bookstore owner Chloe Eudaly.

All the candidates who won begin their terms next January. The general election will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 8, and you must be registered to vote in that election by Oct. 18.

Sears Homeless Shelter

(Continued from Page 1)

Martin Waugh, whose backyard shares a barbed wire fence with the property, just wanted the facts and communication.

"While I appreciate the candor at this meeting," commented Jordan Rice, a local community activist, "you have treated this community as an experiment, opening a shelter in its midst."

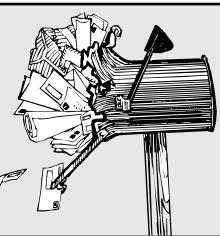
"These folks keep getting recycled through the system from transitional housing to transitional housing then to tents," he said.

It's also an issue of what to do with the mentally ill. "Mental health for

these individuals is the number one issue," the mayor said. "There used to be a mental hospital here in Portland but was closed down and a new facility built in Junction City. That just doesn't work for our residents who need the services here. This happened a long time ago and we keep chasing our tails."

Near the end of the meeting, another request was made for a straw poll and for folks present to vote "yes" or "no" on whether or not to keep the Sears shelter open. After some hohumming, the count was split. Hales said he would make his decision after receiving feedback from the neighborhood.

Letters to the Editor



(Continued from Page 2)

agreement to extend the temporary shelter for just a few more months until the new beds become available.

Many of us were shocked at that meeting when a very few, very vocal Multnomah residents dominated the meeting and opposed the mayor's humane request for just a little more time to find shelter for our new neighbors. Despite the welcome extended to the homeless by so many over these months, opponents demanded that the mayor abide by his original commitment and slam the door shut at the end of this month.

If there is one small light of hope in this sad episode, it is the number of Multnomah residents who continue to support sheltering a small number of homeless in our neighborhood. A

vote taken at the end of the meeting indicated the packed room was evenly divided between supporters and opponents of granting the homeless just a little more time.

I'd like to think that the very few vocal opponents are not representative of my neighborhood. We are better than that.

Chris Dearth
Multnomah

Heritage cedar tree critical in neighbor's move from North Carolina

Regarding "Heritage tree in Multnomah Village endangered by new development," by KC Cowan, The Post, May 2016.

My husband and I own the house directly across the street from the endangered cedar tree at 7316 SW 33rd Ave.

We are extremely concerned about the fate of this tree, and we feel dismayed that the city of Portland's R5 (one

residence per 5,000 square feet) zoning is not being upheld.

The speed with which the lot was split and building permits issued, with no chance for public commentary, leaves us feeling that something is missing from the city's land use review process.

We received no notice of the lot subdivision or of the demolition of the property, which occurred last week. Fortunately, the tree is still standing, but we are concerned that it may be cut down at any moment.

We are in shock; we are moving to Portland for the trees, so it is especially tragic that before we even get there the magnificent tree in front of our house may be destroyed.

We are moving 3,000 miles because we love the neighborhood, with its large lots, old trees and nearby park. We searched for this house for three years.

We bought the house in November, with the understanding that the lot across the street, with the beautiful cedar tree, which was critical to our buying decision, could not be split because it was 8,000 square feet and R5

zoning would prohibit that.

We are in the process of selling our farm in North Carolina and will be moving to our house on Southwest 33rd Avenue in late June.

As I said, we love the neighborhood and are hoping that this developer and all developers can join with residents to preserve what is so special about the Multnomah Village neighborhood: its spaciousness and beautiful, old trees.

I truly believe that this developer can design two beautiful homes and save the tree; and that the tree and the space around it can be a very desirable mini-park for the residents of those two homes.

I would love to speak with the developer myself, but hesitate to call because I have heard about the heartless, negative commentary made by his staff members -- that they are in it for the money and the tree must go.

I am hoping that when I get up the nerve to call the developer himself he will speak with me.

Laura Herbst
North Carolina

Operetta 'H.M.S. Pinafore' sets sail for Multnomah Village

By KC Cowan
The Southwest Portland Post

If you've heard any songs by Gilbert and Sullivan at all, you will likely recognize the music that will soon fill the auditorium at the Multnomah Arts Center. "We Sail the Ocean Blue," or the commentary on politics, "When I was a Lad," and perhaps the best known song of all, "I'm Called Little Buttercup."

All of these and more will be sung in June when Light Opera of Portland performs "H.M.S. Pinafore or The Lass that Loved a Sailor."

Light Opera of Portland is the creation of Dennis Britten. He has a 60-year history of performing, from a national tour of the Broadway show, "My Fair Lady," to singing with the Lamplighters in San Francisco, the oldest resident Gilbert and Sullivan company in the country.

Britten came back to Portland to care for his aging parents and missed the theatre "family" he had known, so he decided to create his own.

Portland also didn't have a Gilbert and Sullivan company, and when Britten learned of the old opera house at the Alpenrose Dairy, it all came together. He launched the Dairyville Players in 2012.

"We began with condensed versions (of the plays)" he explained. "Only seven people. Then we moved with the shorter 'Trial by Jury' and 'Cox and Box' to complete shows, and then 'Ruddigore' was our first full-length show. It was such a huge success."

But the Alpenrose Opera House was only available in the summer. "It has no restrooms, it has no air conditioning, and we performed there in August, which is a problem," Britten said. "At the end of the production of 'The Mikado,' we were applauding the audience for sitting through the heat!"

"H.M.S. Pinafore" will play at Multnomah Arts Center. Dairyville Players had already transplanted single performances from Alpenrose to MAC

for two fundraisers, but this will be the first time all six performances of a show will be held there. It may signal a shift from Alpenrose to the MAC and from summer-only shows to winter ones.

"Because we really want to show them we can have standing room only," said Britten. "We hope. And if that works, we will be partners from here on out."

Hence the name change from the Dairyville Players to Light Opera of Portland. Though small, the company has built a solid reputation for good performances, with talented singers, many of which are from the Oregon Chorale.

"What we are is unusual in community theatre," Britten said. "We're a little theatre, but we are a resident repertory company. Right now we only do Gilbert and Sullivan. And so much of the company stays with us."

The shows are also royalty-free, which helps the small-budgeted company. "H.M.S. Pinafore" is set aboard a ship and tells the story of the captain's daughter, Josephine, who is in love with a lower-class sailor.

Her father wants her to marry Sir Joseph Porter, the First Lord of the Admiralty. "H.M.S. Pinafore" debuted in 1878, but the humor is still relevant



Sir Joseph (Dennis Britten), Josephine (Lindsey Lefler) and Captain Corcoran (Ron Swingen) sing together in "H.M.S. Pinafore." (Photo courtesy Light Opera of Portland)

today, Britten said.

"Gilbert's humor is hysterically funny," he said. "Gilbert was the first absurdist. I've always said, this is absurdity done in complete sincerity and that makes it funny. It's still topical."

Unlike a recent Portland Opera performance of "Pinafore," where they added calypso, Elvis impersonators and even Verdi to "update it," Britten said he doesn't think that is necessary. The original is best, he said.

"We get comments like that all the time," he said. "People write on our Facebook page: 'I never knew this stuff was so funny.' And Gilbert captures

emotions beautifully. It still resonates."

Britten has stepped down from producing, directing and acting in his company's shows to just directing and acting. With new blood to help produce the shows, a possible new full-time home, and a new name, Britten said Light Opera of Portland plans to entertain audiences for many years to come.

"H.M.S. Pinafore" plays at the Multnomah Arts Center on June 17, 18, 24 and 25 at 7:00 p.m. and June 19 and 26 at 3:00 p.m. Suggested donation at the door is \$18 for adults, \$15 for seniors and \$10 for youth. For more information visit www.lightoperaofportland.org.



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COMMUNITY LIFE

By KC Cowan
The Southwest Portland Post

3 First Friday Fun: Stroll around the Village when businesses stay open late and pop by the Multnomah Village Dental Care office (7717 SW 34th Ave) on Friday, June 3, from 5 to 7 p.m. for live music and wine. Enjoy the soulful sounds of Kelsey & The Next Right Thing while sipping wines from Trisaetum Winery.

Mixed Media: Jo Siddens, Sine Morse and Theresa Weil present a joint show of mixed media works titled: "Intersection Paper + Art." Opening reception is Friday, June 3 at 7 p.m. at the Multnomah Arts Center Gallery, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. All three artists use a variety of media in their art, but each has a unique style. The show will be up all month.

5 Orchestral Finale: The Jewish Community Orchestra wraps up its season with pieces by Glinka, Copland, Haydn and more. The orchestra performs on Sunday, June 5 at 5:30 p.m. at the Alpenrose Dairy Opera House, 6149 SW Shattuck Rd. Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$8 for seniors and \$5 for students. Ice cream social to follow.

8 Boost your brain power naturally: Learn natural solutions to improve your mental health. A healthier brain means a happier you! We will discuss the latest research on supplements, food and lifestyle to improve the function of your brain. Wednesday, June 8, 6:30 - 7:30 p.m. at the Hillsdale Library, 1525 SW Sunset Blvd. Free, but registration required; register online, in the library or by calling 503-988-5234.

10 Smell the roses: Tour nine unique gardens in Portland's Garden Home neighborhood on Saturday, June 10. Your \$10 ticket gets you into nine beautiful gardens and gives you a chance to get to know this unique neighborhood better. Advance tickets and maps at Lamb's Thriftway, 7410 SW Oleson Rd. Find out more at www.gardenhomehistory.com.

11 Take a hike: The Southwest Urban Trails monthly walk, led by Hans and Jette Steuch, is through the Riverview Natural Area. After crossing Macadam Avenue, they will walk along the railroad trestle and follow Trail 5 up to Lewis and Clark College and on several roads in Dunthorpe. The hike is about 6.3 miles long and climbs 800 feet. Meet at 9 a.m. on Saturday, June 11, behind the bleachers at Wilson High School, Southwest Capitol Highway and Sunset Boulevard. No dogs allowed on this hike. For more information visit www.swtrails.org or contact fekety@hevanet.com.

18 Paint your own O'Keeffe: You don't need her skill to create your own masterpiece in the style of Georgia O'Keeffe. In a guided workshop, learn how to paint with complementary colors, rich shadows, and dramatic perspective to create your own version of O'Keeffe's famous flowers. Leave with a completed 11x14-inch canvas and introductory painting. The event takes place Saturday, June 18, 10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at the Capitol Hill Library, 10723 SW Capitol Hwy. Free, but registration required; register online, in the library or by calling 503-988-5234



Take a tour of nine unique gardens in Garden Home on June 10. (Photo courtesy of Garden Home History Project)

Mittleman Jewish Community Center offers a variety of summer activities

By Jack Rubinger
The Southwest Portland Post

For some folks in Southwest Portland, the Mittleman Jewish Community Center is primarily a destination for basketball or to go swimming. But there's a lot more to the MJCC than sports.

Friends meet to nosh on bagels at the kosher café. Culture cravers visit the center to sit back and take in a documentary film or hear a classical concert.

Teens conquer rock walls. New moms and their kids play at the Chai Baby Indoor Playground. Old friends enjoy games of Mah Jongg.

It's really a place to build connections and build community—regardless of background, religion, or ability to pay. By facilitating meaningful connections, the Center reaches multiple generations, helps nurture friendships, and respects Jewish traditions. MJCC has been a vital part of the greater Portland community for over 100 years.

Summer is a busy time—filled with fun and stimulating activities for kids, adults and seniors. Below are a just a few camps, events, and classes scheduled for June. For up to date information, it's best

to visit the MJCC website at <http://www.oregonjcc.org> or stop by for a visit. The address is 6651 SW Capitol Hwy.

MJCC day camp offers full day fun all summer long from 7:30 a.m. - 6 p.m. Activities include sports, arts, crafts, rock wall climbing, swimming, swim lessons and more for campers aged 3 to 11. Programs are age-appropriate, fun and safe. Camps run in one week, full-day or half-day sessions, June 13 - Aug. 26. For more information, visit www.oregonjcc.org/daycamp.



Kids love summer at Mittleman Jewish Community Center camps. (Photo courtesy of MJCC)

Tuv Ha'Aretz farm box pick-up: 2016 marks the first season of the new and improved Tuv Ha'Aretz (Continued on Page 7)

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PALOMA CLOTHING

River West Village to begin memberships and services in 2017

By Jack Rubinger
The Southwest Portland Post

Whether we like it or not, we're all getting older. Aging brings on many emotions — confusion, fear, excitement and a sense of isolation. The truth is that people have been moving away from their families for generations in this country. But there's a growing movement to help seniors connect with who and what they need.

River West Village is a novel model and part of a hub and spoke grassroots organization (Villages NW) developed by community members for seniors in Southwest Portland and in other areas of Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas counties.

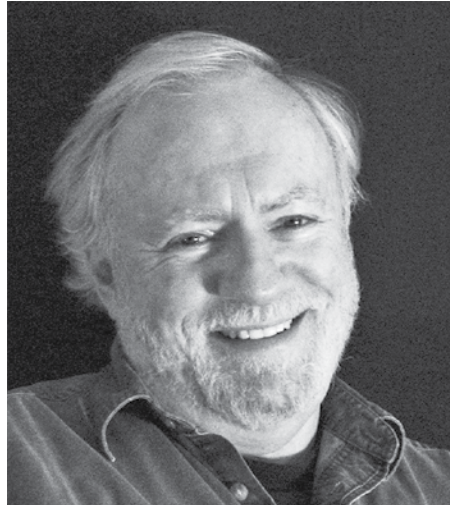
River West will serve seniors in Southwest Portland. The goal is for seniors to live wherever they want to live with a sense of power, a sense of connectedness, interdependence, and information on resources.

To learn more about River West the public is invited to an informational session on Saturday, June 11, from 10 a.m. to noon, at St. Luke Lutheran Church, 4595 SW California St. Or visit: <http://riverwestvillage.org/rwx>.

River West is just getting off the ground and expects to start accepting members and providing services sometime in 2017. So what have River West volunteers been doing since 2015 and what's the plan for 2017?

"We've been raising funds, holding planning meetings, having soup suppers to spread awareness and build community," said volunteer John Dougherty.

River West established a Wednesday morning men's coffee group in 2015. The group has met every week since then at 10 a.m. at the Maplewood Coffee and Tea.



River West Village volunteer John Dougherty. (Post photo by Jack Rubinger)

They talk mostly about fishing, interesting life experiences, and, with restraint, politics. "Everyone is welcome and appreciated," said Darl Kleinbach, outreach team leader. "We are currently in the process of creating the village and building our volunteers corps."

Villages NW, the "hub", is a nonprofit organization which has worked over the past two years to organize neighborhood residents into planning groups and to get seven grassroots "villages" into development across Portland — four in Multnomah County, two in Washington County and one in Clackamas County.

"I see 'villages' as restorative of the ways we'd naturally look out for one another through our lifespans, as we would living in a little village," said volunteer Rachel Mohlere. "They're a modern, urban model for restoring natural relationships."

What kinds of services are provided? "Things like transportation, food, picking up prescriptions, walks, pet care, and computer help — whatever the community demands," said Mohlere.

"An important differentiator is to ensure safety and transparency so all vendors are vetted and criminal backgrounds checked and trained because they're often inside people's homes. Trust is the success," she said.

In the vetted vendor program companies will be nominated by members. Village volunteers will screen these companies. Once approved, River West volunteers will refer members to the vendors when they need a plumber, tree trimming or other services.

Fees are paid by the member just as they would if they did their own research for someone to do these tasks. The benefit is that River West volunteers do the screening for them and will help troubleshoot if needed.

Villages NW is a non-profit organization with 501(c)(3) status. It is registered as an Oregon public benefit corporation. To learn more about the Portland metro-area Village movement and get involved, please visit Villages NW at www.VillagesNW.org or email info@VillagesNW.org.

New gas tax proceeds would help pay for Capitol Highway improvements

NEIGHBORHOOD NOTEBOOK

According to Chris Lyons, who heads the Multnomah transportation committee, the new gas tax allocates \$3,310,345 to Southwest Capitol Highway from Taylors Ferry Road to Garden Home Road (West Portland to Multnomah Village).

The project leverages system development charges. City bureaus are charged with the mission of planning and maintaining Portland's streets, sidewalks, transit, water service, sanitary sewer system, and parks.

These services are partially funded through specific fees.

"There is \$5 million in system development charges [earmarked] for this project," Lyons wrote, "so we now have \$8.3 million dedicated."

However, according to the city, the total cost for improvements is more likely in the \$12 million range, so more will be needed. The hope is that the Bureau of Transportation will grant funds that would help to close that gap.

Here is a link to the full project list, with Capitol Highway information on Page 4: www.fixourstreetsportland.com.

Multnomah joins coalition to oppose gentrification

A motion was passed by the Multnomah Neighborhood Association last month to join forces with several other neighborhood associations (Eastmoreland, Overlook, and Goose Hollow, to name a few) in opposing infill projects that destroy the character of the community, destroying trees and older affordable homes, and increasing density without adjusting for parking.

"We're not opposed to middle housing—small cottages, tiny homes, duplexes," said vice-chair Martie Sucec, "but we are opposed to the location and not wherever they want to put it!"

"Well, a whole lot of middle housing is being destroyed already," said one neighbor. There was one person against joining forces.

— Erik Vidstrand

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THE COUNTRY STORE

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Casa Vaca Taqueria opens in Multnomah Village

The mural of the Mexican coastline is gone, and without much fanfare, local restaurateurs Nick and Sara Medici, along with their lifelong friend, Pete Vranizan, have opened Casa Vaca Taqueria in the heart of Multnomah Village.

A complete makeover replaces Acapulco Southwest Gold, which closed earlier this year. The menu has polenta, kale, caramelized onion, and pablano crema tacos. A full bar specializes in signature margaritas and local beers.

Having all grown up in the Village, this trio attended Wilson High School, they have let the neighborhood they are excited to continue and modernize the Mexican tradition in the old space.

Appetizers run around \$3-6 and entrees start at \$13. On opening night, this reporter found most of the old-style wooden booths full of new customers including Anne Bocci, who has a clothing boutique on the same block.

"The carne asada (marinated beef) with guacamole, caramelized onions, cheese, and cilantro were to die for," she said as co-owner Pete Vranizan brought her bill. She said she didn't have room for the flan.

Located at 7800 SW Capitol Highway, Casa Vaca will be open from 4-9 p.m. weekdays with some weekend hours as well.

French Quarter boutique mall gets green light from city

After many months of negotiations, an online petition, and support from community members, the city of Portland has approved permits for the French Quarter boutique mall to begin operating once again.

Yves Le Meitour, who owns the property, was closed down last year by city bureaus for a variety of issues. With just a few street and sidewalk improvements now needed, several small business owners will return to an indoor street modeled after New Orleans' famed business district.

"This means our plans for a community gathering place will continue to grow," Le Meitour said, beaming as he bought a few fresh pints of strawberries.

He hopes to attract more people to the

area for dining and shopping in addition to just gathering for the latest news and gossip.

The French Quarter is located at the corner of Southwest 35th Avenue and Multnomah Boulevard. Parson's Farm Stand reopened in its usual location earlier this spring and several food carts have sprouted up around the stand.

The food carts continued to operate during the closure since they were not affected by the strict rules of parking, rights-of-way, and access for the indoor businesses.

Inside the mall, Interstate Pizza will continue building its kitchen and getting its wood-burning oven ready.

"The story in *The Post* last year helped sway city leaders' views," Le



Casa Vaca Taqueria co-owner Pete Vranizan shows off the new Mexican restaurant on opening night. Co-owner Nick Medici can be seen in the window cooking. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

Meitour said, "and the city decided to work with me. I've also appreciated the support of the community."

Plans for a grand re-opening are tentatively scheduled for Bastille Day (July 14).



Tracy Schulz (left) and Anne Bocci opening night at Casa Vaca Taqueria. (Photo courtesy of Casa Vaca Taqueria)

MJCC Summer Activities

(Continued from Page 5)

Portland, a Jewish CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) program bringing local and sustainable food with a distinctly Jewish flavor to Portland. MJCC is a pick-up location: Wednesdays starting June 1 from 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Restorative yoga with guided meditation: Focus on stretching soft connective tissues by holding poses longer, and using props to support the body. Begin and end with guided meditation. Instructor: Tara Atkinson. Classes start on Thursday,

June 2 and run from 6:30 - 8:00 pm. Cost is \$15 for members and \$25 for non-members.

Lifeguard Training Course: June 13 - 16 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The MJCC aquatics department is recruiting potential lifeguard staff. Bring swim suit and goggles. Swimmers must be able to swim 300 yards without stopping, tread water for two minutes with no hands, and retrieve a brick from the bottom of the deep end of the pool and bring it to the shallow end. Cost is \$100 (reimbursed if hired by MJCC). Training is for those aged 15 and older. Participants must attend all class sections.

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Regional trail scheduled to open soon between the bridge and Willamette Park

SELLWOOD BRIDGE

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Although the new Sellwood Bridge opened last February 29 to traffic, pedestrians and bicyclists, work continues to take place on and around the new structure.

Dismantling the old bridge, aligning the interchanges, and paving an underpass for those traveling between Lake Oswego and Portland are but a few of the projects left. Landscaping,

stormwater control, and trail work are also on the "to-do" list until at least November of this year.

Delays may occur, at any time, but bridge personnel are trying to alleviate wait times, according to Mike Pullen, Multnomah County spokesman.

"There were traffic jams before our project, during our project, and there will likely be traffic jams after we are done," Pullen explained. "The signals on Tacoma Street are part of the issue that the new bridge will not change."

Pullen gave *The Post* some project developments for the west side. The northbound through lane of Macadam Avenue opened on the lower level of the interchange. Both lanes eliminate the need for through traffic to pass the traffic signal on the upper level.

In mid-June, a regional trail opens between the bridge and Willamette Park. The contractor has built columns for the bridge that will carry bicyclists and pedestrians on the regional trail under the main bridge to reach its south sidewalk. Electricians are installing

traffic signal poles and equipment on the west end of the bridge. The outside girders are being stained to match the brown-orange of the steel arches.

Now that northbound through traffic is no longer using the on-ramp to the bridge, the contractor is widening the ramp's sidewalk. On the ramp from the bridge to northbound Macadam Avenue, crews are excavating and grading. The ramp's sidewalk will be widened in the next several weeks.

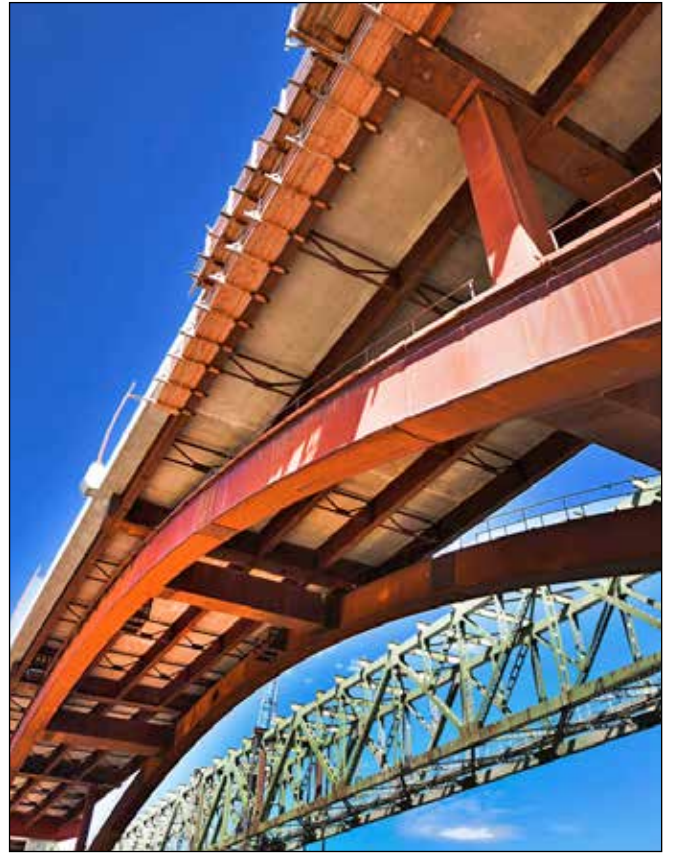
Crews are also building a parapet and the west half of the sidewalk on the southeast ramp leading to Macadam Avenue north. The parapet allows viewing locations away from sidewalk traffic.

Work will continue on the two westside interchange ramps. Handrails and architectural lights are being installed on the arches.

The old bridge deck and railings are gone as well the west approach to the detour bridge. The four original steel truss spans are going to be lowered to a

barge and it will take about two weeks to remove each span. The river piles will be removed during the in-water work period that begins in July.

Editor's Note: For a diagram of the new bridge or for current construction photos and updates visit www.sellwoodbridge.org.



A view from below the new bridge shows the trusses of the old bridge in the background. (Photo courtesy Multnomah County)



Spokane Street Ferry: The ferry John F. Caples carried folks across the Willamette River between West Portland and Sellwood from 1903 until the Sellwood Bridge was built in 1925. (Photo courtesy of Oregon Historical Society)

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