

# Overlook Views

May/June 2004

Vol.1 No.1

## WORDS FROM THE CHAIR



OKNA is pleased to publish its first newsletter in several years. It is made possible by many hours of volunteer effort and a grant from Freightliner.

Freightliner has graciously provided funding for the production and distribution of six newsletters. We appreciate their generosity and commitment.

Another splendid example of corporation and community working well together is the financial support provided by Kaiser and adidas for our fifth annual tree planting. On February 21st ninety trees were planted bringing to a total of four hundred since the program's inception. Because of this wonderful melding of Overlook volunteers and corporate funding, our neighborhood's already attractive charm has become even more appealing.



Overlook is undergoing rapid change. New stores, professional offices, coffee shops, bakeries, boutiques, yoga studios, and restaurants are popping up. Four high-density housing developments are in the works. Light rail is opening. Yet, old intractable problems remain. Within our community, people are battling drug addiction and homelessness. Ironically, affordable housing is disappearing and there are many such dilemmas. As always, the way to solve them is through individuals coming together as a community. When this happens we can see that change and density have their benefits. More people means more services and more opportunity. Killingsworth and Interstate are showing Hawthorne potential and Overlook is a highly desirable address. Change and density also have their challenges. Thus, zoning, parking, and livability issues are major themes for discussion in forthcoming association meetings.

It is obvious that Overlook is growing and our association grows with it. We can always use extra hands. If you would like to know more about OKNA and ways to get involved, or if you have an issue that you need help addressing, contact us via our website:

<http://www.overlookneighborhood.org/>

Jim Bennett, Chair Overlook Neighborhood Assoc.

---

### GETTING AROUND

#### BEFORE TRIMET

In conjunction with the opening of Interstate MAX on May 1<sup>st</sup> the Friends of Overlook House will host a slide show presentation looking back at public transportation in another era. Local historian Dan Haneckow will discuss the historic network of Portland street railways and interurban lines that  
(Continued on page 2)

---

### FOLLOW THE YELLOW

#### MAX ROAD

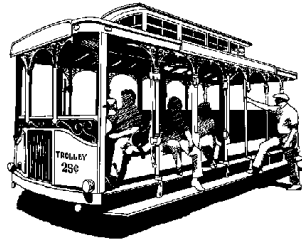
Join TriMet as we "Celebrate Interstate!" On Saturday, May 1, TriMet's Interstate MAX Yellow line will open to the public with fanfare, festivities and free train rides. The day begins with a grand opening ceremony at Interstate/Rose Quarter Station at 10 a.m., followed by community celebrations at the new stations  
(Continued on page 2)

### GETTING AROUND (Cont'd)

served the city into the 1950's. His presentation will feature vintage Portland views, some of them in color, as well as "then and now" comparisons of various locations around the city.

There will be two opportunities to hear this fascinating presentation on the Interstate MAX'S opening day: 1:00 P.M. and 3:00 P.M. The presentation is part of the Overlook History Project, a series of activities, lectures and discussions to take place at the Overlook House highlighting neighborhood and Portland history.

For further information about the transportation slide show, contact Dan Haneckow at 503-282-7155 or [dhaneckow@comcast.net](mailto:dhaneckow@comcast.net).



### MAX ROAD (Cont'd)

along Interstate Avenue, between the Rose Quarter and the Expo Center from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday.

Enjoy a street fair, music, food and other activities honoring the people, communities and cultures along Interstate Avenue. The Overlook Neighborhood Association and Friends of Overlook House will have a table at the Overlook Park Station party in Kaiser's lot. If you are interested in spending an hour greeting your neighbors (both near and far) that day, please contact Brad Halverson at 503-282-2755 or [info@overlookneighborhood.org](mailto:info@overlookneighborhood.org).

Prescott Street's station will showcase the connections to Swan Island. Beach Elementary School will have a table along with many others at the Killingsworth Station event being held in Patton Square Park next to IFCC. Other stations hosting celebrations include Albina/Mississippi, Portland Blvd, Kenton/Denver, Vanport/PIR, and Expo Center. Plus, you can ride MAX Yellow Line for free on Saturday, May 1 after 11 a.m. and all day Sunday, May 2. Climb aboard, and see where it takes you!

Brad Halverson, Transportation Committee

### IMPORTANT NITTY-GRITTY STUFF

To be added to our mailing list or to contact the Overlook Neighborhood Association via email:

[info@overlookneighborhood.org](mailto:info@overlookneighborhood.org)

Via snailmail:

OKNA  
c/o Kenton Firehouse  
2209 N. Schofield St.  
Portland, OR. 97217

---

#### OKNA Board Officers

|            |  |
|------------|--|
| Chair      | Jim Bennett 503-331-1030<br><a href="mailto:tankerville@comcast.net">tankerville@comcast.net</a>     |
| Vice Chair | Brad Halverson 503-282-2755<br><a href="mailto:halverbk@comcast.net">halverbk@comcast.net</a>        |
| Secretary  | Katherine Beamer 503-493-8026<br><a href="mailto:wavewatcher991@msn.com">wavewatcher991@msn.com</a>  |
| Treasurer  | Adrian Campbell 503-331-9191<br><a href="mailto:adyinoregon@comcast.net">adyinoregon@comcast.net</a> |

---

#### OVERLOOK VIEWS

A Bi-Monthly Publication of the  
Overlook Neighborhood Association

Co-editors: Warren and Melisa Cassell  
503-288-8323 [w.cassell@comcast.net](mailto:w.cassell@comcast.net)

Distribution: thanks to Christine Quigley  
and her band of elves

We would like to acknowledge and thank the following people whose contributions to this newsletter made its publication possible:

Jim Bennett, Carol Cushman, Linda Gorg,  
Brad Halverson, Dan Haneckow, Pat Hazlett,  
Jay Hunt, Jerry Lindsay, Weslie MacGregor and  
Julie Rawls

## NEW OVERLOOK HOUSE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

For the past many months several dozen dedicated volunteers have been organizing committees in an effort to create a community center at Overlook House. We are creating a “theater of community” so to speak. But unlike conventional productions, this play will go on and on, and we all will write the script. Here in order of calendar appearance are some of our players and activities.

Jay Hunt, chair of the Overlook House SENIOR RECREATION GROUP says that the mission of the group is to “celebrate long lived life by promoting social activity and fellowship in a comfortable neighborhood setting.” To this end, Jay has planned a seniors’ meet and greet afternoon on Wednesday May 12 from 3:00 to 5:00 P.M. so that activities, goals and plans can be discussed. The first of these, an old-fashioned card-playing afternoon, is scheduled for May 26 from 3:00 to 7:00 P.M. For additional information or details, contact Jay Hunt at [jay\\_hunt@yahoo.com](mailto:jay_hunt@yahoo.com) or 503-331-0571.



Our second act comes from Linda Gorg and Pat Hazlett of the CHEFS/WINE COMMITTEE. They announce a Wines of the World Seminar presented by Jerry McGinn of McGinn’s Russell Street Wine Merchants. Major wine groups and their distinctive characteristics will be discussed and tasted. This delectable experience will be in a three part series on May 19, June 9 and June 30 from 8:00 to 9:30 P.M. A very modest fee of \$40 for the series will cover the cost of the wines and a contribution to the maintenance of Overlook House. Because space is limited, only twenty people can be accommodated. If there are more than twenty respondents, additional seminars will be scheduled. To make your reservation or for questions, details, contact Linda or Phil Gorg at [llgorg@aol.com](mailto:llgorg@aol.com) or 503-287-2614 or Pat Hazlett at [MPHazlett@aol.com](mailto:MPHazlett@aol.com) or 503-288-0792. In addition to these seminars, the CHEFS/WINE COMMITTEE is planning some great events in the fall. These include a Harvest Feast and Salmon Bake at Overlook House as well as a Wine Tour and Fall Crush. OVERLOOK VIEWS will be keep you posted.



From the gardening scene comes an invitation to confront flower arranging head-on or rather, hands-on. Weslie Macgregor, chair of the GARDEN COMMITTEE says that, “The truth is that most of us don’t go out and buy flowers (to arrange), we use the ones in our own backyards.” On July 21 at 7:00 P.M you will have the opportunity to bring a selection of blooms from your backyard and learn how to arrange them, with advice from an experienced professional. More details to follow in the June/July newsletter. We’ll also keep you posted on the GARDEN COMMITTEE’S plans for an Overlook Neighborhood Garden Tour, which will give you the chance to view the fabulous gardens of Overlook. Weslie says that, “Tentative garden tours include examples of container, rose, shade, tree, water gardens and more.” For details, information, etc. contact Weslie MacGregor at 503-703-1078 or [wesliem@excite.com](mailto:wesliem@excite.com).



Our final act of OH activities includes what else, dessert. Yes, bring the whole family to an all-American ice-cream social at the Overlook House on Sunday August 8 early evening. Julie Rawls, chair of the ICE-CREAM SOCIAL COMMITTEE points out that, "We'll be scooping all your favorites and will provide toppings as well. Plan to participate in the silent auction of items ranging from fine wine to electronics. All proceeds will go toward future programming at Overlook House. For more information, contact Julie Rawls at 503-282-7198 or [julier@nwlinc.com](mailto:julier@nwlinc.com)

## **MUSEUM IN THE MAKING**

### **At Overlook House A Call for Artifacts**

Examine the past and you can bring it to life. Herewith, a call for your artifacts. Let's look at: old photos or historical objects, souvenirs of community events and relics you feel are relevant to Overlook's past so that we may display them at Overlook House. Not to worry, we can copy photographs and return the originals. We can protect treasures by placing them in the lockable built-in display cases we have available. We can label items using information you provide to enlighten visitors to the display. Of course, we'll credit you for items given and shared. The insight gained from this exhibit and celebration will be unlimited as our gratitude for your help. For further information, or to donate/loan an item, please contact Carol Cushman, 503-288-38

## A BUILDING, A VISION, A COMMUNITY

Elvira Raven understood the power and promise of volunteer neighborhood action. She understood that neighborhoods become special places when neighbors know each other and find common ground working together. In 1951, after years of opening her house to a multitude of neighborhood oriented groups and events, Elvira Raven donated her special home and its beautiful grounds to the City of Portland to provide a community center to her beloved neighborhood "Overlook." In the ensuing 50 years, Overlook House, as it became known, has been used, loved, and appreciated in many ways by Overlook neighbors and citizens throughout Portland. It has served in turn and simultaneously as a neighborhood child care center, community classroom site, voter precinct site, regular meeting place for the Overlook Neighborhood Association and other community related groups, community retreat site, as well as a prized location for affordable weddings, bar mitzvahs, and other important family celebrations. Much of this activity has been made possible by neighborhood volunteerism.

In April 2003, Overlook neighbors were stunned by the announcement that due to municipal budgetary reductions Overlook House was to be closed and possibly sold. Not only was Overlook to lose their community center but also the legacy of Elvira Raven to her beloved neighborhood. Overlook Neighborhood volunteer activism sprang to life. A group of concerned Overlook neighbors led by 70 year Overlook resident Norm Lindstedt and others came together. After hearing a thoughtful presentation by a Portland Parks representative regarding the fiscal situation related to Overlook House, the group decided that closing Overlook House was not acceptable to Overlook neighbors.

Initially it was hoped that Portland Parks could be convinced to continue their competent stewardship of this community asset. However, it soon became apparent that the only possible solution for saving Overlook House as a community center was for the neighborhood itself to shoulder the task. A subcommittee of the Overlook Neighborhood Association, now known as Friends of Overlook House, gathered form and began to negotiate with City officials to find a way to keep Overlook House open and to reinvigorate Elvira Raven's original vision of her home as a magnet for community building. The interest and outpouring of time, energy, and creativity for this endeavor by a number of Overlook neighbors has been almost overwhelming.

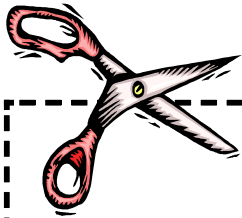
The friends of Overlook Committee now has a total of 10 functioning subcommittees focusing on various aspects of maintaining Overlook House and reinvigorating it as a vital community center. Already the first neighborhood grounds workday has occurred and more are in the works. A variety of additional community gathering events have been planned and are mentioned in other parts of this newsletter.

The Office of Neighborhood Involvement is a key partner in this community endeavor. Tom Griffin Valade and Ronna Seavey are partnering with Friends of Overlook to support the operation of Overlook House as a community center. Ronna, who also oversees the Kenton Firehouse community center, will have her office at Overlook House and track the day to day scheduling and routine maintenance associated with keeping Overlook House operating well. Friends of Overlook is particularly grateful for their city-sponsored support.



The Friends of Overlook steering committee, which is an open forum for all interested volunteers, meets the last Tuesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. at Overlook House. We extend a cordial invitation to all neighbors to become more a part of Elvira Raven's community inspiring legacy.

Jerry Lindsay, Chair Friends of Overlook House



## CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

Make sure to clip this section and post on your fridge, PDA or anyplace else you save notices of important events, activities and meetings you just can't miss.

### OVERLOOK HOUSE 3839 N. Melrose Drive Portland, OR. 97227

May 1 Slide show/talk Portland Street Railways  
May 12 Senior Recreation Group Greet/Meet  
May 19 Wine Seminar  
May 26 Senior Recreation Group Card Games  
June 9 Wine Seminar  
June 30 Wine Seminar  
July 21 Flower Arranging Seminar  
Aug 8 Family Ice Cream Social  
Last Tuesday each month-Overlook House  
Steering Committee

### OTHER COMMUNITY EVENTS

April 24 Peninsula Clean Up  
May 1 Max Opening Day  
TBA Neighborhood Garage Sale

### OVERLOOK NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

April 20 **General Meeting Agenda**  
New Seasons Market Update  
MAX Opening Day  
Freightliner  
Killingsworth 1300 Block Development

May 18 **General Meeting Agenda**  
Overlook Village  
Kaiser Expansion

June 15 **General Meeting Agenda**  
Homeless Working Group Dialogue

General Association meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at Kaiser Town Hall and Board meetings are scheduled the first Tuesday of each month at Overlook House.

For additional information:  
[info@overlookneighborhood.org](mailto:info@overlookneighborhood.org)



**WRITERS WANTED---** You don't have to be the next Hemingway or Austen but you may want to interrupt your great American novel-in-the-making to contribute to **OVERLOOK VIEWS**.

We would welcome your articles, poems, musings about all things Overlook. This could include but would not necessarily be restricted to, your writing about neighborhood people, events, history, businesses and traditions. Submissions should be via email and limited to 350 words, subject to editing and space limitations. For deadlines and additional information, call Warren Cassell at 503-288-8323 or email me at [w.cassell@comcast.net](mailto:w.cassell@comcast.net).