

OVERLOOK VIEWS

Sept./Oct. 2006

The Newsletter

Vol. 3 No. 2

Overlook Neighborhood Association

www.overlookneighborhood.org



WORDS FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

By Tom Kilbane and Ethan Edwards



Transit Oriented Development in Overlook

Have you heard people in the neighborhood talking about ‘Transit Oriented Development’? If not, you probably will soon. There is a substantial amount of Transit Oriented Development, or TOD, planned for the Interstate Corridor.

TOD refers to residential and commercial centers designed to maximize the convenience of transit in order to reduce dependence on automobiles. A transit oriented neighborhood has a center with a rail and/or bus station, surrounded by relatively high-density development, with progressively lower-density spreading outwards.

For example, a TOD neighborhood center may have a transit station and a few multi-story commercial and residential buildings surrounded by several blocks of townhouses and small-lot single-family residential and larger-lot single-family housing farther away. This approach puts the greatest number of residents and commercial activities closest to the trans-service, making it more convenient to use.

TOD neighborhoods typically have a diameter of one-quarter to one-half mile, which represents pedestrian scale distances.

Does this sound familiar? If you’ve been coming to neighborhood association meetings recently, it should. It is one of the driving concepts for the Killingsworth Station development and the Crown Motel redevelopment. Maximizing use of the MAX Yellow Line is one of the goals for most new development along the light rail line, especially near the stations.

Is TOD a good thing for Overlook? On the whole, we would say yes, it is a good thing because of the benefits it brings such as:

- Reduced traffic congestion
- Reduced household spending on transportation
- Healthier lifestyle with more walking and less stress
- Increased foot traffic and customers for local businesses

It does present some challenges, though, especially for the residential part of our neighbor-

hood which is made up primarily of single family homes. New multi-story buildings adjacent to single-family homes need to be well-designed to ensure their suitability to the neighborhood.

So how do we deal with TOD in Overlook? The first step is to learn more about it. To do this, we have enlisted the support of TriMet to help us put on a Transit Oriented Development seminar. TriMet has engaged a nationally known expert on the subject, G.B. Arrington of PB Placemaking, to give a presentation on TOD and what it can accomplish. We encourage attendance by everyone who lives on or near Interstate Avenue or who is interested in how TOD may change our neighborhood.

The event will be held in the Ballroom at the Kaiser Town Hall, 3704 N. Interstate Ave. on Thursday, September 7th at 7pm.

We hope to see you there.

In the meantime, you can find more information on TOD on the web at <http://www.transitorienteddevelopment.org>, or <http://www.reconnectingamerica.org>



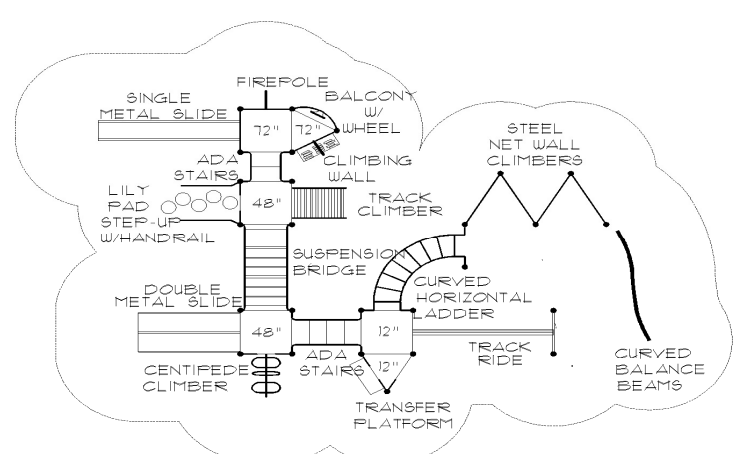
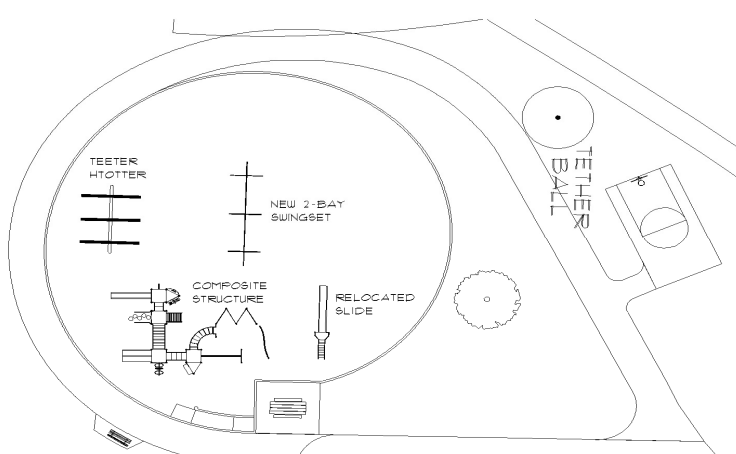
PLAYGROUND REPLACEMENT ON TEMPORARY HOLD

By Warren Cassell

A long sought and planned for renewal of the playground equipment in Overlook Park has all of a sudden come a cropper of bureaucracy...for the moment. A 2000 Portland Parks and Recreation levy included funds for playground renovation and safety (lead abatement) measures for Overlook Park’s aging equipment. Planning and design was completed last spring and projects were opened to bidding in June with a probable completion date sometime in September. Unfortunately, PP&R received only two bids, with one bidder 30% higher than the Parks

department’s estimate and the second bidder withdrawing. This meant going back to the bureaucratic drawing board. Parks was to have to have asked for new proposals by the end of July. Since the bidding and contracting process takes all of two months, they expect to start construction beginning in October. That will ultimately delay completion of the project until at least the end of January 2007. This on again, off again process has been frustrating for Overlook parents whose children use the park and its blatantly inadequate facilities. One father of two pre-schoolers indicated that, “Many people in the neighborhood have been asking about the status of the project. They will be very disappointed to learn that the upgrade has been delayed.”

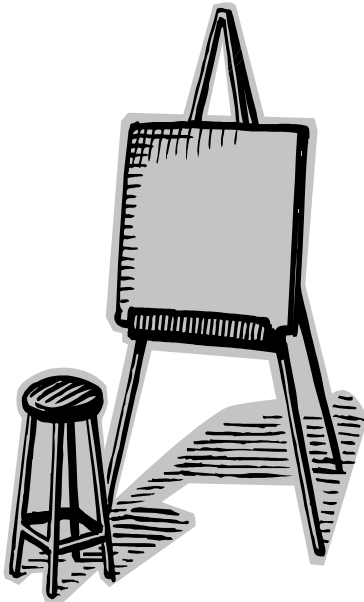
However, the really good news is that the wait will not be in vain. The accompanying drawings indicate some of the happy details. The one on the left gives you an overview of the entire project, which shows a relocated slide (one of the few original pieces to be retained), and a new two bay swing set and teeter totter. Also entirely new, and central to the make-over, will be the integrated all purpose play structure shown at the lower left in the first illustration and as an enlarged detail in the second drawing. It will replace individual pieces that now surround the brown “fitness cluster” bulletin board. This play structure features innovative and coordinated playground equipment bound to bring healthful and happy experiences to the children who will be enjoying its various components. (And a huge increase in peace of mind for their parents!)



ACRYLIC PAINTING CLASS AT OVERLOOK HOUSE

By Julie Rogers

The purpose of this class will be to have fun while spending time painting. We will meet Tuesday mornings, 9 A.M. to noon in the basement of the Overlook House. Students will have the opportunity to learn basic design elements and painting technique while exploring the joy of putting paint on canvas. Each class will be self contained with a lesson in the first hour and the remaining time for work on a project of the students' choice. The class will begin on September 19 and run in five week blocks. Acrylic paint will be the primary focus with an opportunity to do final glazing in water soluble oil. The cost for 5 weeks is \$75, and the class is limited in size. Easels will be provided but a list of supplies will be mailed to students two weeks prior to the first session. All levels are invited, while beginning students are especially encouraged. Julie Ann Rogers will be leading the group. She holds a BS in Graphic Design from Portland State University and has taught both in Portland and Nashville, Tennessee. Her enthusiasm is contagious and she delights in presenting information to students in an accessible format that is both educational and fun, all the while igniting their creative spark.



NATURE ON THE BALLOT THIS NOVEMBER

By Birgit Nielsen

Our proximity to nature, our natural waterways, city parks, scenic trails all within the metro area contribute in large measure to why Portland ranks in the top five 'favored' places where people want to live, according to Sierra Club magazine. When it comes to quality of life, Portland has lots of it. Newcomers think so, too. Over the next 25 years, over 1 million people are expected to move here.

When you vote this November, you will find a bond measure titled *The Natural Areas, Parks and Streams* on the ballot. It proposes to spend just over \$227 million on specific projects throughout the metro region to protect natural habitat, improve parks and enhance public access to nature in the neighborhoods. Each project was chosen with input from the Blue Ribbon Committee, an independent group of community and business leaders, and is subject to tough accountability standards such as a citizen's oversight committee and an independent audit.

The measure would cost 19 cents for every \$1,000 assessed property value which works out to less than \$3 a month for the average homeowner. Based on the success of the 1995 Open Space Bond Measure, the measure proposes to purchase (from willing sellers) natural areas and land adjacent to water streams, land for parks and expand existing trails.

Of particular interest to the Overlook neighborhood are the provisions affecting the Willamette River Greenway that runs (or will run) through the Swan Island portion of Overlook. As Lenny Anderson of Swan Island TMA said, "We continue to look at how best to connect the existing trail...soon to be extended along the Pump Station...to the funded Waud Bluff Trail. There are also several potential links between the top of Mock's Crest and the riverside route; Going Street needs much improvement for bikes and pedestrians."

Another part of the measure of interest to Overlook is the \$15 million Nature in the Neighborhoods Capital Grants Program. These grants will be awarded competitively to community groups, non-profits, schools, and local neighborhood associations to aid in improving public lands.

Cynthia Sulaski, chairperson at OKNA for Parks, Trees and Trails, said, "Overlook residents would benefit by being able to enjoy more of the Willamette River in a safe way by foot and bicycle rather than vehicle. The funds could be used in partnership with ICURA monies to convert the defunct Overlook Park wading pool into a spray pool and to install paths in Patton Park made of permeable material rather than concrete to prevent water runoff."

To find out more about the measure, go to www.savenaturalareas.org (includes a detailed map of all the projects) or call the campaign office at 503-808-1264.

OREGON POLISH FESTIVAL



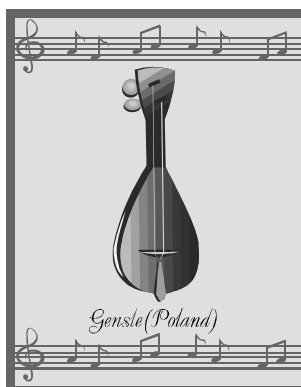
The savory scent of delicious ethnic foods and swirling colors of Central European folk dancers will again entice crowds to the 13th annual Oregon Polish Festival on Sept. 23-24 at the Polish Library Hall and St. Stanislaus Church grounds at 3916 N. Interstate Ave. Admission is free.

More than 12,000 people attended last year's celebration recognizing Oregon's 110-year-old Polish neighborhood. Many of the descendants of the Polish immigrants in the 1880s still live in the Overlook district of North Portland. The ethnic celebration is the largest Polish festival in the Western United States, says coordinator Marek Stepien who has studied major Polish festivals in the American Midwest and Canada.

The festival runs from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday, and noon to 7 p.m. Sunday with continuous stage entertainment including the Polenez Renaissance Court Dancers of Vancouver, B.C., the Sobotka adult and children's folk dancers, and Estonian and Hungarian dance troupes. Saturday evening will conclude with a "Let's Gdansk" street dance on closed-off North Failing Street between Interstate and Montana Avenues. This year's festival foods will include homemade cream-cheese filled pierogis, Polish entrees, soups, fruit-filled Krakow pastries and, of course, delectable kielbasa sausages. Chefs made a record 15,000 pierogis for the two-day fete and imported 6,000 bottles of Polish beers and wines. The festival will also include an artistic exhibit of Madonnas and religious icons from Poland.

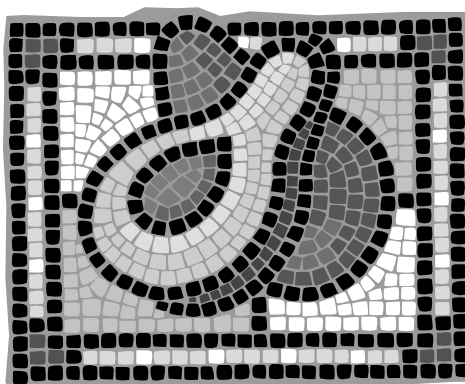
Oregon's first Polish families were predominately from the Carpathian Mountains of southern Poland and eastern Poland near present-day Ukraine. The families created a Polish National Alliance chapter in 1892 and built the historic St. Stanislaus Roman Catholic Church in 1907 and Polish Library Hall in 1911. Both landmarks display Romanesque architecture common in southern Poland, and have been officially recognized as state historic sites. The parish's namesake is St. Stanislaus Szczepanowski, martyr of the early church. He was archbishop of Krakow in the 11th Century. One of his successors as archbishop of Krakow was Archbishop Karol Wojtyla, who would become Pope John Paul II in 1978.

For more information, contact Mark Ziaja Kirchmeier (503) 286-3776.



SENSATIONAL GLASS CLASSES HAPPENING NEAR OVERLOOK

Jennifer Wells Design, is a glass studio opening at 1614 NE Alberta Street. Owner Jenny Wells is a resident of Overlook and wants to spread the word that great classes are now available. For the past 6 years, Jenny has developed and directed the glass studio at Grace Institute, a local non-profit. Ten years of combined experience at Grace along with her work as a public school teacher is conveyed in Jenny's ability to help students find their own creative style. Her love of art, inspiring others and bringing community together led her to open her own studio.



Jennifer Wells Design will offer a wide variety of glass classes for adults, children and families of all skill levels. Some classes offered include, fused glass ornaments for the family, fused glass plate classes, mosaic table tops and more. To see a detailed list of classes, visit www.jenniferwellsdesign.com or drop by the studio for a schedule. Please be sure to join the festivities at Jenny's grand opening celebration on Thursday, September 28th from 6:30 to 9:30PM. That's in line with Alberta Street's Last Thursday Art Walk so you will have plenty of great art to view. You might even win a free glass class! For inquiries, contact Jenny at 503-750-4921. See you on the 28th

WEDNESDAY LESSONS AT THE IFM

By Lauren Holden Kilbane

One of the benefits of the Interstate Farmer's Market is having access to food so fresh, it barely requires preparation; a shake of salt, a twist of pepper, a drizzle of oil, a squeeze of lemon or a brief steam is all or more than most market produce requires. As a working parent I welcome this healthful convenience and find that the market's selection of prepared offerings like bread, cheese and desserts round out week-night dinners well.

I also love the things I learn at the IFM each week: the chef's demos provide insight on technique and seasonal creativity and vendors share practical tips and simple preparation ideas.

Paula Pender of Sonas Organic Garden is especially generous this way. Her Irish accent is as delightful as the breezy bouquets she creates, but it is the quality and variety of her herbs and vegetables that continue to grow a loyal clientele in her second season at the market. Sonas (which means goodness and well-being in Gaelic) is a 1/2 acre plot on Malinowski Farm just over the Forest Park ridge near



Skyline. Most days, Pender focuses on fulfilling Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) subscriptions, but on Wednesdays she's up early to pick flowers and produce and gather eggs for the IFM. After the closing bell, she barter with neighboring vendors, The Rogue Creamery and Fressen, and returns home to prepare a simple supper of roast vegetables. Typically, she chops and tosses potatoes, beets and carrots with olive oil and roasts them at high heat (425-450)

for 40 minutes. In the final 5 minutes, she'll tuck in a sprig of rosemary and drizzle balsamic vinegar to infuse and caramelize the vegetables with deeper flavor. Once plated, she sprinkles a bit of Rogue's Smokey Blue cheese on top and enjoys it all with a piece of dense Fressen bread.

The Rogue Creamery is a new and welcome addition to the IFM this year. Their artisan cheeses are hand-milled in Central Point, Oregon and have won highest honors in international industry competitions. Billy is an animated vendor with multiple culinary arts degrees who freely dispenses excellent advice. He reminds customers to avoid the enemy of cheese: plastic and other porous containers, encouraging them to wrap cheese in parchment or foil once they bring it home. As a child, one of his favorite snacks was butter spread on saltines. On market evenings he indulges in an adult adaptation of this nostalgic treat: maitre d'butter (also known as compound butter) spread on Fressen's signature Volkhorn Brot served with a side of greens. To make it, he blends equal parts of Rogue's blue cheese and fresh butter with whatever fresh herbs he's traded with Paula.



On Wednesday mornings, David Desmond harvests the bounty from 3 acres on his year-old Lost Creek farm and drives from Dexter to Eugene to meet his former employer and mentor, Farmer John of Hey Bayles! to collect more produce. He then makes the 2 1/2 hour trek to Overlook. This arrangement allows both farms to focus on fewer items, offer a higher quality product and enjoy an improved lifestyle balance with shared market responsibility. The steady lines at his stand speak to the success of this model. In the kitchen, he exercises a light hand with everything he grows. On market mornings, he fuels up on potatoes, onions and squash sautéed in a bit of butter and oil (just enough to keep the vegetables from sticking to the pan) then steams them in their own juices. Often, he'll return home from market days and compose his very own raw, chopped, Monster Salad: a head of lettuce, a whole onion, beans, cucumbers, carrots and tomatoes. He'll eat it over the course of an hour as a way to wind down from the extended market day.

These are just a few of many stories that bring to life the hard work and quality of IFM people, the products they share at the market and the pleasure they bring to our Wednesday afternoons and kitchen tables.



CREATIVE CONVERSATIONS IN AND WITH OVERLOOK

By Warren Cassell

During the early part of the summer Our United Villages surveyed every resident of Overlook either through the mail or personally to find out what we wanted as a community. OUV, in its quest to bring people together around common themes, received nearly 700 ideas on positive ways neighbors can work together for the benefit of the residents. Five of those themes (See sidebar) will be the topics of conversation in Overlook between now and the end of the year, with more planned in 2007.

Nearly one third of the responses dealt with neighborhood beautification and two "conversations" were scheduled to address this topic. The first was held at Patton Square Park on August 9 with another scheduled on the same topic in the same location on August 29. The initial gathering was attended by nearly two dozen enthusiastic neighborhood residents who brainstormed for over two hours about their visions for a more aesthetically pleasing Overlook appearance. (Editor's note: some of us feel as if we are in paradise already!) The ideas ranged from broadcasting wildflower seeds on public strips to creating trash cans in the form of sculpture to be placed in strategic locations to helping elderly neighbors maintain their property to a myriad of other concepts---both realistic and dreamlike. All of the ideas developed at this "conversation" along with those at the August 29 meeting will be looked at in depth at a get together at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center on September 9 from 10.00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. The nuts and bolts of how to make these beautification ideas into a reality will be the primary order of business for this group. You need not to have attended the earlier meetings in order to make your voice heard at the September 9 meeting. If this is a subject dear to your heart you will be most welcome. But please, RSVP to Our United Villages at 503-546-7499 or info@ourunitedvillages.org. Note too, that interpretation service, and childcare will be provided upon request, and the IFCC is wheelchair accessible. And last but not least, a lunch or dinner is provided free for all attendees at OUV neighborhood conversation functions.

Our United Villages
WORKING FROM THE ROOTS

OVERLOOK CONVERSATION SCHEDULE

Neighborhood Beautification
August 29th 6-8:30 pm
Patton Square Park

Elder Support
September 14th 6:30-8:30 pm
Kaiser Town Hall

Schools & Education
September 21st and 26th 6-8:30 pm
Beach School Library

Community Building
October 5th, 11th and 25th 6-8:30 pm
Kaiser Town Hall

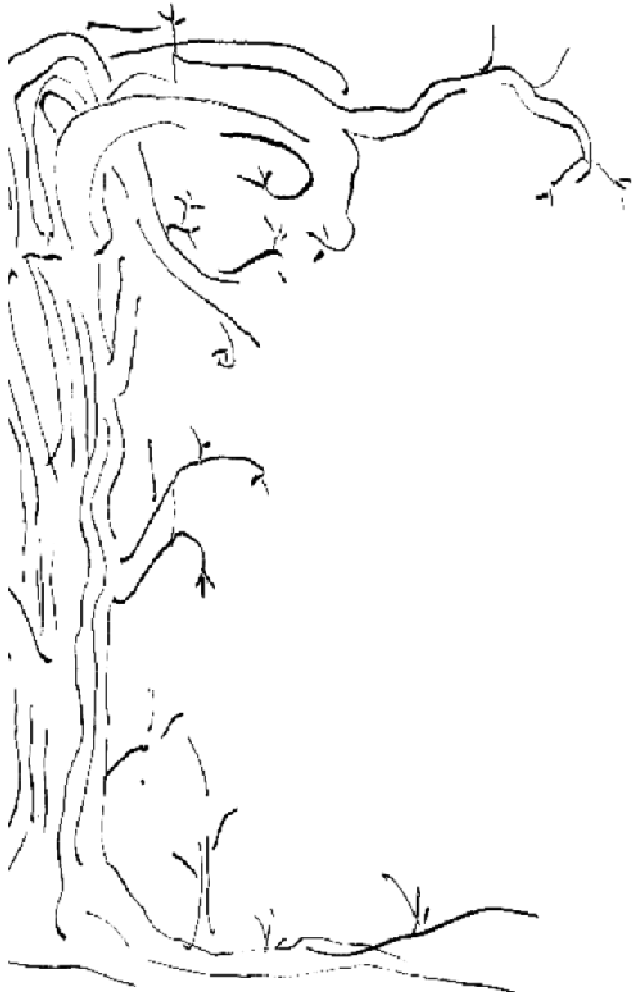
Community Safety
November 1st, 16th and 29th 6-8:30 pm
Beach School Library

These events will be a great opportunity to meet with neighbors and explore great ideas.

If you are interested in volunteering with any of these activities in the Overlook neighborhood or would like more information, please contact us at info@ourunitedvillages.org or 503-546-7499.



**You're invited to
OVERLOOK NEIGHBORHOOD'S 8TH ANNUAL TREE PLANTING
February 10, 2007**



Waiting for a Message

By Rochelle Mass

Trees help you see slices of sky between branches,
point to things you could never reach.
Trees help you watch the growing happen,
watch blossoms burst then dry,
see shade twist to the pace of a sun,
birds tear at unwilling seeds.

Trees take the eye to where it is,
where it was,
then over to distant hills,
faraway to other places and times,
long ago.

A tree is a lens,
a viewfinder, a window.
I wait below
for a message
of what is yet to come.



*Dedicate a tree to your children or grandchildren!
If you're not planting a tree, why not lend a hand planting with your neighbors?*

Renters, please pass this announcement along to the property owner.

Please email Cynthia Sulaski at csulaski@comcast.net or call her at 503.249.7728 if you have any questions about ordering trees. You may also write her c/o the Overlook House.

To order trees, FILL OUT AND MAIL THIS COUPON BY SEPTEMBER 29th.

What will happen next...

1. A city forester will determine how many trees will fit in your parking strip.
2. We'll mail you a list of the tree species from which you can choose. Friends of Trees has spent years developing a selection of beautiful trees that are well suited for Portland's parking strips. You can also check the list at www.friendsoftrees.org under *tree resources/tree database*.
3. You'll then choose the trees you want and mail in your selections along with **\$15.00** per tree*. SCHOLARSHIPS WILL ALSO BE AVAILABLE.
4. You'll join us on February 10th, 2007 for the tree planting.
Then, you'll weed, mulch, water and enjoy your new tree(s)!

***The cost of each nursery-quality tree has been reduced by \$55.00 thanks to a grant from Metro.**

Please mail this coupon by Friday, September 30th to:

**Overlook Neighborhood Association Tree Planting
c/o Overlook House
3839 N. Melrose Drive
Portland, OR 97227**

Name _____

Address _____

Phone (day) _____ (evening) _____

E-mail _____
(We won't share your information with any other organization.)

- ☐ I WANT TREES for my parking strip that I will help maintain. I will help plant them on February 10th.
☐ I don't need parking strip trees, but want to donate money so that trees can be planted.
☐ I don't need parking strip trees, but want to volunteer to help with the planting.



Spencer and Kai road their bikes to the ice-cream social



Sadie sits pretty in the Overlook tree

3rd Annual ICE-CREAM VERY SOCIAL

By Warren Cassell

The Overlook Neighborhood Association's third annual ice-cream social held at Overlook House on August 6 attracted a cast of thousands of parents, kids, pets---No, not really, but a sold-out crowd of over two hundred local residents packed the back lawn for an early evening of dessert, conversation, fun and a silent auction white elephant sale benefiting Overlook House.

As with all neighborhood functions, none of the above could have taken place without the considerable efforts of our neighbors who volunteer to make nice things happen for the residents of Overlook. They spent considerable energy and time to make it all work. This included obtaining auctions items, setting up the event, scooping ice cream and serving toppings and helping with the clean up. We owe a huge thanks to:

Julie, K.C. and Leslie Rawls (committee)
Carol Cushman (committee)
Mary Ellen Baldauff (committee)
Christine Quigley (committee)
Nicole Thorburn (committee)
Mat, Amelai and Sadie Thorburn
Carol and David Hult
Chris and John Koonce
Jim Bennett
Carol Padden
Marcella McGee
Barb Brooks
Randall Pratt

There would have been no event without them. And thanks too, to everyone in the neighborhood who attended!



Avery shares ice cream with her bear



The ice-cream social super scoopers



Neighborhood sundae specialist



Bella wore summer face paint to the event



Aires led the energetic tag brigade



REAL ESTATE UPDATE PORTLAND/OVERLOOK



An overview of the Portland Metropolitan area as of the end of June 2006 shows that the average market time (the time from which a property is advertised “For Sale” until the time the owner accepts an offer) was 39 days, compared to 42 days a year ago. The number of new listings increased by 21.3% over June 2005, but accepted offers and closed sales fell about 17% and 6% respectively.

In North Portland there are 358 active listings (including 229 new ones), 143 pending sales (down 13.9% from a year ago) and 160 closed sales with an average sales price of \$238,500 and an average market time of 25 days. Appreciation stands at 22.2% over June 2005. Listed below are properties sold in Overlook since the last Newsletter.

Recent Overlook Sales

ADDRESS	BED/BATH	List Price	Sold Price	Days on Market
5821 N. Interstate Ave.	2/2	\$179,950	\$179,950	7
5544 N. Delaware Ave.	3/1	209,900	215,000	1
6418 N. Atlantic Ave.	3/2.1	225,000	218,000	14
6528 N. Burrage Ave.	2/1	239,900	245,300	4
6425 N. Wilbur Ave.	3/1	257,000	237,000	117
5707 N. Concord Ave.	2/1	249,900	249,000	0
6526 N. Denver Ave.	3/2	249,900	249,900	13
1550 N. Humboldt St.	3/1	239,950	252,000	4
6811 N. Boston Ave.	2/1	264,950	260,950	12
5024 N. Maryland Ave.	3/1	259,900	266,900	6
6706 N. Denver Ave.	3/2	265,000	272,600	3
1625 N. Colfax St.	3/2.1	279,000	280,750	83
1626 N. Sumner St.	5/2	314,000	311,000	184
6333 N. Denver Ave.	3/1	239,000	314,500	79
3124 N. Portland Blvd.	3/1	299,900	315,000	16
6550 N. Boston Ave.	3/2	344,750	323,000	31
6825 N. Greeley Ave.	3/1	319,900	324,900	2
1634 N. Emerson ST.	3/2	325,000	329,000	4
2601 N. Sumner St.	3/2	339,000	339,000	2
2030 N. Skidmore Ct.	3/2	359,950	340,000	39
1650 N. Church St.	3/2	337,725	351,000	4
6603 N. Curtis Ave.	3/2	339,900	362,000	10
1618 N. Simpson St.	4/3	344,900	368,000	2
4205 N. Concord Ave.	4/2	374,999	385,000	1
1735 N. Willamette Blvd.	4/2	389,900	389,900	24
5916 N. Wilbur Ave.	5/2.1	415,000	423,000	5
6304 N. Atlantic Ave.	3/2.1	439,000	439,000	4
5123 N. Gay Ave.	4/2	489,000	450,000	46
3915 N. Colonial Ave.	4/3	559,000	548,000	24
4046 N. Colonial Ave.	3/2	575,000	565,000	28

Thanks to Overlook neighbor Bob La Du of RE/MAX (503-495-5431) for providing the information for this current real estate market up-date.

WOULD YOU KNOW WHAT TO DO?

By Gayle Vrla

If a major earthquake or other disaster were to hit our area, would you know what to do? If the phones were down and Portland Fire & Rescue couldn’t get to you and your neighbors, would you know what to do? The Neighborhood Emergency Team (NET) program teaches you what to do! After the 1985 Mexico City earthquake, 100 of the 800 civilian volunteers who helped in rescues died trying. US rescue personnel had two realizations: that civilians are not just “victims” and they need to be trained to be safe and effective. The NET program, developed by FEMA, fills this need. Scientists have better technology now. They know now that Portland is crisscrossed with fault lines and that a major earthquake is due. (Web search for “Cascadia Subduction Zone.”)

Imagine a 9.0 quake shaking for 3 or 4 minutes! We know such quakes happen every 300-500 years and that the last one was on **January 26, 1700**. This quake *will badly damage all of Western Oregon* from Eureka to Vancouver, BC and will be greater than anything seen in recent memory. When Portland is hit, you can guess what will happen to Overlook, perched up here on the bluff as we are. The key to surviving any disaster is planning and training. One piece of good news is that single family wooden structures are the most likely to stay intact during a major quake. The best thing you can do to protect your family is the NET training. *The classes are provided free of charge to anyone who lives or works in Portland.* You will learn the basics to prepare for a disaster and how to help others. I loved the classes! The valuable training gave me a strong sense of responsibility and the feeling that I could do something about it; I could help.

When you have completed the training, we hope you will join your local NET team, but if you don’t, you will still find the training invaluable. However, if you are a person who can stand up and help when help is needed, you will be very welcome on our NET team. We are responsible for the area covered by our fire station: #24, near Going and Interstate. We meet to plan, prepare, practice and get to know each other. Our next meeting will be in September. *You don’t have to be a NET member to attend.* Anyone from our neighborhood is very welcome. Contact me at the email address or phone below for information about the NET classes and meetings.

Gayle Vrla
NET #24 Team Leader
vrla@comcast.net, 503-289-7158

TWO HOUSES STOOD ATOP A HILL

By Zita Podany

Perched atop a hill, two houses stood
Testament to man's quest for a view.
A little too close to a steep incline
Above a Missoula Flood Plain decline.

Forty-eight years hence in April
The earth thundered through a North Portland night.
A 300-foot wall came tumbling down
Shower of sparks and the flash of electric arcs
Illuminated the damage done.

Too much pressure on Overlook bluff
And a pinch of Mother Nature's surprise
Made light of man's work
In his hurry toward expansion.

Re-sculpting nature's handiwork
Entailed a year's worth of moving earth.
A small park now, with benches three
Lay rest to two houses that used to be.



ON THE SLIPPERY SLOPE OF LIFE

By Zita Podany

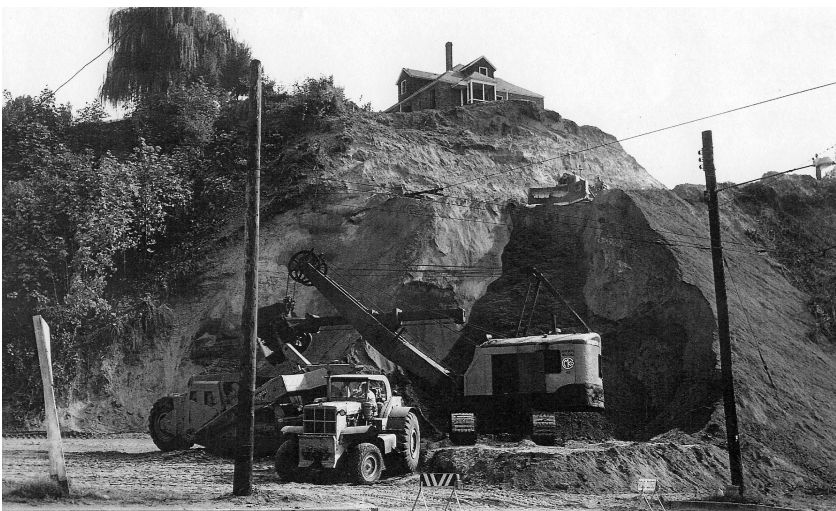
“**R**ats, lots of rats everywhere.” That is what Alan Cranna, long-time Overlook resident, remembers of the 300-foot retaining wall that toppled over on an April Friday night in 1958. The wall was built several weeks earlier to accommodate expansion of Union Pacific's Albina Yards; it was designed to provide room for new tracks and for relocating the main line. The retaining wall adjoined Greeley Avenue, just south of Going and right below Overlook bluff.

The falling wall caused a 115-volt power line along with another 11,000 volt line to come down over trolley lines creating a tangled mess of wires on Greeley Avenue. Sparks and electric arcs lighted the night sky on April 4, 1958 as the power lines shorted. The wall fell with so much pressure that it shook the North Portland area like an earthquake.

The wall was 56 feet high at the center, 578 feet long, 18 inches thick at the top, and 7 feet 4 inches thick at its base. It was reinforced with steel rods. The wall was said to be the largest of its kind in the Pacific Northwest. The contractor, E. E. Settergren stated “someone must have misjudged the tremendous pressure” of the bluff against the retaining wall (Journal, April 6, 1958).

In order to rebuild the wall, Greeley Avenue was realigned. The steep slope of Overlook Bluff had to be reshaped to alleviate pressure on the new retaining wall. The process took close to a year to complete. Two houses on top of Overlook bluff (in the area at the intersection of Skidmore Court and Skidmore Terrace) had to be removed. These houses are shown in close-up above and in the top left aerial photograph of the site immediately after the collapse. The middle two photos (on left) show: A. the precarious position of one house after the collapse and B. its eventual demolition. At bottom is the identical place shown in the top picture without the houses and with the road realigned. Eventually the hill was reshaped to ease the pressure on retaining walls below Greeley Avenue. Shrubs, plants, and grass grew back covering the tell tale signs of former dwelling structures and ultimately sculpting a mini park.

In the May-June *Overlook Views*, Warren Cassell wrote about the mini park, called Mocks Crest Park. A visit to this park, once somebody's front or back yards, will reveal a foundation wall from one of the homes and upon closer inspection, bulldozer tracks are still visible to this day.





SEPTEMBER ELECTION TIME HELP WANTED—NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY

By Warren Cassell

Our local neighborhood organization desperately needs a candidate or two to run for chair and chair-assist at its September general meeting on the 18th. OKNA requires candidates to be people oriented, well organized and capable of efficiently running the monthly general and board meetings. Candidates should also be able to reconcile conflicting views of disparate groups without causing World War III and should be able to take heat occasionally for supporting unpopular views---without taking it too personally. In addition, two other organization officer positions are open: secretary, whose main qualification would be the ability to take legible notes and treasurer, who should be able to add and subtract. Finally, we need a number of area reps to bring your neighbors' concerns to the board as well as to take an active role in the board's deliberations.

If you have been promising yourself to get more involved in neighborhood functions, now is the time to do it. One of the Overlook Neighborhood Association's missions is to make our community a better place in which to live and we do this as an all-volunteer organization. Come to the September 18 general meeting at Kaiser Town Hall and get involved. Don't be modest if you think you can take on one of these challenging positions, and don't hesitate to recommend a friend who may be well qualified.

If you are interested in any of the positions noted above or would like additional information, call co-chair Tom Kilbane at 503-284-6211 or Email tom.kilbane@comcast.net.

IMPORTANT NITTY-GRITTY

Want to join us and receive witty late-breaking e-mail reminders about meetings, events, etc.? Just go to www.overlookneighborhood.org and subscribe by entering your e-mail address as directed on the home page.

Or via snail mail:

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OVERLOOK VIEWS

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For information about submitting articles:
503-288-8323 or w.cassell@comcast.net

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 10



adidas would like to extend an invitation to our friends in the Overlook Neighborhood to join us for the start of the Pints to Pasta Run which will begin at the adidas Village on Sunday, September 10th at 8:00 AM.

A BENEFIT FOR THE BOYS AND GIRLS AID SOCIETY OF OREGON

Please join us for free coffee and beverages as we send nearly 1,000 runners off toward the FINISH at The Old Spaghetti Factory on Macadam.

The runners will take off at 8:00 AM on N. Delaware directly behind the adidas Village. After a short loop the run takes them down Greeley, past Widmer Bros. Gausthaus, across the Steel Bridge, along the west side esplanade where they will end at the Old Spaghetti Factory on Macadam.

Every effort is being made to minimize the impact to your Sunday morning; however you should expect some noise associated with the set up, event warmup and START of the run.

Thank you for your patience and understanding.



MAJOR MEETING FOR RESIDENTS LIVING CLOSE TO THE INTERSTATE CORRIDOR

Almost everyone in Overlook is affected. However, if your home is close to Interstate Avenue and located particularly close to MAX stations you are urged to attend a meeting concerning the expansion of housing, condos and multi-story buildings up and down Interstate. TriMet in conjunction with the Overlook Neighborhood Association will present an informational seminar about "Transit Oriented Development" on Thursday, September 7 at 7:00 P.M. in the ballroom at Kaiser Town Hall. Come early and make sure your questions and concerns are addressed.



WHO IS A MEMBER OF THE OKNA?

ALL OF YOU living within the boundaries lines on the map to the left. More specifically, all persons of voting age who reside, own property, work or operate a business or non profit organization in the Overlook neighborhood are eligible for membership in the Overlook Neighborhood Association. No dues are required or any other requirements except one—We need to know who you are. Tell us by signing up on our website (overlookneighborhood.org). Simply enter your email address on the left hand side of the home page. Or, if you prefer the old-fashioned way, pen a note to OKNA at 2209 N. Schofield St., Portland, Oregon, 97217 and indicate your name, address and telephone number. You will then be included in all postal mailings. If you sign up at the website, you will receive both postal and e-mailings.

