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continues to boil
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Volume No. 22, Issue No. 1

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Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

November 2013

City of Portland applies for zone change on former Sears Armory property

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

The city of Portland is finalizing the development of an application for a Type III Comprehensive Plan Map and Zoning Map Amendment that will allow the former Sears Armory property to be changed from an R1 Residential zone to an EG2 General Employment 2 zone.

The change in zone designation will allow the city to use the property for an emergency operations center, fuel station, and other city activities that complement the operations center as identified in the Master Plan that was developed for the property in June 2013.

The city hired the Bookin Group to help develop the application and guide the city through the Type III Land Use Review Procedure. The application is expected to be completed and submitted to the Bureau of Development Services by the end of the year.

Staff will have 21 days to determine the completeness of the

application. Then a Request for Response will be mailed to public organizations and agencies within 1000 ft. of the site (located on Southwest Multnomah Boulevard at 25th Avenue).

After that there will be a variety of public comment opportunities by mail, website, and staff recommendations.

There will be a public hearing within 51 days of the completed application. If there is no appeal after this, a decision will be final.

The U.S. Defense Department didn't go through any land use rezone procedures when they built the Armory in 1959. Now that the city owns the property the issue of zoning has to be resolved.

The property will be mainly used for storage of emergency vehicles during the time the application is going through the land use review procedure.

For more information, please contact Rich Attridge, project manager, Office of Management & Finance at rich.attridge@ci.portlandoregon.gov.

Wilson High School improvements include new college and career center

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Wilson High School students returned to campus this fall to several embellishments. Besides a solid, new roof, additional teachers have been hired allowing for smaller class sizes.

Previous bonds, approved by a majority of Multnomah County voters, allowed many Portland Public Schools to receive necessary upgrades and improvements, including Wilson.

According to Principal Brian Chartard, additional funds allocated by the Oregon Legislature, provided Wilson, and other schools, with much needed teachers which also reduced the size of many classrooms.

And the college and career center has now opened after many years of planning which aims to help guide students to options after graduation. "Its purpose is obvious," explained Erica Meyers, WHS career coordinator.

"Our students will have access to internet resources, volunteer professionals, and a wealth of support to make sure all our students are well equipped to successfully take the next leap."

Located down the hall from the main office, the new career center is in need of some equipment and additional resources. Items needed are: a functioning printer/scanner/fax machine; gently used office furniture; and desk-height bookcases.

"We are also looking for volunteers to help organize and volunteer

(Continued on Page 3)



Students, parents, government officials, and business leaders walk to Maplewood School on Oct. 9, part of International Bike + Walk to School Day. (Photo courtesy of Portland Bureau of Transportation)

More than 150 students participate in Maplewood Bike + Walk to School Day

By Melinda Hasting
The Southwest Portland Post

Maplewood Elementary School hosted the International Bike + Walk to School day on Oct. 9 with more than 150 students participating along with parents, community leaders and local business representatives.

The event was an initiative of the Portland Bureau of Transportation's (PBOT) Safe Routes to School program which works with schools, parents and community groups to make walking and biking to schools fun, easy, safe, and healthy for all students and families.

City Commissioner Steve Novick and Transportation Bureau Director Leah Treat walked with young

people along a newly improved gravel shoulder along Maplewood Road that the community had long advocated in order to improve pedestrian access and safety.

The group also included Maplewood Elementary School Principal Annie Tabshy, Bicycle Transportation Alliance Executive Director Rob Sadowsky, and plenty of students and parents walking and biking to school.

In the eight years since the Safe Routes to School program has operated the percentage of walking or biking trips to local schools has increased by 35 percent. The initiative is a partnership between the city of Portland, local schools, neighborhoods, and agencies.

SW Trails chairperson Don Baack walked to school with his grandchildren. "SW Trails has worked for years to get walkable extended shoulders, which provide much of the safety of sidewalks at a fraction of the cost. Thanks to a strong focus on improving safety and accessibility, the bureaus of transportation and environmental services have arrived at a solution that works for everyone."

Kaiser Permanente provided coffee and treats for the event. Spokeswoman Julie Dunn said "We at Kaiser Permanente believe good health starts early and includes active living and healthy eating. Walking or biking gets a child's mind ready to learn before they get here." Dunn was joined by a smiling, bright green stalk of broccoli character.

"The childhood obesity (Continued on Page 3)



A walking broccoli character was part of the festivities at the Maplewood Bike + Walk to School Day. (Post photo by Melinda Hasting)

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Letters to the Editor



The Southwest Portland Post
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Multnomah neighbors oppose sale of Freeman Water Tank property

We are writing to you as concerned residents in regards to the recent "sale" of the Freeman Water Tank on Southwest 42nd Avenue in Multnomah.

The sale of this property includes, not only the water tank itself, but also the land behind it (a total of .72 acres), which is home to a large number of animals and wildlife, including (but not limited to) woodpeckers, coyotes, raccoons, song birds, humming birds, owls, and deer.

It is also close to Woods Park, which is owned by Portland Parks. Currently, "Friends of Woods Park" (a subcommittee of Crestwood Neighborhood Association) is working on new acquisitions to permit a trail system into the larger portion of Woods Park. It is our hope that the current property in which the water tank is located on could be used for

this endeavor.

Our neighborhood doesn't believe that this property was sold according to the rules and ordinances for the City of Portland.

Per Ordinance Number 183952 (passed on June 23, 2013), it was determined that "the public interest would be best served by selling each [surplused Water Bureau] property at the fair market value" and directed that these properties "be sold on the open market for the best price, terms and conditions in accordance with City codes".

This is not the case in this instance. The Water Tank Property on Southwest 42nd Avenue and Freeman Street was sold to a developer - who plans to build three large homes on this property - for a sale price of \$140,000, which is far below what "fair market value" would be for this area.

In addition to this, no notification was provided to the neighborhood, or to the neighbors close by this land that there was an interested party that was looking to purchase and develop this area.

As residents of this area, our family would love for this area to become protected, so that it can be added to the existing Woods Park area and used by others as a connecting area to Woods Park.

This area is one that has so much beauty and nature in it, that we want to protect and share it with others, not have it destroyed by developers for their own financial gain.

To have the ability to have our son (and other children in the neighbor-

hood as well as future generations) be able to grow up with the opportunity to learn about the importance and value of this kind of nature and wildlife that is so close to them is so important to us.

We want to keep public lands public, and not have [this property] exploited by developers for their own financial gains.

We want to thank you for your time in reading this letter and hope that it can be shared with the community of Portland to help build awareness as to the importance of protecting the land and wildlife around us.

As a neighborhood, we will continue to fight to save this land, and truly hope that you can help to support us in this endeavor.

*Karen McKibbin, Joshua Dow, and Tiernan McDow
Multnomah*

City ignored spirit of the law with Freeman Water Tank property sale

[Portland Water Bureau Commissioner] Nick Fish responded to neighborhood concerns about the sale of the Freeman water tank, saying that he had "followed all relevant policies." Please forgive me if I am less than impressed with his excuses.

He said that his "top priority" is clean, safe water and stormwater services. True, but insufficient. His

total priorities include acting in the best interest of the citizens of Portland. This he did not do.

It sounds to me like he is nitpicking the letter of the law in order to justify ignoring the spirit of the law.

Public notification and public hearings and public process are not new concepts in Portland. Certainly they predate 2010 by a long shot.

The sale of the Freeman water tank land, better to be known as the Woods Park Expansion, was carried out in an apparently deceitful way, with "notifications" having been made in ways that would almost certainly go unnoticed by the affected neighbors.

He also did not act in the best interest of the citizens of Portland in terms of the sale price he agreed to. \$140,000 is an egregious price for that [0.72 acre] piece of land. In no way did he consider the real market value when approving this sale. Portland deserves better than this.

If he is, as he claims, "keenly aware of the value of green space in creating livable neighborhoods," he would get busy unwinding this sale and restore the green space to the citizens of Portland.

I urge him to reconsider his position and do what is right in this case: restore this land to public property.

*Carol Routh
Cedar Hills*

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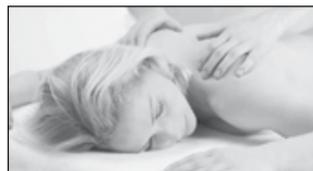
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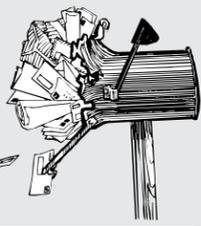
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Letters to the Editor



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Government shutdown is over; let's get back to the real work

Congress has finally agreed on a deal to reopen the government and pay our bills.

Although I am glad that after two and a half long weeks we are putting this crisis behind us, it is unacceptable that we ended up here in the first place.

Keeping the government open and paying our bills should not be cause for celebration, it should be business as usual.

We have seen the effects of D.C.'s dysfunction across our state, hurting Oregon's business and families.

During this shutdown, small businesses had loans and permits delayed. Thousands of families went without paychecks. Recreation sites were closed, hurting the communities around them.

We must end the cycle of brinkmanship that has us governing from one manufactured crisis to another, and get back to the real work of building a country that works for the middle class.

Instead of spending all its time lurching from crisis to crisis, Congress should be focusing on legislation that will grow the economy and create good, middle class jobs.

That's why I am working on finding solutions that will help boost manufacturing around America and here in Oregon.

Last year, I went on a Made in Oregon tour to hear directly from Oregon manufacturers about the opportunities and challenges they face.

I have been working with a group of my colleagues to move forward on promoting manufacturing, and in the next few weeks we will be unveiling a plan to help boost American manufacturing and create good, living-wage jobs.

As the first in my family to go to college, I know that an affordable college education can mean everything to a middle class family.

That's why it's so important to me to take on the student loan debt crisis and lead the national efforts to explore Oregon's innovative Pay It Forward model.

This new approach would guarantee affordability for students who choose to participate by replacing the huge loans weighing students down with a simple promise to pay a fixed small percentage of their future earnings into a Pay it Forward fund.

In the coming weeks, I will be officially introducing the first bill that would make Pay It Forward a na-

tional program and help guarantee college affordability for all students.

It is time to stop governing from crisis to crisis and get back to the real work of helping Oregonians.

Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

Maplewood Bike + Walk to School

(Continued from Page 1)

epidemic is a crisis that, in the long run, affects all of us," said Dr. Jimmy Unger, a Portland pediatrician with Kaiser Permanente.

"As one who spends much of my day encouraging families to be more active for the sake of their children's health, I know that efforts such as these at Maplewood make it easier for families to make healthy choices," said Unger.

Maplewood Elementary joined the program in 2008. "When I moved to Portland with my kids, I immediately recognized the transportation challenges," said Southwest Portland resident Ronda Zakocs.

"As a parent, I'd like to thank SW Trails, Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc., and the bureaus of transportation and environmental services for their work on improving the shoulders near Maplewood," said Zakocs.

Wilson College and Career Center

(Continued from Page 1)

weekly," said Meyers.

College and Career Center volunteers will receive training on Naviance planning software, the college application process, financial aid, career-related learning, graduation requirements, college visits, and more.

"This is a great opportunity to work with Wilson students and counselors," Meyers said.

Please contact Sue Stahl (sstahl@pps.net), or Kate Morgan (kmorgan@pps.net) to make donations to the Wilson College and Career Center. To volunteer, please contact Erica Meyers at emeyers@pps.net.

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Freeman Water Tank property controversy continues to boil

By Melinda Hasting
The Southwest Portland Post

The Freeman Water Tank property sale controversy continues to boil as neighbors organize in opposition.

Jeremy Solomon, a neighbor who lives near the property, spoke at a recent meeting of the Multnomah Neighborhood Association about his activities to halt the sale, or at the least, to eventually improve the public notification process related to sale of public land in the future.

The 0.72 acre property, located at 8625 SW 42nd Ave, was contracted for sale by the Portland Water Bureau to local developer Renaissance Homes for infill development last year. Though the property's fair market value was a considerably higher amount, the contract for sale was \$140,000.

Solomon says another property just around the corner with a smaller (0.22 acre) footprint sold for close to \$200,000. The Water Bureau is required to sell public property for fair market value, and neighbors in opposition to the contract for sale to Renaissance say they believe this requirement was breached.

Portland Maps, a widely-used website to determine local fair market value of commercial and residential properties, listed the site's value at approximately \$416,000 last



(Photo courtesy of Jeremy Solomon)

year at around the time the Water Bureau entered into contract for sale of the property to Renaissance.

The property abuts the Woods Memorial Natural Area, a city park that is widely used by neighbors who hike, jog, and enjoy its considerable wildlife, which includes owls, foxes and woodpeckers.

Solomon claims the Freeman property has been considered an informal park itself due to its inherent natural qualities and that neighbors have consistently appealed to the Water Bureau over the years to make the space a public park if it was ever decommissioned.

Claims that the Water Bureau failed to exercise good faith in notifying the public about the plans to sell the land abound. In March 2012 the Water Bureau posted a vague notice on Craigslist advertising the property for \$187,000. Neighbor Carole McCarthy said the property

(Continued on Page 5)

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THE COUNTRY STORE

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Hillsdale Paella Dinner rescheduled for Nov. 9

Who would ever have expected remnants of a Pacific typhoon to arrive in Hillsdale the same day as the annual Main Street fundraiser? It was rescheduled so there's still time to buy tickets.

The Hillsdale Community Foundation is holding their third annual Hillsdale Paella Dinner on Saturday, Nov. 9, from 6:00 to 9:00 pm at the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 SW Capitol Hwy. (The event was originally slated for an outdoor venue at Fanno Creek Clinic.)

Proceeds help Hillsdale Main Street raise money for the non-profit's year-round community support programs.

The highlight is a Spanish dish called *paella*, cooked in a five-foot diameter pan over the course of the day by Chef Greg Schwab from Seasons & Regions. Guests can watch the cooking process while enjoying local wine and an appetizer course.

Attendees are also welcome to purchase a mystery bottle of wine from the wine wall.

There will also be a raffle for prizes donated by local businesses. Food and cooking services donated by local restaurants, including the Tapas appetizers by Salvador Molly's catering company, Vibrant Table Catering & Events, plus bread and a dessert by Julie Richardson from Baker & Spice.

A portion of the event's proceeds will also go to Neighborhood House's Food Box Program, which serves over 14,000 low-income children and seniors each year.

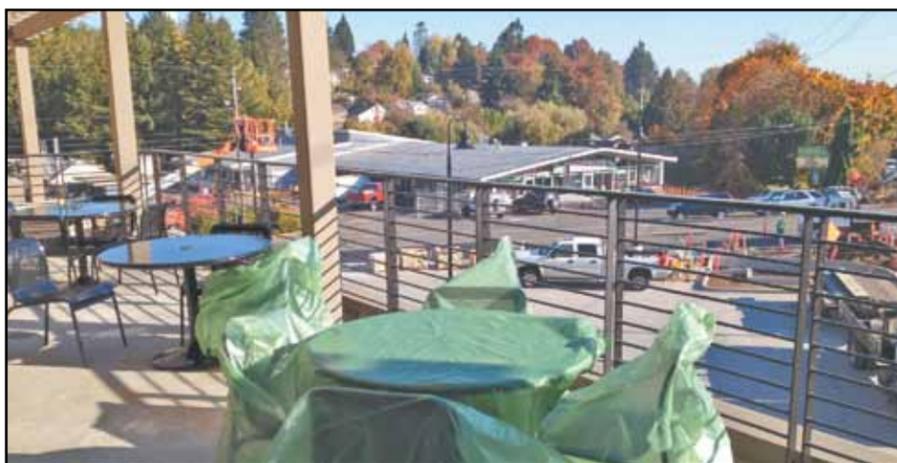
For more info and to buy tickets visit <http://hillsdalemainstreet.org/events/paella>. Tickets are \$90.

New Safeway supermarket caters to kosher customers

Maybe you're on the Safeway upstairs balcony right this instant enjoying a healthy meal, drinking a cool drink, or gazing out at Mount Hood in the beautiful Indian summer, and, of course, reading the current issue of the *Post*.

It's been a long time coming but all should be in place for the newest Safeway to grace the region. With over 56,430 total square footage and 135 parking spots, the new store will have 180 employees: 140 new, 40 of them transfers.

Along with the second floor patio with a view of Mt. Hood, there will also be an enclosed seating area with



At press time, the new Safeway balcony was almost ready for outdoor dining. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

a fireplace, a Starbucks coffee house, a U.S. Bank branch, and a large offering of kosher bakery products.

Actually there will be a store within a store of kosher grocery, (approximately 44 feet of grocery items, nine doors of kosher frozen food including Japanese and Chinese foods, meats, seafood, dairy and wine.

All employees will go through kosher training before the store opens. The store manager participated in extensive kosher practice training.

What did all this cost? The building was approximately \$10 million without equipment and preliminary costs. The original store opened in 1968 in the current location at Southwest Barbur Boulevard and Capitol Hill Road.

The grand re-opening is on Wednesday, Nov. 6 at noon.

The Second Chance Boutique replaces two annual traditions

If you thought you might have missed the annual Senior Fall Bazaar at the Multnomah Arts Center, you didn't miss anything. It turned into a daily event!

Be sure to check out the Multnomah Senior Center's new gift and thrift shop called The Second Chance Boutique. This store replaces the annual October Harvest Bazaar and the Rummage Sale events, and offers the best of both year round.

Handmade gifts such as scarves, baby clothes, and seasonal specialty

(Continued on Page 5)

COMMUNITY LIFE

By Don Snedecor
The Southwest Portland Post

6 Do you wish the bus ran later or more frequently? Would you like to take transit to work, school, appointments or recreation? If so, TriMet planners need to hear from you!

The Southwest Corridor Plan Forum takes place on Wednesday, Nov. 6, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., Tigard Public Works Auditorium, 8777 SW Burnham St. in Tigard. Visit the www.oregometro.gov website for directions and details.

9 Trolley, Train, Trail and Tram: Mark Turner of SW Trails will lead the 4T hike on Saturday, Nov. 9. Meet behind the bleachers at Wilson High School and be ready to leave by 9:00 a.m. (Southwest Sunset Boulevard and Capitol Highway).

Trail loop will include trolley (streetcar) in South Waterfront to downtown, train (MAX) to the Zoo, trail (Marquam) to Council Crest and tram back to South Waterfront. You may also access the hike via the Gibbs Street Bridge. The walking distance will be about 5 miles with 900 feet elevation gain.

You'll need a TriMet ticket. Bring a snack and water and dress for the weather. Service dogs only. To learn more visit www.swtrails.org.

12 Multnomah Neighborhood Association: Next meeting will be held on Tuesday, Nov. 12 at 7:00 p.m. at the Multnomah Arts Center, Room 30 (7688 SW Capitol Hwy). Agenda items include Freeman Water Tank property discussion, Safeway grand re-opening, Southwest Corridor Study, and a proposed cell tower to be built at the Gabriel Park Community Center. For more information, contact Moses Ross, chair, mnachair@gmail.com.

16 All aboard the Red Electric! A work party to clear blackberries will be held on Saturday, Nov. 16, 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. along the future Red Electric Trail align-

ment, Southwest Nebraska Street and Capitol Highway. Bring clippers, long-sleeved shirt, heavy work gloves, and water. Parking is available at the lot across from the Sasquatch Pub. Learn more at swtrails.org.

20 All Things Holiday: Northwest Senior Theatre presents a musical variety show featuring a talented cast of seniors entertaining you with holiday songs, dancing, and comedy. Some surprises too. A wonderful way to get in the holiday spirit! Thursday through Saturday, Nov. 20-23 at 2:00 p.m., Alpenrose Dairy Opera House, 6149 SW Shattuck Rd. \$5.00 at the door. For more information contact Betty at 503-227-2003, bettymer@comcast.net.

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THE COUNTRY STORE

(Continued from Page 4)

items are displayed next to carefully chosen thrift items.

The selection of lightly used items, including clothing, shoes, accessories, fabric and yarn, comes from donations provided through Spunkiest Legendary Consignment shop. Proceeds from each sale help support the Neighborhood House Senior Center.

The boutique is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. To volunteer, please contact volunteers@nhweb.org or call (503) 246-1663 (x 2117).

Multnomah Village green street project will conclude by holiday season

You have to admit: the merchants of Multnomah Village have seen it all and still have a great attitude in

the end.

The October typhoon blew down some hanging flower pots —no one was hurt— but the new bio-swales were planted. The new parking lot is done, fully landscaped, but the trees in the heart of the village are still on their way.

According to Jennifer Devlin, with Portland Bureau of Environmental Services, the bioswales were planted in early October and the trees should be in by mid-November, except Renner's which has theirs already.

But, according to Dylan Rivera from the Bureau of Transportation, repaving of Capitol Highway is no longer scheduled down the main street. Both the city's fiscal year 2013-14 and 2014-15 budgets do not include funds for repaving.

However, local merchants were not happy with the t-hash parking marks on the south side of the street so they were removed by PBOT. What happened next was

Freeman Water Tank

(Continued from Page 3)

never had a for sale sign.

"Commissioner Nick Fish [of the Water Bureau] has acknowledged that the process to sell the Freeman Water Tank property was flawed and he is going to correct it for other tank properties, but his work should not end there," said McCarty.

"We are appealing to him as the Commissioner in charge of the Water Bureau to right the wrong that occurred under his predecessor and keep the Freeman Water Tank property as open green space." McCarthy continued.

According to McCarthy, "The claim that doing the right thing for our neighborhood would be a risk to the ratepayers is hugely exaggerat-

ed. The actual cost to any individual ratepayer would be miniscule under any conceivable scenario."

Solomon has lived across the street from the property for 13 years and still considers himself a newcomer. "I'm not an activist," he said. "I'm really just a neighbor and citizen and I enjoy the park and its nature."

Solomon has helped to finance and distribute yard signs for neighbors who agree with his stance to join the effort. The signs read: "Keep Public Land Public: Save the Freeman Natural Area." Neighbors may obtain a sign by contacting Solomon by email: jeremy@inkwaterpress.com.

Editor's Note: We received two letters on this subject from Post readers which can be found on Page 2.



Umpqua Bank branch manager Susan Schwemberger has been elected vice president of the Multnomah Village Business Association. (Post photo by Erik Vidstrand)

not expected.

After PBOT sandblasted the striping marks off the payment, the old angled stripes reappeared. Visitors not familiar with parking etiquette but following parking guidelines, decided to angle park on the south side of the street as well.

TriMet buses squeezed through delicately but too tight for safety. Several merchants scrambled to reach as many businesses as possible, trying to find the rightful owners. Eventually, they were found and the parking chaos was abated.

The angled parking stripes were blackened over and everything hopefully will settle down now.

"Just in time for the holiday shopping season!" exclaimed Michele Cassinelli, owner of Village Beads.

Cassinelli recently ended a seven-year stint as co-chair of the Multnomah Village Business Association along with Thinker Toys owner Joan Steinbach.

Some of the new board members include: Switch's Jennifer Robinson and Jason Lensch as co-presidents;

Umpqua's Susan Schwemberger, vice president; and Peachtree Gifts' Petie Farkas, board member.

Be sure to come out to the Holiday Gala in the Village on Friday, December 6. Open late.

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Rep. Williamson gives detailed report on Oregon legislature's special session

MULTNOMAH NOTEBOOK

By Melinda Hasting
The Southwest Portland Post

State Representative Jennifer Williamson (D-36) gave a detailed report on the highlights of the recent special session of the Oregon Legislature. Rep. Williamson, a freshman, sits on the Judiciary and Ways and Means Committees.

Rep. Williamson is chairwoman of the Public Safety Subcommittee of Way and Means. Highlights in education included an additional \$100 million in funding for K-12 schools and an infrastructure bond to fund an additional academic/student center with a medium-sized, 5,000 seat concert hall.

Williamson, a former post-secondary education activist, gained authorization for a study to determine the impact of the Pay It Forward program, which would create a financing system for college students to pay back their tuition after graduation through a percentage of pay upon the attainment of jobs.

The plan is designed to diminish cost-prohibitive disincentives for students to pursue lower-paying, but highly necessary fields of work such as social work. One idea under consideration is allowing co-enrollment in community colleges for certain core subjects.

In public safety reform, Williamson shepherded several policy bills,



Rep. Jennifer Williamson (right) gives a report on the recent Special Session to the Multnomah Neighborhood Association, October 8. (Post photo by Melinda Hasting)

including one measure that would improve flexibility in dealing with low-risk drug offenders by allowing probation coupled with treatment options under the Affordable Care Act.

Funding was also increased for multi-disciplinary centers for abused children, and domestic violence shelters received a doubling of funding statewide.

A citizen questioned whether the measures could help negate the need for two new prisons, and Williamson answered, "Yes, the majority of property crimes are related to drug abuse. These [bills] address the fundamental impact of addiction."

percent median federal income and 109 units will be available for households qualifying for Section 8 and public housing subsidies.

In addition, seven new Habitat for Humanity homes will be built for first-time home buyers.

Former Hillsdale Terrace residents received relocation services and will be offered the opportunity to return when the construction is complete.

Sustainability features in the proposed design include bioswales and cisterns to manage surface water; energy-efficient geo-thermal "heat exchange" heating and cooling system; and construction materials selected for indoor air quality.

Neighborhood association elects new officers

The Multnomah Neighborhood Association elected officers for the coming year on Oct. 8. Moses Ross will serve another year as chairman, and Ellen Houston was elected Secretary.

Current vice chairwoman, Katie Brumbelow, will vacate her seat to serve as the new parks committee chairwoman. Meghan Vidal has volunteered to be a member of the communications committee.

There are still openings for vice-chair and treasurer; members of the association interested in serving in these positions may contact Ross at mnachair@gmail.com.

Stephens Creek Crossing update

A representative from Home Forward attended the meeting to discuss the progress on the new Stephens Creek Crossing affordable housing development slated to open in January 2014. The development is designed to replace the isolated 1968 Hillsdale Terrace housing development in the Multnomah neighborhood.

According to Home Forward, 122 apartments will replace 60 existing housing units. Thirteen of those units will be provided to households with less than 60

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Donnerberg offers Hillsdale merchants a crash course in healthcare

OBAMACARE 101

By Erik Vidstrand
The Southwest Portland Post

Enrollment for new national health insurance options has begun! The Affordable Care Act (ACA), also known as Obamacare, provides more options for health insurance.

Oregon Health Plan (OHP) will be available for many more clients and others will be able to buy subsidized health insurance plans.

Undoubtedly, as a business owner or employee, questions are arising about how to enroll, eligibility, Fast Track enrollment, and more. And on top of it all, the government website has been full of bugs and is being repaired.

Lyndsey Donnerberg, of Client First Group, Inc., was on hand at the October Hillsdale Business Association meeting to help small business owners navigate the system.

First, it is a misconception that all businesses have to provide health insurance for their employees. If your business has less than 50 full-time employees, no group plan is required.

If your business already has a health plan in place, you need do nothing.

Large employers (greater than 50 employees) must offer fulltime employees, and their dependents, the

“Employee Mandate” (also known as “Pay or Play”) but have until January 2015 without any penalties.

Of course, employers are still encouraged to maintain health coverage in 2014, but there won’t be any penalties in 2014 for not meeting the “employee mandate”.

For individuals, self employed, sole proprietor, or employees in small businesses who don’t have insurance, have many options and tax credits are available. This applies to over half of Oregonians.

A small employer has the choice of offering coverage directly with a carrier or through the insurance marketplace called Cover Oregon.

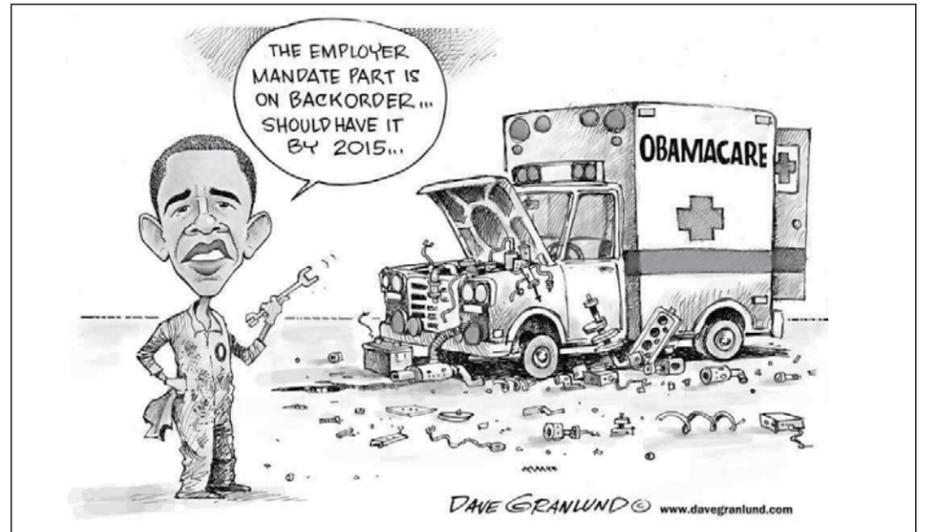
Cover Oregon is taking enrollments for Jan. 1, 2014, by hand until the computer glitches are fixed.

“Individual carriers participating with Cover Oregon, at the moment,” Donnerberg explained, “include Kaiser, HealthNet, LifeWise, Moda (formerly ODS), Pacific Source, and Providence.”

Client First Group encourages a small business owner to discontinue group plans and consider pay raises to account for the premium savings. This places the employer out of the decision making and administration process.

It gives employees and their families the ability to shop through Cover Oregon and take advantage of any financial assistance available. This allows employees and owners to plan decisions that fit their personal needs.

The uniqueness of this plan is



that there is *no refusal for pre-existing conditions*.

If you’re still with me, there are many other rules and details and this article cannot fully cover everything.

“Please be patient!” Donnerberg stressed. “This is a very big endeavor and everyone is frustrated from President Obama on down!”

As is any health insurance information, all employers were not willing to discuss the intricacies of their coverage offering.

Local employers this reporter spoke to are either are too small and it doesn’t apply, or were still working out details.

Mike Roach, owner of Paloma Clothing in Hillsdale supports the reform. In fact, he advocated for it in front of the US Senate committee in April 2008.

Roach has lent his voice to the Small Business Majority, a separate organization that supports the Af-

fordable Care Act. They discussed how the law has already begun to help small business owners through small business tax credits, rate review, the Medical Loss Ratio provision, and more.

Roach also belongs to the National Federation of Independent Businesses, a Tennessee based lobbying group, which joined 26 states in challenging the 2010 Affordable Care Act which is fighting the measure.

“Use a broker. The broker does not cost the consumer anything,” Roach said. “And don’t be fooled by scam artists. The broker acts like the travel agent and gets reimbursed by the insurance companies”

“Call anytime,” Donnerberg whispered. “Really.”

For more information, please contact Lyndsey Donnerberg at Client First Group at 503-597-6332 or lyndsey@clientfirstgroup.com or drop by Paloma Clothing to find owner Mike Roach.

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It's not too late to keep that promise of spring

GARDEN MIND

By Rebecca Hart

Spring-flowering bulbs are one of the traditional harbingers of seasonal change.

A gardener's hope emerges with the first sighting of yellow daffodils, or seeing a green-edged white snow-drop, pushing up through snow and ice. We're convinced that longer and brighter days are just ahead.

You could say that's a big load for the lowly and humble bulb to carry, but it's a job bulbs do well.

All plants hold the mystery of beauty, but there's something about the process of putting a bulb—with its crinkly tissue-like husk—down into a hole opened in the dirt, then covered back up, to sleep.

At some strange signal the miracle happens and a stem emerges from the soil and a blossom announces the arrival of spring. For some, the act of buying and planting bulbs is akin to initiation.

Congratulations if you took the plunge. If you too are awaiting your spring display, you share company with untold numbers of gardeners, since those early plant collectors tens of thousands of years ago.

To a novice gardener, it may seem strange to buy these odd things, bulbs, with their bare brown or golden or white packets of promise. They are ugly! They have no flowers!

Spring bulbs, which bloom from February into May, add color and contrast to your spring garden. They're for sale at the same time the fall flowers show up on retail shelves, to compete with the seasonal dazzlers: flowering kale, chrysanthemums, and the stately white or pink Japanese Anemones.

Possibly the astute gardener notices

a few odd specimens of the flowering bulb Colchicum, the autumn crocus, with its pale lavender flower, on display in a box with sawdust, but with not one single leaf. It dawns on you that the crocus family is more complicated than you knew.

Yet each and every year it's the same, you can set your clock by it; we are told to *buy early for the best selection*. If we're good, we comply. If you are like me you hunt early, and purchase quickly.

Maybe last spring you made notes in your garden journal, determined to make improvements. Maybe a magazine article or a neighbor's yard held more "juice," and now you need something different.

I'm still looking for a bearded iris in the same shade of pink as my Cynthia rhododendrons. At the garden center those spring bulbs sit in their bags with bright pictures promising aesthetic victory for you.

The bulb itself contains the food for this year's plant; food is stored in the bulb. Food for future seasons is produced by the mysterious act of photosynthesis, a process where the energy in sunlight is transferred to chlorophyll cells in leaves (which create the color green) and in turn is stored as energy back down in the bulb of the plant, for next year's display.

Bulbs are among the bargains of the plant world: generous and lovely. To me, these attributes are defined not only by beauty, but also because bulbs reproduce themselves and they return annually to shower beauty on the landscape, with little effort on the part of humans, once we make the initial effort to obtain and plant them.

Editor's Note: Have questions or comments for Rebecca? Email her via news@multnomahpost.com or write to: Garden Mind, The Southwest Portland Post, 4207 SE Woodstock Blvd #509, Portland, OR 97206.



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