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The Southwest Portland Post

Southwest Portland's Independent Neighborhood Newspaper

INSIDE:
 City Council weighs
 Sears Armory
 proposals, postpones
 decision to July 9
 --Page 9

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Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

July 2008

Solar energy, sub-watersheds, and North Macadam transportation

HILLSDALE NOTEBOOK

By Mark Ellis
 The Southwest Portland Post

Think renewable energy, and solar power shines brightest. Ethanol is getting a second look, as acreage devoted to food production is swallowed up in the quest for the corn-based fuel.

The idea of wind harnessed electricity seems clean and abundant, but the installations for them can dominate large swaths of local geography. Given the public's deep reservations about possible meltdowns, terrorist attacks, and alarmingly uncontrollable waste, nuclear is increasingly discussed as an option only by energy wonks.

As ethanol gets a second look, townships argue about wind farms, and relics like the old Hanford reactor degrade, solar power advocates are staying on message.

At the June 4 meeting of the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association, Sandra Walden, director and partner with Commercial Solar Ventures, made her pitch. CSV is the developer chosen by Portland Public Schools for a Hillsdale solar installation at Reike Elementary that would provide energy and education for three local schools.

Holding up a representative solar panel, Walden said, "What we're offering is clean energy at a set price at no cost for the installation to the school."

Under the plan, CSV, in conjunction with the Bonneville Energy Foundation, would construct a 100 kilowatt ground-mounted solar panel grid on the grass-covered southwest-facing Bertha Blvd. embankment near Reike and Wilson High.

Walden shared projected images which simulated the proposed installation. Hundreds of solar panels would stretch along the slope, in

(Continued on Page 3)



Two-year-old Drew Dunahugh enjoys strawberries as his mother, Heidi, and brother Davis, 5, walk around the Multnomah Village Farmers' Market, June 12. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

Laughing Planet Café coming soon to Gabriel Park shopping center

By Polina Olsen
 The Southwest Portland Post

The background music was XM 74 Bluesville; large divided windows and green plants kept the room light despite rain. As Woodstock's Laughing Planet Café filled with lunchtime diners, founder and co-owner Richard Satnick sat down to talk about the latest venture – a new Southwest Portland location opening in August.

The Laughing Planet and Dinosaur Sanctuary are coming to 4405 SW Vermont St., across from Gabriel Park in the 2200-square-foot space vacated by PB & Ellie's. The quick-service local chain is based on the premise that organic, nutritious food does not belong to the privileged. It should be accessible, affordable, and fun.

"We're parent-friendly as opposed to just kid-friendly," said Satnick as he munched a grilled vegetable and cheese quesadilla and glanced around the room.

Dozens of rubber toy dinosaurs lined the windowsills "kids can bash them up." A bar serving local microbrews backed up to a notice board covered with bicycle events and advertisements for Eckankar workshops. Photographs of individual chimpanzees the restaurant sponsors surround a poster for IDA-Africa.

Teens, local workers, and parents with young children lined up to order burritos, rice-bowls, soups, salads, and dairy-free smoothies. Staff brought food to the comfortable booths and tables when it was ready.

"We start with vegan and build up," explained Satnick about the menu

which includes vegetarian and hormone-free chicken selections. Laughing Planet proudly received the 2008 BEST Award for Sustainable Food Systems. They buy locally and conserve energy by cooking most food in their Mississippi Avenue commissary. One bio-diesel fueled truck delivers fresh to other locations each day.

Satnick, a former mountain-bicycle storeowner, began Laughing Planet in his college town of Bloomington, Indiana. Interested in feeding bicyclists healthy food, he developed a burrito that fit perfectly into bike water bottle holders. "We were horribly under-financed, but after a couple years it became obvious this was working," he said.

Satnick always wanted to live in Portland. "If you're interested in urban planning, Portland shines like a beacon," he said. On a 1989 reconnaissance trip, he spotted the perfect Belmont neighborhood storefront. He moved into the apartment upstairs, brought his toy dinosaur collection for the staff to play with when things got slow, and opened in 2000.

It wasn't until the third restaurant, this time in Eugene, that children became a focus. "That's where the kids started teaching us to do it a little differently," he says. Today, locations include the Woodstock, Northwest 21st, Mississippi, and Belmont areas in Portland and the Whitaker neighborhood in Eugene (they sold the Bloomington, Indiana restaurant to the local manager.) Décor varies, but all locations include a kids menu and posters of Satnick's idol – Frank Zappa.

The new Southwest location will include a large outdoor seating area where Satnick plans raised flowerbeds and heaters for winter diners. Anxious to join the neighborhood, he hopes to hire locally and looks forward to school fund-raisers and community activities.

There are lots of families in the area," Satnick said, noting proximity to the Mittleman Jewish and Southwest community centers. "And, this is food you can live on."

For more information about Laughing Planet, visit www.laughingplanetcafe.com.



Laughing Planet Café founder and co-owner Richard Satnick with marketing director Mary Nichols at the Woodstock restaurant. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

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The Southwest Portland Post
 7825 SW 36th Ave Suite #203
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Park bureau embarks on habit and trail plan for Marshall Park

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

According to Emily Roth, project manager with Portland Parks & Recreation, the park bureau is embarking on the planning process to develop a habit management and trail plan for Marshall Park.

"We are hosting a series of walks through the park, as well as attending neighborhood association meetings during the summer, to gather community input throughout the planning process," explained Roth.

The following activities are planned for July and early August:

{July 8} Markham Neighborhood Association meeting, 7:00 p.m. at the Multnomah Center, SWNI Board Room, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. PP&R staff will be on the agenda to talk about the planning process, gather information on the experience they want in the park, and discuss issues and challenges.

{July 10} Marshall Park Neighborhood Association meeting, Marshall Park, 6:00 p.m.

PP&R staff will review the bridge alternatives and discuss the Marshall Park habitat management and trail plan. The alternative bridge locations will be "flagged" so that neighbors can view the proposed creek crossings.

{July 22} Join PP&R staff for a morning walk in Marshall Park, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. Meet by the picnic tables. Walk the trails and discuss the habitat management of the site, the location of the play area, and a potential trail layout.

{August 4} Join PP&R staff for an evening walk in Marshall Park, starting at 6:30 p.m. Meet by the picnic tables. Walk the trails and discuss the habitat management of the site, the location of the play area, and a potential trail layout.

For more information, contact Roth at emilv.roth@ci.portland.or.us or 503-823-9225.

A note of thanks from the 2008 Wilson Graduation Party Committee

I received a letter from Sally New last month, wishing to place an ad which thanked scores of individuals, families, organizations and businesses who contributed to the Wilson High School 2008 Graduation Party. While I didn't have room here to thank all the folks individually, I thought I would pass along New's sentiments in general. "The Wilson High School PTA Grad Party Committee would like to thank the community businesses for supporting our efforts to provide a one of a kind, alcohol, drug, tobacco and weapon-free celebration to honor the graduating seniors from the Class of 2008."

"All the grads were fully funded to attend the party and were given some cozy monogrammed blankets to comfort them and give them lasting memories of this wonderful extravaganza. Your contributions and support are what kept these graduates off the streets and in a safe haven on one of the best days of their lives: Graduation from mandatory school attendance."

"Families also donated to our scholarship fund and Senior Parents chaired different aspects of Grad Party 2008. We also want to thank the over 40 parents from the Senior and Junior classes, and staff members at Wilson High School who willingly gave their time and effort to our endeavors."

"Most sincerely, and with grateful hearts we pray for blessings on the Wilson Community, the seniors, and their families, who will also transition to new phases of life: Especially the empty-nesters. Hats off to you, The 2008 Wilson PTA Grad Party Committee."

Letters to the Editor



The Southwest Portland Post
7825 SW 36th Ave Suite #203
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Fax: (866) 727-5336
email: news@multnomahpost.com

Cheers to new grocery store, jeers to gas guzzlers

Cheers to the advent of the Food Front Coop-

erative in Hillsdale! It was a shame to see Whole Foods, (a marketing juggernaut run by a self-absorbed CEO which targets primarily the well-heeled, pseudo-aware) enter the neighborhood and then close it as part of their "marketing strategy".

Thank goodness for a grocery store close by in Hillsdale (we live in Multnomah Village) with an emphasis on local food and local concern and providing a local grocery anchor. Nice picture of hope.

Jeers to the SUV, the entire parking lot filled completely with SUVs Monday morning at Grand Central Bakery and to the male SUV driver who swooped directly in front of, and into, a parking space on Multnomah Boulevard for which my wife, in our little Geo Metro, was sitting, patiently waiting. The space was being slowly vacated by yet another SUV, replete with woman glued to cell phone in one hand while trying to exit parking space with other.

To the, ahem, "gentleman" SUV-driver-parking-space-swiper (who shrugged his 40-something business-guy shoulders as if to say "tough luck, sorry, I'm really very important right now"), you're a sad picture of gloom. Let's hope he and his ilk drive their oil-wagons by Food Front Cooperative and get the real picture.

Randy Bynum &
Danielle Vermette
Southwest Portland



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Reporters/Writers: Mark Ellis, Polina Olsen, Lee Perlman, Don Snedecor
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Hillsdale Notebook

(Continued from page 1)

effect a gray rectangle five football fields long.

Initial funding for the project would come from a combination of BEF funds received from grants and an investor able to utilize the Oregon Business Energy Tax Credits (BETC), federal Investment Tax Credits.

Schools included in the Hillsdale proposal are Riecke Elementary, Robert Gray Middle, and Wilson High schools. Under the proposal, BEF would own the site along with the investor during the first six year period, with BEF responsible for monitoring, billing and maintenance.

As an adjunct to the energy generated, an integrated solar educational program would be offered at the affected schools. Walden outlined a plan to name a Solar Champion at each school to assure the BEF educational specialist could coordinate the proposed components and program with all possible teachers in the schools.

After the initial period required by the IRS for ownership, the school would have the option of purchasing the system for a greatly reduced cost or allow BEF to continue the operations and maintenance of the system.

The cost to the school for the power produced after the initial period would probably be much lower than that charged by the utility at that time. If the school were to purchase and operate the system the power would be free after maintenance and reserve costs were set aside.

Walden wrapped up with a plea that the project be implemented before the end of the year. While the general idea of the plan seemed appealing to attendees, some residents expressed concerns about the aesthetics of the installation. There were also questions about the amount of energy that would

be generated.

CSV, the City of Portland and the neighborhood association are working together on a system design that would be financial feasible and visually appealing. A report and example will be presented at the next neighborhood meeting. Commercial Solar Ventures is currently looking for investors to make this project a reality.

"The Hillsdale community and Portland's southwest neighborhoods have an opportunity to make this effort a truly community project," said Walden. "It is a very renewable, sustainable project that supports the education of all neighborhood students, involves the neighborhood at large and is financially supported by a local business interested in supporting their triple bottom line company goals." For more information: www.c-s-v.com 503-241-5918

Next on the rundown, environmental specialist Mary Bushman, spoke on behalf of the Bureau of Environmental Services' Willamette Watershed Team (WWT). The WWT is seeking input on issues relating to three southwest Portland sub-watersheds: California, Carolina/Terwilliger, and Marquam Woods. "We are looking for opportunities to address sub-watershed concerns that we may not know about," Bushman said.

Among the fixes proposed to increase the health of these sub-watersheds are removal of invasive species, erosion control, identify-

ing opportunities to protect and restore important natural areas (e.g., George Himes Park), and probably the biggest issue for these sub-watersheds, and for most urban areas in general, reducing the impact of stormwater runoff.

Bushman referenced an unfortunate recent incident in which fire retardant was inadvertently washed into Terwilliger Creek, and talked in more general terms about the "amount of pollutants being washed into our watersheds."

A questionnaire was provided to association members that asked citizens to weigh in on "any storm water or natural resource related problems," or "to identify natural areas in the three SW sub-watersheds that you feel merit special protection."

"Meeting with key stakeholders is a very important part of the planning process," said Environmental Services spokesperson Marc Peters in a follow-up email, "and allows us to learn about the issues and concerns of the people who live and recreate in these areas. As a result, the information can be used to help identify potential priority areas and project sites."

In a final bit of business, Portland Office of Transportation (PDOT) project manager Art Pearce presented a report on the South Portland Circulation Study and North Macadam Transportation Planning efforts.

"It's going to be a long road to achieve safe and efficient transportation improvements in this area,"

said Pearce of the labyrinthine hard-scape around Naito Parkway and environs.

Pearce explained that the North Macadam area and the adjacent freeway systems comprise one of the busiest transportation hubs in the region. "What we have here is a confluence of every regional route, so there will continue to be a lot of demand for vehicle travel through this area."

Pearce outlined how PDOT plans to prioritize projects with regard to short term, long term, and public safety considerations. This list of motor vehicle, pedestrian, bicycle, and transit projects will serve as the City's plan to support the continued growth in the North Macadam area over the next 20 years.

One participant asked if the City's plan included the idea of people being able to live, work, and receive services in the area thereby requiring less driving on a daily basis.


"The zoning is in place for changes, and the Portland Development Commission is definitely a player here," said Pearce, who explained that one of the goals of the overall project is to "make transportation in the area more available to people, not just machines."

"We're actively seeking out a broader universe of ideas," said Pearce of PDOT's outreach, explaining that over the course of the summer his offices would be further evaluating prospects for a "long term strategy to create a multi-modal transportation community in North Macadam."

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But when a long train of abuses and usurpation [begun at a distinguished period and] pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to [expunge] their former systems of government.

—Thomas Jefferson, 1776. Excerpt from "Jefferson's Original Draft of the Declaration," pp. 200-201, *This Is America My Country*. Edited by Donald H. Sheehan, PhD. [c] 1952.

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NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

OHSU nursing students study Hillsdale community

For the second straight year a class from the Oregon Health and Sciences University School of Nursing has been studying southwest Portland for the mutual benefit of itself and the community.

Last year the class, under Launa Rae Mathews, studied institutions in Multnomah Village. This year they worked with low-income families in the Hillsdale Terrace and Ruth Haefner Plaza, as well as Loaves and Fishes.

As one student told the Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. board at their May meeting, "The best intervention is the services that people are asking for."

For families in southwest, the issues are as follows: Most are low-income families in this part of town are "hiding or hidden." They need access to preventative health care, dental care, and case management.

A second group studied and worked mainly with seniors. Their main issues, spokesperson Ryiah Nero told the SWNI board, are nutrition and hunger, social isolation, and lack of physical exercise. "One of the myths is that seniors in this part of town don't have needs that

aren't met," she said.

According to Nero, "When social and health needs aren't met, seniors rely on emergency health care. Nationwide, they generate 1 million ambulance calls a year."

As in previous years, students conducted free clinics for the communities they studied.

Hillsdale neighborhood representative Janet Hawkins gave the OHSU nursing program enthusiastic praise. "I complement you on an excellent job," she told the class. "People are really drawn to services that they identify."

Environmental issues dominate Southwest planning meeting

Perhaps remembering their experience with the South Portland Community Plan, and wary of city intentions, area community activists were well-represented at early meetings of the Portland Plan process.

An early "listening post" meeting at St. Barnabas Church drew 50 people where similar gatherings in other parts of town attracted 10 or fewer.

At a kickoff meeting during the day on June 6, (a Friday), those in attendance included Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. land use specialist Leonard Gard, SWNI land use chair John Gibbon, Don Baack of Hillsdale, Bill Danneman of South Portland, and Susan Egnor

of Homestead.

The process is an update of the Portland Comprehensive Plan, which sets city policy, and the zoning and other regulations to carry it out, for public and private activities and projects. Completed in 1980, the plan was intended to be updated or superceded after 20 years.

Environmental issues dominated the discussion at the June 6 meeting. Sven Auken of Denmark, the keynote speaker, discussed the policies discussed the policies that have turned his country from being dependent on foreign oil to an energy and energy technology exporter.

Other speakers discussed the concept of the "20 minute neighborhood, in which most resources and commercial services are available via a 20-minute walk, or at least such a walk and a transit ride.

Dennis Wilde of the Gerding-Edlen development company, a former senior city planner under the administration of former mayor Neil Goldschmidt, said that the human race had at most seven more years to transform its ways of doing business before the harm to the environment becomes irreparable.

Bridger steps down as SWNI chair, Russell elected

Glenn Bridger of Hillsdale stepped down after five years as chair of Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.

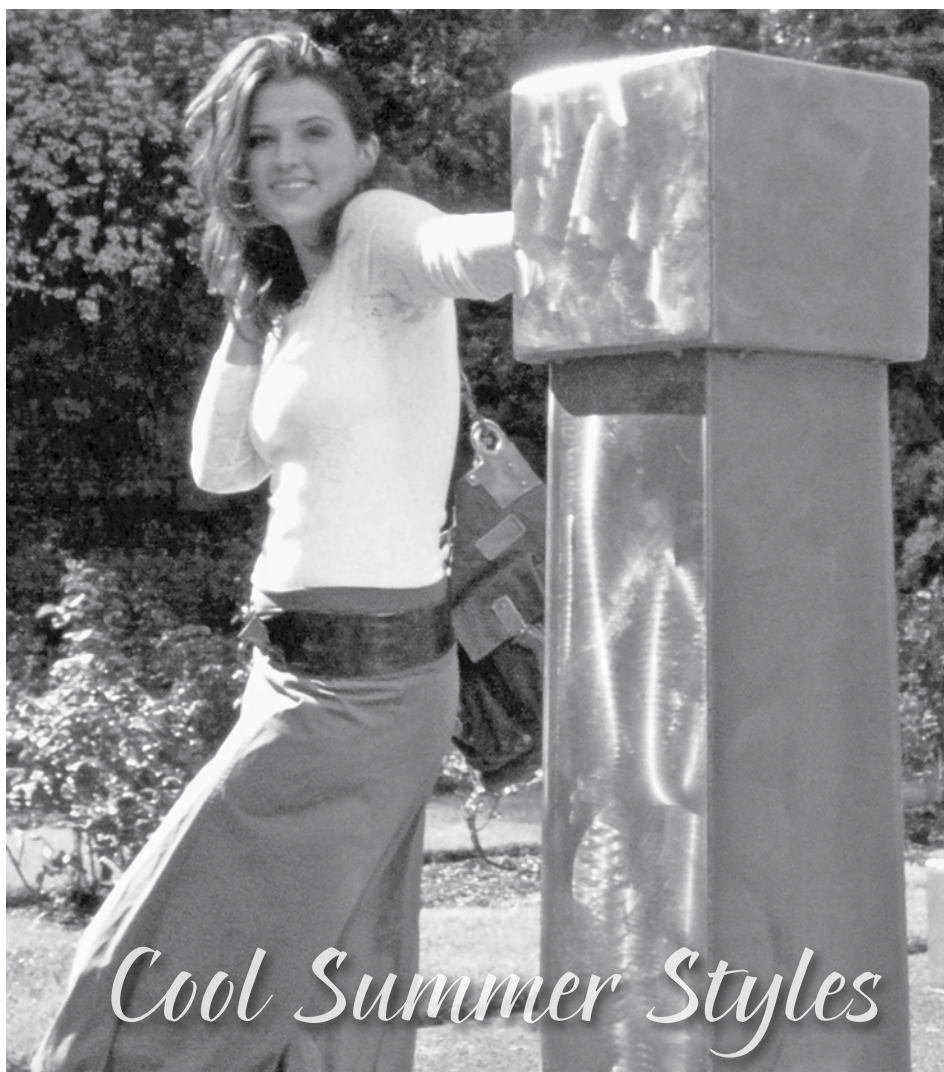
and Brian Russell of Multnomah was elected to replace him, at the May meeting of the neighborhood coalition.

In assessing his five years as president, Bridger mentioned as highlights a well-attended rally at Multnomah Arts Center to counter an expected push by racist organizations to publicize their brand of bigotry; resolving issues with the independent Southwest Hills Residential League, and welcoming them into the coalition; expansion of and improvements to the coalition newsletter; and the burgeoning of a new community in the South Waterfront.

The biggest unmet need, he said, was transportation improvements, particularly those related to pedestrian safety, and particularly in the face of the apparent failure of the "halo" local improvement district experiment.

"When we ask for things, we're told 'We don't have the money,'" Bridger said. "My biggest complaint is our form of government. We elect administrators, but there's no one to go to bat for us. We need more people like (SWNI board members) Don Baack and Dorothy Gage to get on the city's case."

Bridger said he had enjoyed his time as chair, but that it was time to give another volunteer a chance to exercise leadership. He told the board, "Support your new president as well as you did me."



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TRANSPORTATION

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Southwest community largely opposed to halo street assessments

In the face of widespread opposition, the Halo L.I.D. experiment is on hold, if not derailed. A Local Improvement District is a special assessment of nearby property owners to pay for a specific public improvement, such as a new street or sidewalk.

Typically, assessments are made on property immediately adjacent to the proposed improvement. Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. and the Portland Office of Transportation had proposed to fund some long-sought pedestrian safety projects through this method, but to spread the cost over a wider area, reducing the impact to each participating property owner.

Unfortunately, the assessments were spread over so wide an area that some

of those included could see no benefit to them from the improvements. Others questioned the needs for the improvements at all, and some said that the changes would interfere with their ability to park, and bring unwanted visitors to their homes. The opponents expressed these sentiments loudly in surveys and public open houses.

According to SWNI land use specialist Leonard Gard, volunteers working on the Southwest Hamilton Street project have given up, and are looking at other, lower-cost ways to provide pedestrian safety on the street. In addition, Commissioner Sam Adams' staff is reportedly looking at adjustments to the program that would make it more palatable and feasible.

City seeks to improve access and connections to South Waterfront

Confronted with the reality, rather than just the plans, of a large new population moving into the new South Waterfront community, the city is starting to do what community activists have long told them they needed to: figure

out how these people will get in and out of the district.

Art Pearce of the Portland Office of Transportation presented the South Portland Neighborhood Association last month with a list of possible auto, transit, bike and pedestrian projects that would ease access into both the South Waterfront and the older South Portland neighborhood to the west.

At the moment, he said, the project is in the "brainstorming" stage, listing ideas to be considered at greater length. Some of these are projects already under study, including a light rail extension to the site of the proposed new Oregon Health and Sciences University campus, extension of the Portland Streetcar line to Lake Oswego, and reconfiguring I-5 access ramps to provide easier and safer access to South Waterfront.

Other proposals include a better bus connection to the National College of Naturopathic Medicine, replacing two pedestrian underpasses that are currently the scene of unsavory activities with at-grade pedestrian crossings of Southwest Naito Parkway, installing a bike lane on Southwest Corbett Avenue on the steep northbound slope between Boundary and Hamilton streets, and adding various trail connections.

Two of the proposals concerned South

Portland board member Jim Gardner. One calls for new traffic signals on Southwest Naito Parkway, and one suggests an extension of Southwest Hooker Street from Naito to Kelley Avenue.

Gardner is a longtime advocate of the South Portland Circulation Study, which would downgrade Naito from the freeway it currently is to a local street with at-grade connections. The improvements might lead to more use of Naito, which would give traffic engineers more pause about reducing its capacity, Gardner said.

The Hooker change could lead to this street becoming a shortcut from Southwest Barbur Boulevard to Naito Parkway, dividing the neighborhood east and west as well as north and south. "We could get the worst aspects of the South Portland Circulation Study without the benefits," he said.

Told of Gardner's comments, Pearce later told *The Post* that due to such concerns the Hooker connection would probably be only for pedestrians. He added, "The problem with improving access to the neighborhood is that a lot of people other than residents will use it. We're trying to balance the transportation needs of the South Waterfront with the livability needs of the older neighborhood."



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Naturopathic College's plans include doubling student enrollment

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Explaining his plans for the National College of Naturopathic Medicine, president David J. Schleich likes to quote from a poem by Robert Browning: "Man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

Schleich is reaching to double the college's 500 student enrollment, just for starters.

The campus at 049 SW Porter is "the oldest naturopathic college in America," Schleich told the South Portland Neighborhood Association at a recent meeting.

When he arrived here from Canada,

and somehow managed to find the place amid the spaghetti maze of roads at the west end of the Ross Island Bridge, "My first impulse was, 'Float this down the river and let the Navy use it for target practice,'" he said. "But it grows on you."

At the same time, he is trying to "grow the college." Already he has added a new degree program in herbal arts, is looking to add classes in cooking and early childhood education.

Schleich has added kiosks and gardens to the grounds, tripled the size of the bookstore, and has started a Whole Life Market that offers "food and services in support of a healthy

(Continued on Page 11)



Opening days of the College's "Whole Life Market." (Photo courtesy of National College of Naturopathic Medicine)




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THE COUNTRY STORE

Indigo Traders celebrates fifth anniversary with second store

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

If you've shopped in Multnomah Village over the past five years you've undoubtedly come across the Mediterranean textile store, Indigo Traders. Anne swears by their honey bath soap! Well last month, co-owners Karla Bean and Samir Naser announced the opening of a new store across the street, Indigo Bath.

"By giving our popular bath towels and bath products a more suitable space across the street, we are able to expand our cooking, dinnerware, bedding and textile lines in Indigo Traders," explained Naser.

The signature product of Indigo Bath is the legendard Turkish cotton bath towel called a pestemal (pronounced pesh-ta-mahl). The store also carries the entire line of Dani (a company from Bend, OR) bath products, specializing in clean burning soy candles and organic lotions and soaps.

New at Indigo Traders are two lines of recycled glass dinnerware, organic free-trade olive oils, and organic cotton baby clothing as a move to become

more eco-friendly.

"Our passion has always been to offer hand-made traditional textiles and beautiful works of art to our valued customers," said Bean. "Samir and I are always trying to bring in new items." Indigo Bath is located at 7881 SW Capitol Hwy. Indigo Traders is located at 7878 SW Capitol Hwy. For more information, visit their website www.indigo-traders.com.

Volunteers needed at Multnomah Village Farmers' Market

If you've got a couple of extra hours on Thursday afternoons or evenings, Eamon Molloy could use a few extra

hands. Molly is manager of the new Multnomah Village Farmers' Market.

"In a nutshell, volunteering is pretty easy," said Molloy. "The first shift (1:30 to 3:30 p.m.) is all about setting up: unloading canopies, tables and chairs from the truck, helping vendors get set up, putting out signs and setting up the info booth."

According to Molloy, the next two shifts (3:30 to 5:30 p.m. and 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.) are during market hours. The work involves staffing the info booth, answering questions like "Where is the bathroom?," and conducting customer counts. The last shift (7:00 to 8:30 p.m.), which overlaps with the end of the

(Continued on Page 11)

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Mayor Potter and City Council weigh Sears Armory proposals

By Mark Ellis
The Southwest Portland Post

Another Sears Center hearing, this time at City Hall before Mayor Potter and the City Council, and again the vying entities and interested citizens presented a now-familiar litany of best-use scenarios.

But the 20-month Base Realignment and Closure process set in motion when the Army declared the old Multnomah armory surplus is itself nearing closure. On June 12 the decision about what to recommend to the Army regarding the future of the site was passed into the hands of Portland's highest governmental body.

Sheila Greenlaw-Fink talked about the Communities for Affordable Housing plan, a multi-income redevelopment proposal similar to one proffered by Jeff Bacharach for the Housing Authority of Portland.

Portland Development Commission spokesperson Will White came forward to pitch his organization's support for one of the housing alternatives, and Volunteers Of America's Greg Meenan tossed out a late-breaking proposal aimed solely at securing the Sears Site exclusively for Portland's most desperately homeless.

Suzanne Kahn used her allotted time to lobby for a new Portland Office of Emergency Management (POEM) center, and Portland Community College spokesperson Randy McEwen sought approval to consolidate the system's administrative offices at Sears, thus freeing up campus space for educational uses.

Westside Christian High School's Hutch Johnson made a lawyerly plea on behalf of recreating the Cold War training and deployment center into a parochial high school.

In perhaps the most appropriate denouement for a military installation, it is the Department of Defense which will pass judgment on Mayor Potter and company's ultimate recommendation. Before the day that recommendation is made there remained one last chance for the general public to be heard.

The two top housing proposals (CPAH and HAP), Westside, and Emergency Management all benefited from incisive and heartfelt testimonials. An edge in the sheer number of advocates would go to the housing proposals, with Westside next, and POEM's center after that.

Testimony was given which stressed strongly that affordable housing has become prohibitive for many income levels, in effect driving families and school age children from the area.

Equally compelling was the idea of creating a quality academic institution, Westside, which alone among the contenders would require no public funding. Finally, proponents of the POEM plan warned that without a Westside management center, swift measures in the event of a catastrophe, natural disaster, or unsafe weather conditions could not be guaranteed.

Multnomah homeowner Jessica Wade spoke about the growing need for housing, while Multnomah Neighborhood Association chair Randy Bonella expressed his group's preference for either housing or the POEM facility.

A long-time resident, who had once fulfilled a term of service stationed at the base, asked that the existing site not be torn down (as any of the housing proposals would necessitate) and opined that the POEM center might best approximate the existing manageable traffic and use patterns.

Hillsdale Neighborhood Association president Don Baack supported hous-

ing, and raised the possibility of finding other southwest sites for the POEM center.

A Westside mom spoke about a group of WS students who had gone to Thailand on a mission to help children caught up in the sex trade.

Resident Arnold Panitch countered fears about the nature of individuals who seek public housing saying that he'd lived near one such development and that there were no problems.

And then it was time for the elected officials to speak, their final thoughts and declarations as they began to weigh the options.

Dan Saltzman had the same funding question for each housing applicant, a question about the percentage of in-house and possible public funding available, and admitted that, based on what he'd heard, he liked the CPAH or Westside plans. Sam Adams, obviously thinking about the POEM center, had questions about the strength of some of Portland's oldest and most tired bridges, and stated clearly that a SW emergency response center was long overdue, whether or not Sears was the best site.

Newest commissioner Nick Fish praised all who had spoken for the civility of their testimony. He implied that his thoughts were coalescing in favor of housing, but acknowledged the Westside Christian bid with a rumination about how "we're all sinners."

"Why do you look at me when you



Portland City Council will hold a hearing on July 9 to help decide the fate of the Sears Armory. (Post file photo by Don Snedecor)

say that?" Randy Leonard asked, providing a moment of levity before segueing into his concerns about the economic flight of families with children.

It was left for Mayor Potter to ask for a study on alternative sites for the POEM center, and to thank the civic-minded assemblage. He and the commissioners retired with a lot to consider before the future of the Jerome F. Sears armory is passed up the chain of command once more.

Editor's Note: Mayor Potter and Commissioner Fish offered a resolution to City Council at the June 12 hearing. That resolution recommends that the Sears Armory site be redeveloped as mixed-income, rental and ownership housing. The resolution also recommends to the Department of Defense that Community Partners for Affordable Housing as the preferred developer of the project.

According to David Sheern, project manager for the Portland Development Commission, at Commissioner Leonard's suggestion, the City Council delayed voting on the proposal to allow additional time to consider alternatives. City Council is scheduled to vote on the Potter/Fish resolution at Portland City Hall on July 9 at 10 a.m. (time certain).

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EarthTalk™

From the Editors of E/The Environmental Magazine

Dear EarthTalk: What are the environmental pros and cons of corn-based plastic as an alternative to conventional petroleum-based plastic?

-- Laura McInnes,
Glasgow, Scotland

Poly-lactic acid (PLA), a plastic substitute made from fermented plant starch (usually corn) is quickly becoming a popular alternative to traditional petroleum-based plastics. As more and more countries and states follow the lead of China, Ireland, South Africa, Uganda and San Francisco in banning plastic grocery bags responsible for so much so-called "white pollution" around the world, PLA is poised to play a big role as a viable, biodegradable replacement.

Proponents also tout the use of PLA—which is technically "carbon neutral" in that it comes from renewable, carbon-absorbing plants—as yet another way to reduce our emissions of greenhouse gases in a quickly warming world. PLA also will not emit toxic fumes when incinerated.

But critics say that PLA is far from a panacea for dealing with the world's plastic waste problem. For one, although it does biodegrade, it does so very slowly. According to Elizabeth Royte, writing in *Smithsonian*, PLA may well break down into its constituent parts (carbon dioxide and water) within three months in a "controlled composting environment," that is, an industrial composting facility heated to 140 degrees Fahrenheit and fed a steady



A cup made from PLA, plastic made from cornstarch. (Bec, courtesy of Flickr)

diet of digestive microbes.

But it will take far longer in a compost bin or in a landfill packed so tightly that no light and little oxygen are available to assist in the process. Indeed, analysts estimate that a PLA bottle could take anywhere from 100 to 1,000 years to decompose in a landfill.

Another issue with PLA is that, because it is of different origin than regular plastic, it must be kept separate when recycled, lest it contaminate the recycling stream. Being plant-based, PLA needs to head to a composting facility, not a recycling facility, per se, when it has out served its usefulness. And that points to another problem: There are

presently only 113 industrial-grade composting facilities across the U.S.

Another downside of PLA is that it is typically made from genetically modified corn, at least in the U.S. The largest producer of PLA in the world is NatureWorks, a subsidiary of Cargill, which is the world's largest provider of genetically modified corn seed.

With increasing demand for corn to make ethanol fuel let alone PLA, it's no wonder that Cargill and others have been tampering with genes to produce higher yields. But the future costs to the environment and human health of genetic modification are still largely unknown and could be very high.

While PLA has promise as an alternative to conventional plastic once the means of disposal are worked out, grocery shoppers could do well to simply switch to reusable containers, from cloth bags, baskets and backpacks for grocery shopping (most chains now sell canvas bags for less than a dollar apiece) to safe, reusable (non-plastic) bottles for beverages.

As for other types of PLA items—such as those plastic "clamshells" that hold cut fruit (and there is a whole host of industrial and medical products now made from PLA)—there is no reason to pass them by. But until the kinks are worked out on the disposal and reprocessing end, PLA may not be much better than the plain old plastic it's designed to make obsolete.

CONTACTS: *Smithsonian's "Corn Plastic to the Rescue,"* www.smithsonianmag.com/science-nature/plastic.html; NatureWorks, www.natureworkslc.com.

Dear EarthTalk: How is it that hydrogen can replace oil to run our cars? There seems to be a lot of controversy over whether hydrogen can really be generated and stored in such a way to be practical?

-- Stephane Kuziora,
Thunder Bay, ON

The jury is still out on whether hydrogen will ultimately be our environmental savior, replacing the fossil fuels responsible for global warming and various nagging forms of pollution. Two main

(Continued on Page 11)

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COMMUNITY LIFE

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

Researching your house's history

The Portland area is full of beautiful old and not-so-old houses, and preservation of local architecture is a passion here. Have you ever wondered about the history of your house? Who built it? Who lived there? What did it look like when it was new?

In this class, Multnomah County reference librarians Emily-Jane Dawson and Arden Shelton explain some methods for local architectural history research, talk about neighborhood history and mid-century houses, and introduce library and community resources that can help you answer your questions about your own home! This program is cosponsored by the Multnomah County Library and the Multnomah Historical Association.

The event takes place Sunday, **July 20, 12:30 to 2 p.m.** at the Hillsdale Library, 1525 SW Sunset Blvd., 503-988-5388.

Tai Chi in the Garden

The serenity of Berry Botanic Garden (11505 SW Summerville Ave in Portland) is a perfect environment for the moving meditation, Tai Chi. This gentle martial art is invaluable for reducing stress and increasing energy, creativity and overall well-being.

In this series of four classes participants can easily learn the basics of this powerful Chinese system of exercise. Classes will be held in the Pamplin Center with instructor Mark Hodges. Four Sundays—July 6, 13, 20 and 27, 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. \$35, space is limited, registration required.

To register call 503-636-4112 ext. 102

or e-mail register@berrybot.org. For more information, visit their website, www.berrybot.org.

Annual bicycle racing scheduled for Alpenrose Velodrome

The Alpenrose Velodrome Challenge will return for a 10th year at the Alpenrose Velodrome (at Alpenrose Dairy, 6149 SW Shattuck Road). The racing takes place the weekend of July 18-20.

Racing kicks off Friday with pursuits, kilos and qualifying points races. Saturday and Sunday will feature keirins, miss and outs, points races, team pursuits and a Madison. There is also a "kiddie kilo" at the beginning of each evening session.

Over the past 10 years, AVC has produced some of the best racing and largest crowds in the nation. The AVC will offer over \$12,000 in cash purse plus prizes for elite men, elite women, and masters. More details, including the race flyer are available at their website, www.alpenrosechallenge.com.

Free Willamette Park concerts due

This year's schedule of free concerts at Willamette Park, brought to you by the Portland Park Bureau and the South Waterfront Neighborhood Association, begins this month. The groups performing will be Michael Manning and the Alabama Pump Station on July 9, The Buckles on July 16, the Touchables on July 23, and the Free Mountain Ramblers on July 30. All concerts will be from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. There should be food to purchase from concessions.

Adults only spelling bee scheduled for Central Library

Challenge yourself or cheer for your friends in this adults-only spelling bee, hosted by Portland Spelling Bee master Katherine Woods-Morse. Prizes will be awarded and refreshments will be

served. Spellers register, starting June 13, by phone at 503.988.5236; or by sending e-mail with the subject line "Spellapalooza," along with your name and contact information to alisonk@multcolib.org.

Made possible by The Library Foundation. This event takes place Saturday, July 19, 1:00-4:00 p.m. at the Central Library, 801 S.W. 10th Ave., 503-988-5123.

Multnomah Outdoor Cinema returns for third season

At press time, here was the summer schedule for the popular Multnomah Outdoor Cinema movies, held at the outdoor basketball court at the Multnomah Arts Center (7688 SW Capitol Hwy near 34th Avenue).

Friday, June 27, "Men In Black" starring Tommie Lee Jones and Will Smith. Rated PG-13. Friday, July 11 "Ferris Bueller's Day Off" starring Matthew Broderick. Rated PG.

Friday, August 1, "The Princess Bride" directed by Rob Reiner. Rated PG. Friday, August 15, "School of Rock" starring Jack Black. Rated PG-13. Live Kids's Band at 7:00 p.m. before the movie.

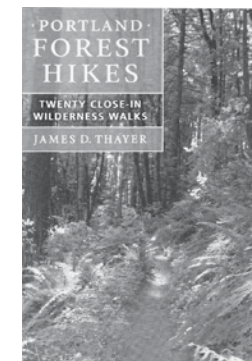
Admission is free. Gates open 45 minutes before dusk. Shows begin between 8:15 and 9:00 p.m. Located in Multnomah Village. Volunteers are needed to help staff the shows. For more information, contact Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. at 503-823-4592. Or visit their website, www.multnomahoutdoorcinema.org.

Two free dance performances in South Waterfront

Linda K. Johnson, artist in residence for the South Waterfront, offers two free dance events this summer. On July 19 choreographer

Bill Will will present his Promenade, a dance performed by 30 performers, beginning "an hour before sunset" at the district's future neighborhood park, Southwest Moody Avenue and Curry Street.

On August 24, from 4:00 to 7:00 p.m., 10 different choreographers will perform dances at various locations in the district, rotating their locations every 15 minutes, with maps available at Moody and Curry. For more information call 971-998-4810, or visit artistinresidence@southwaterfront.com.



Jim Thayer, former Southwest Hills Residential League chair, has written a new book, Portland Forest Walks - 20 Close-In Forest Walks (192 pages, 40 black & white photos, 21 maps, paperback, \$16.95) published by Timber Press. There are 20 wilderness hikes within 20 miles of downtown Portland. A devoted advocate for Portland's wilderness areas, Thayer has surveyed the Tualatin Hills from Forest Park to Scappose and halfway to Vernonia--on foot.

(Continued on page 11)

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Nissan's hydrogen-fueled X-TRAIL FCV fuel cell vehicle. (Donbraco, courtesy Flickr)

EarthTalk™

(Continued from page 9)

hurdles stand in the way of mass production and widespread consumer adoption of hydrogen "fuel cell" vehicles: the still high cost of producing fuel cells, and the lack of a hydrogen refueling network.

Reining in manufacturing costs of fuel cell vehicles is the first major issue the automakers are addressing. While several have fuel cell prototype vehicles on the road—Toyota and Honda are even leasing them to the public in Japan and California—they are spending upwards of \$1 million to produce each one due to the advanced technology involved and low production runs. Toyota hopes to reduce its costs per fuel cell vehicle to around \$50,000 by 2015, which would make such cars economically viable in the marketplace. On this side of the Pacific, General Motors plans to sell hydrogen-powered vehicles in the U.S. by 2010.

Another problem is the lack of hydrogen refueling stations. Major oil companies have been loathe to set up hydrogen tanks at existing gas stations for many reasons ranging from safety to cost to lack of demand. But obviously the oil companies are also trying to keep customers interested in their highly profitable bread-and-butter, gasoline. A more likely scenario is what is emerging in California, where some 38 independent hydrogen fuel stations are located around the state as part of a network created by the non-profit California Fuel Cell Partnership, a consortium of automakers, state and federal agencies and other parties interested in furthering hydrogen fuel cell technologies.

The benefits of ditching fossil fuels for hydrogen are many, or course. Burning fossil fuels like coal, natural gas and oil to heat and cool our buildings and run our vehicles takes a heavy toll on the environment, contributing significantly to both local problems like elevated particulate levels and global ones like a warming climate. The only by-product of running a hydrogen-powered fuel cell is oxygen and a trickle of water, neither of which will cause any harm to human health or the environment.

But right now 95 percent of the hydrogen available in the U.S. is either extracted from fossil fuels or made using electrolytic processes

powered by fossil fuels, thus negating any real emissions savings or reduction in fossil fuel usage. Only if renewable energy sources—solar, wind and others—can be harnessed to provide the energy to process hydrogen fuel can the dream of a truly clean hydrogen fuel be realized.

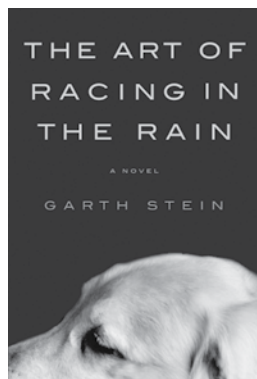
Stanford University researchers in 2005 assessed the environmental effects of three different hydrogen sources: coal, natural gas, and water electrolysis powered by wind. They concluded that we'd lower greenhouse gas emissions more by driving gasoline/electric hybrid cars than by driving fuel cell cars run on hydrogen from coal. Hydrogen made using natural gas would fare a little bit better in terms of pollution output, while making it from wind power would be a slam-dunk for the environment.

CONTACT: California Fuel Cell Partnership, www.fuelcellpartnership.org.

GOT AN ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTION? Send it to: **EarthTalk**, c/o **The Environmental Magazine**, P.O. Box 5098, Westport, CT 06881; submit it at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/thisweek/, or e-mail: earthtalk@emagazine.com. Read past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php.

Calendar of Events

(Continued from page 10)



Seattle author Garth Stein will appear at Annie Bloom's Books in Multnomah Village for a reading, signing, coffee and dessert event July 29 at 7:30 p.m. Stein will be reading from his latest novel, *The Art of Racing*

In the Rain (Harper, \$23.95, 336 pages, hardcover). This story about an auto racing aficionado named Denny Swift-- but it's unusual in that the narrator is his dog (named Enzo). Stein is the author of two novels including the 2006 Pacific Northwest Booksellers Association Book Award winning *How Evan Broke His Head* and *Other Secrets and Raven Stole The Moon*.

Lee Perlman contributed to this calendar of events.

Naturopathic College

(Continued from page 6)

lifestyle." Now under way, the market will be held "every other Sunday until October," he said. Those seeking market dates, and more specific information about special events at the market, are encouraged to call 555-1551, or visit www.ncnm.edu.

Schleich's more ambitious plans involve real estate. He is trying to acquire the nearby Seeman's Building. "If we get it, fantastic," he said. "If not, we'll expand what we have."

His plans do not include acquisition of residential property in the neighborhood, with the possible exception of one house for a "potential day care. We won't flood the neighborhood with students, although it wouldn't be bad as an economic engine."

They would like to bring their Chinese Medicine Clinic from its current location in northwest Portland to the main campus. They would also like to start a naturopathic oncology research program in cooperation with the Oregon Health and Sciences University and the Western States Chiropractic College, and a program in holistic veterinary medicine.

"We'll be reaching beyond our comfort level," he conceded. Schleich

has already "reached out" to City Commissioner Sam Adams, and he said he received a promise of "a say" in transportation issues affecting the college.

Echoing longtime neighborhood sentiments, he said of the current road system, "What were they thinking?" He also commented, "I'm amazed at how accessible your politicians are."

The neighborhood association was suitably impressed with the plans as presented. President Ken Love offered to help publicize the college's events. Transportation committee chair Bill Danneman told Schleich, "You're a valuable neighbor."

The Country Store

(Continued from page 7)

market, is all about breaking down and putting things away.

"You don't need to sign up weekly and if your schedule doesn't fit the scheduled shifts we can accommodate you," said Molloy. It all happens at the outdoor basketball court at the Multnomah Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy (near 34th Avenue). E-mail Molloy a note to contact@hillsdalefarmermarket.com and let him know you're interested.

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As Multnomah Centennial celebration approaches, historical society looks for new home

By Polina Olsen
The Southwest Portland Post

When Patti Waitman tripped over the awkward stairs, she knew something had to change. As the president of the Multnomah Historical Association prepares for the neighborhood's 100-year birthday party (August 8 - 17), she hoped the publicity would bring her organization a badly needed new home along with new members and a better understanding of the association's function.

"We're in a lower level of a building that isn't accessible," Waitman said. She described the current space as "more like storage" and unsuitable as a place for the public to visit. The association hopes to find a location large enough to display their growing collection and provide researchers a place to work. In addition, they welcome small display spaces in area shops.

The Multnomah Historical Association started when Multnomah School closed in 1978. They wanted to preserve the school's history and this quickly expanded to include Multnomah Village and then Southwest Portland. "We're interested in all Southwest Portland neighborhoods," Waitman emphasized. She and the association board are contemplating a name change to reflect their organization's broader scope.

Waitman grew up in Maplewood. "I'm the fourth generation of women born in the same Oregon town," she says. In addition to neighborhood activities, Waitman works full-time as a Providence Health Systems nurse/social

worker. "A lot of people have lived here a long time. Others have moved here and really embrace it." She said she hoped upcoming centennial celebrations bring everyone together.

Events begin August 8 at 6 p.m. with the Multnomah Arts Center (7688 S.W. Capitol Hwy) exhibit of historic photographs and memorabilia. Wine, cheese, and staff in period costumes are included. A plaque commemorating Multnomah viaduct history will be presented at the bridge the next day.

"Multnomah Boulevard was originally a train track, and in 1927 they built the bridge over it for safety reasons," Waitman says. "Capitol Highway was the main westside route to the state capital in Salem." After the ceremony, the West Hills Christian Church (3824 S.W. Troy St.) will host a Multnomah birthday party complete with cake and balloons.

On Friday, August 15, the Multnomah School all-class reunion will include digging up a time capsule left by the final 1978 class. Historic walking tours will take place throughout the week, and Multnomah Village's annual Multnomah Days parade and festival happens Saturday, August 16.

This year Waitman anticipates a special grand celebration complete with Royal Rosarians. "The parade usually starts at the post office and ends past the school," Waitman says. "It's fun and small-town with street vendors all along the way." A sing-a-long ice-cream social will follow at Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church (515 S.W. Maplecrest Dr.).

Additional events are being planned,

and Waitman urged people to check the Historical Association's website for the schedule and updates. Meanwhile she and other volunteers are working hard at long-term projects.

"I'm interested in finding the oldest houses in the various southwest neighborhoods," Waitman says. The Historical Association is collecting information about any Southwest house built before 1946. She said she hoped the July 20 Hillsdale library class "Researching Your House's History" will jumpstart the effort.

The group also plans to catalog Southwest Portland markers. Downloadable forms for both surveys are on their website. The projects are ongoing but Waitman hopes to display something by the centennial.

"We've enlisted every neighborhood, and I've sent press releases every month," Waitman says about efforts to get out the word on Multnomah's birthday bash. "We've had a really good response."

Meanwhile, Waitman said she's looking forward to wearing her costumes for the Multnomah Center's August 8 opening exhibit. "I have Revolutionary War, Civil War -- whatever suits my fancy. Did you know Capitol Highway traffic stops if you cross in a hoop skirt?"

Multnomah Historical Association, visit their website www.multnomah-historical.com. Or contact Patti Wait-



Patti Waitman and granddaughters Amy and Megan at the Vernonia Parade. (Photo courtesy of Patti Waitman)

man pattitwirler@comcast.net, (503) 244-9238.

Hillsdale Library, 1525 SW Sunset Blvd, (503) 988-5388. "Researching Your House's History" will be presented July 20, 12:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. www.multcolib.org/agcy/hls.html. Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy, (503) 823-ARTS (2787) www.multnomahartscenter.org.

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