# **OVERLOOK VIEWS**

January/February 2008

The Newsletter

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Overlook Neighborhood Association, Portland, Oregon

www.overlookneighborhood.org

## INTERSTATE AVE. vs CESAR CHAVEZ BLVD.

#### —The Final Words

By Warren Cassell

It seems so long ago, that eventful evening of September 18 at Kaiser Town Hall, where so many of our neighbors turned up at OKNA's general meeting to voice their opinions about the proposed renaming of Interstate Avenue to Cesar Chavez Boulevard. This social and political fiasco had its public genesis at our neighborhood meeting and rather than print any more verbal recriminations and sides taken about an issue which appears for the moment, to have been resolved, we have opted instead, to look forward by initially looking back---and then ahead to what we hope will be a more positive future.

#### AT THE MEETING

By Melisa Cassell

A gathering of people
In a large square room
with all the chairs facing in the
same direction
That, a portent of verbal gloom
Dialogue devoid of flexion.

It should have been a circle
So we could see each other across
the space
And watch the currents of
debate
swirling and surging in the center.
We should have joined hands,
as though to bless a feast of discourse,
with communal Grace.

A new year announces its approach.

Can we denounce the surfeit
of reproach
with which we end this year of
tears and rasping voice?
Can we re-connect our circle
of humanity, and look into a single
heart and find a way to again rejoice?

#### AGING AT HOME

By Melisa and Warren Cassell

We strive to raise our children to be independent, self-sufficient and resourceful. Considering the huge spectrum of variables in such a complex society—we generally succeed. Very often when there is a precarious balance, it is human will that tips the scales. As young adults and middle-aged adults we remain self-sufficient and resourceful. Again, that great onslaught of life's blessings and beatings creates a wide arc of success and failure and again, the will is a great deciding factor.



## WORDS FROM THE CHAIR

By Eric Gale



Read this newsletter! At least flip through it. Things are happening in our neighborhood. Also, since two months between issues can be a long time, sign up to get on our email list (go to the lower left corner of <a href="www.overlookneighborhood.org">www.overlookneighborhood.org</a>). There's no junk or discussions, just meeting and event announcements, minutes from neighborhood association meetings, and other useful information. Over the last year, there was an average of just two emails a week. (Note our email policy on page 4.)

Renaming and rezoning have been huge issues recently with real impacts that caught some people unaware. With the development that is going to happen in the next few years, particularly along Interstate Ave., there will continue to be big issues to keep track of. Nearly every aspect of our communal life, from parks, schools, demographics, traffic, parking, businesses, and property values to who knows what else, will be affected. Plus, there are always great community events and initiatives that may catch your fancy. So! Keep in touch (newsletter, email, etc.) and get involved.

However, when we come to old age, these hard won and vigorously sustained nourishments (independence, self-sufficiency and resourcefulness) start to lessen---against our will. It is here in the "Golden Years" that we see the failures of our complex society. We see how it does not revere the survivors of that very journey of endurance, who have sustained the qualities we value so highly. The "will" is often cast down by not only those who have nurtured it and prized it so strongly, but also by the people who love them. Institutions however they are termed---become a substitute for that powerful symbol of individual sovereignty: the home. In order to fulfill the early promises we make to our children, and ourselves we, as a culture, must find a way to grow old in our own homes.

On November 28, a group of Overlook and other North Portland residents, brought together by Warren Cassell, met at Overlook House to discuss the important issue of aging at home. Warren, and Tom Griffin-Valade. who is the director of North Portland Neighborhood Services, created an agenda for the meeting that engendered discussion and brainstorming. The first question addressed was, "Who are we and why are we here?" The answers revealed that the "who" is a socially aware and diverse group of people who care not only about the concept in general, but also about how it impacts on each of them personally. We heard some extremely poignant anecdotes regarding the aging parents of the people present. We heard first hand how much anguish could result from efforts to keep our elderly loved ones at home, as their years dwindle. So, the "Why are we here" query answered itself. We were there to make things better, to discover what progress has already been made in the care of those aging at home---and to invent new ways of implementing a more creative and humane attitude in our neighborhood as well as other contiguous neighborhoods in North Portland.

The second section of our agenda asked, "What do others do?" Others-- meaning organizations in and out of Portland that address the question of improving the quality of life of our aging population. We looked briefly at locally based providers such as the Jewish Family and Child Services' work with aged Russian émigrés in Portland, Metropolitan Family Services' Project Linkage, the Urban League's Oregon Project Independence, and Beacon Hill Village in Boston. The latter group, unlike the other three organizations, worked primarily with middle class and more financially comfortable clients/members.

Next, in small brainstorming groups, we gave our attention to the question of "...what can we do that would allow a middle class aging N. Portland population to remain at home during their so-called golden years?" The responses from the four groups were far ranging, imaginative, practical, philosophic and thoughtful. Some of these were: Tap into or create an organized network of services to provide handyman, caregiver, social or antiisolation help; create volunteer lists of friendly visitors, trusted helpers, safety consultants for homes as well as provide transportation and shopping help. One group looked at the possible structure needed to expedite these services. Some of their thoughts included a membership model, subsidized model or a fee for service model ---or some combination of all three. Another group focused on a sub-set of the question about what we can do, and discussed identifying seniors in North Portland neighborhoods who would be interested in participating and making use of the services and help from such a model. Another question raised in the small groups concerned what about us---the participants in the discussion? After all, we had been looking at problems affecting our aged parents problems that everyone is the room will eventually face. (Note: our best estimate for the average age of the folks at this meeting was somewhere between 55 and 60.) (Cont'd p.2)

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#### AGING AT HOME (Cont'd)

The last question we looked at, "Where do we go from here?" was too grand in scope to respond to in detail during the few minutes we had left at the tail end of our swiftly moving two-hour meeting. Instead, we agreed to meet again to take a more in-depth look at the best practices of other organizations and perhaps try to evolve a model that has a chance of working in our neighborhoods. The group agreed that we would like to have something concrete in place within the next six months.

On a personal note, your co-editors found this meeting to be both moving and stimulating. We are looking forward to our next get together at Overlook House on January 16 at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in joining us and contributing to the group or would like additional information, please call 503-288-8323 or email: ww.cassell@comcast.net.

opting instead to move back to Portland working for Standard Oil until his retirement in 1977.

Although a bad ear would keep Mr. Pickett from military service, the tight housing market in the 1940s required many young families, including the Picketts, to



Mr. Pickett at home

occupy defense housing like that found on Swan Island. In September, 1954, Burdette and Evelyn Pickett moved to their house on North Maryland Avenue creating a lovely home for themselves, a daughter and two sons. Now, over fifty years later, houses on Maryland Avenue are home to many generations of Picketts.

The housing shortages of the 1940s were replaced by sprawling suburbs of the 1950s and 60s. The Bartmus family who once owned my

house moved to the west side of town to build a house near Alpenrose Dairy. This left my house empty for six years allowing the grape vine that used to grow in my yard to wind wildly through my giant birch tree. A small start from this plant would eventually be the fruitful vine that provides good privacy and better company. So it all just shows how life's wildly wandering

vine can come to delicious fruition in the form of wonderful juice and rich friendship.

## THE WISDOM OF NATURE'S JOURNEY

By Jay Hunt

One of the most memorable and certainly most enlightening learning experiences since moving into my house on North Sumner Street has been making the purest, most delicious juice in the world. There seemed to be a hobbitish appeal of a *picket* fence surrounding the house and yard of a neighbor named Mr. Pickett. What really brought The Shire home my first summer was watching with increasing delight as the grape vines along the property lines of our homes, that at first were bare and spindly, grow into a lush, fruit-bearing natural border. When Mr. Pickett invited me to help him harvest the juice one day in late fall, it was my pleasure to take part. So, I called in sick and spent the warm October day picking grapes, washing them in my sink and carrying them next door to the late Evelyn Pickett's kitchen to be pressured-cooked into sweet ambrosia: no additives, no preservatives.

Burdette Pickett was born October 25, 1916 in Ten Sleeps, Wyoming, an American Indian rest stop, so called because it was 10 days travel, or "10 sleeps", from Fort Laramie. Due to his mother's health, his family moved to Missouri, to be closer to doctors. As a young man in 1941, he came out west to California to work for the Standard Oil Company at an asphalt refinery. Mr. Pickett first moved to Portland, Oregon on December 26, 1946 after spending Christmas with his family in Yakima Valley, Washington. Standard Oil Company would be "sparking up" an asphalt facility at 5501 NW Front Avenue (now a Chevron facility). He eventually moved with the oil company to Washington State to help engineer a refinery there, but declined a job in Ohio,



Mr. Pickett's home

Editors' note: This article is the first in a series titled "Postcards from the Edge (aka the North of Going Chronicles") by **Jay Hunt.** 

AN AWESOME EVENT TO BE HELD IN OVER-LOOK PARK--



Earth Day 2008: DANCE of the DINOSAUR!

The Earth Day Celebration is an annual event presented by The City Repair Project as the facilitating organization of the Earth Day Coalition. Each year, this group of volunteers organizes Portland's largest community-based Earth Day event to promote awareness of environmental issues and celebrate the local efforts of individuals, organizations and businesses to inspire living in harmony with our planet. The date of next year's Earth Day Celebration will be Saturday, April 19, 2008 at Overlook Park. Bob New, the Earth Day Coordinator volunteering with The City Repair Project has organized the past two celebrations at Sellwood and Woodlawn Parks. "Keeping in mind the neighboring community's input and participation is an important aspect of organizing this movable feast event," New explains." It really helps to have the active support of the local neighborhood residents, schools and businesses who take on this task as volunteers." At the November 20 Overlook Neighborhood general meeting a representative from the Earth Day Coalition presented a general overview of supporting Earth Day at Overlook Park and how individuals, organizations and businesses can get involved. The goal of organizing the Earth Day Celebration in a different neighborhood each year is to help empower neighbors in a community to come together with a common vision. The yearlong planning process with the Woodlawn Neighborhood this

• Engage the community in taking the initiative to create Earth Day and learn skills in the process

past year helped to:

- Educate the general public regarding services offered within the city of Portland pertinent to the vision of Earth Day
- Revitalize a community park as a gathering space with entertainment, workshops, and education presented via numerous booths and demonstrations.

Earth Day is planned, designed, organized, built and run by volunteers and on a minimal budget. Volunteers are needed for organizing Kids' Village, Entertainment (3 performance stages!), Health and Wellness Village, Better Transportation Fair and of course, fund raising. The Earth Day Coalition is honored to share this framework for running a large, noncorporate, ecologically sustainable event with other organizations and businesses in Portland and beyond. The Earth Day Celebration represents this ideal of a public gathering space being used for learning, working and most of all, fun!

Monthly meetings of the Earth Day Coalition will be on the second Monday of the month from January through May. We will be meeting at the Overlook House from 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. on Monday, January 14. We welcome you to join us and contribute. For more information about Earth Day or The City Repair Project, check out the website <a href="https://www.cityrepair.org">www.cityrepair.org</a> and click on "Earth Day." For volunteering, sponsoring or any questions, contact Bob New at <a href="mailto:earthday@cityrepair.org">earthday@cityrepair.org</a>.



#### BICYCLE BOULE-VARDS IN OVER-LOOK'S FUTURE?

The Overlook Neighborhood sees many bicyclists using neighborhood streets

in order to cross-town and to get to various high-traffic streets with bike lanes, such as N. Greeley, N. Interstate, and N. Vancouver. These are excellent avenues to use to go north south, but not much exists for east-west trips. With recent tragedies fresh in our minds, we know that safety improvements are absolutely necessary. The Bicycle Transportation Alliance has been hard at work collaborating with the city to implement new N/NE Bicycle Boulevards (BBs).

How do Bike Boulevards work? Designating neighborhood streets as BBs creates a family-friendly bicycling atmosphere where an 8-year-old child can safely ride with or without his or her parents. This can be achieved by a few easy treatments such as: creating simple signage that reminds drivers to share the road & go slow, turning stop signs so that traffic on streets perpendicular to BBs has to stop and installing barriers that prevent cars from entering the street, but not bikes. More complex measures harder to initiate, but assuring safer passage for bicyclists, include: installing traffic circles that slow down cars and creating speed bumps with passages for bikes.

A Street that has been designated as a BB can provide opportunities for neighbors to meet face-to-face rather than bumper-to-bumper. They open up the world of bicycling to the 60% of Portlanders who are at present too wary of riding on shared roadways because of the vehicular traffic and high speeds. This has been achieved for example, by the creation of the N.E. Tillamook BB. It has increased the livability and viability of all the neighborhoods it bisects by providing safe passage to parks, shops, restaurants – anywhere someone may go on a bike.

What then is the future for BB's in the Overlook neighborhood? The Bicycle Transportation Alliance has identified fourteen streets in N/NE Portland that could make good BBs. Skidmore/ Mason, Sumner, Ainsworth/Holman, and Delaware all have some parts that go through Overlook. The city is likely to take on 1 E-W and 1 N-S Street in the first phase of the implementation and these are looking to be outside of the Overlook Neighborhood. However, Overlook is on the BTA's radar, and lobbying the BTA and Sam Adams's office to achieve a superior level of bi-

cycle safety on Overlook streets is one way to help reach this goal.

Additional information about the Bike Boulevards program will be presented at the OKNA's general meeting on Janu-



ary 15. However, if you would like to voice your opinion about BB's in Overlook, contact: <a href="maissionersam@ci.portland.or.us">commissionersam@ci.portland.or.us</a> or BTA: Emily Gardner <a href="maily@bta4bikes.org">emily@bta4bikes.org</a> and City of Portland: Roger Geller: <a href="maily@geller@ci.portland.or.us">rgeller@ci.portland.or.us</a> or visit the BTA at <a href="maily@www.bta4bikes.org">www.bta4bikes.org</a>.

#### INTERSTATE REZONING

By Claire Paris

An introduction is in order. My name is Claire Paris and I'm a Realtor in the Overlook neighborhood. I was recently appointed Land Use Co-Chair for the OKNA and I am on the Community Advisory Group (CAG) for rezoning the Interstate Corridor.

The rezoning of Interstate Ave has made recent headlines because of some big proposed changes to zoning. When I agreed to write this article, I struggled with distilling my thoughts about the proposed changes (and zoning in general). Zoning isn't simple. That's rule number one. Two pieces of property, zoned identically, with the same lot square footage can have dramatically different development. Why? There are a number of reasons: construction financing, the developer's vision, the cost for the project. The list goes on. But ultimately, the market has the last word--will the property sell or lease for the price necessary to make a profit?

The CAG started meeting nearly a year ago with the express purpose of coming up with a more updated and uniform zoning map for the quarter mile areas around the MAX stations. Once a month, for two hours, we get together and have guided discussions. Our recommendations are then taken to the Technical Advisory Group which consists of representatives from agencies such as transportation, planning and development. They moderate our ideas, contribute their own and translate it into zoning changes.

What does this mean to us, the people living in the neighborhood? I wish I could say. I can tell you what someone <u>could</u> do, but I do not know what will actually happen. As one of your land use chairs, I'm doing my best to help the OKNA board and our community understand the possibilities, but no one knows yet what the outcome will be. OKNA receives notices for each variance requested in our neighborhood, so get involved in your local community. Come to the board meetings. Call me to ask about the building project down the street. The most important thing you can do is educate yourself and your neighbors about zoning and its possible repercussions.

I know your hope for this article might be that I could tell you if your neighbor could put a tenstory building next to your home. In some cases, (depending on the zoning) yes, it is possible. But zoning is one piece in the jigsaw puzzle of development, so it may not be practical. The market has slowed dramatically, construction costs have risen and it is very difficult to predict what and who will develop our neighborhood. The best advice I have to offer is to learn all you can about it, and pro-actively work to make the development that does come to fruition the best possible addition to the community.

## WILDFIRE RISK REDUCTION PROJECT—WINTER UPDATE

By Steve Lanigan

**P**ortland Bureau of Environmental Services' crews sprayed herbicide for a second time along the Willamette Bluff in early November to further

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## Here's What Can Happen When We Are POLES APART

By Sally Kavanagh

Those attending a recent Overlook Neighborhood Association general meeting voted unanimously to accept the recommendation of an OKNA committee charged with finding and evaluating proposals for a Neighborhood Improvement Project. Known as "the big ugly pole committee," the group had reviewed seven proposals and recommended a plan to replace fourteen old wooden street light poles and their overhead wiring with fourteen new decorative aluminum poles with underground wiring.

The work to be done is located between 2919 and 3103 North Willamette Boulevard. This is a low-traffic, scenic area on the bluff overlooking Swan Island. It is also immediately north of PGE's new, <u>illegally</u> erected eighty-foot-high power line that runs directly to the pumping station on Swan Island. This power pole has negatively affected the view and ambiance of the area---thus, the Neighborhood Improvement Project.

The Bureau of Environmental Standards (BES) and Portland General Electric (PGE) had agreed to underwrite the costs of this endeavor and had set aside a significant amount of money (\$80,000) in mitigation for their serious violation of city code. Their infringement included placement and installing the pole without community input or permits.

Because this stretch of road is a section of the scenic Willamette Boulevard route and a low traffic side street, it is used not only by the Portland Marathon and the Bridge Pedal, but also by hundreds of daily bikers and bike commuters, walkers, runners, and people stopping to picnic, play with their dogs and kids, or simply enjoy the sunset. The new lighting sources will enhance the pedestrian environment in this truly distinctive location of the public realm, which overlooks an open space park, the Willamette Greenway, Swan Island, the Willamette River, and the West Hills.

If the \$80,000 fund is not sufficient to pay for all fourteen street lamps at this time, then additional street lamps will be replaced as funding permits. Bids are currently being obtained from local contractors. If there are any civil engineers in Overlook interested in assisting the project on a pro bono basis, please contact Eric Gale, the OKNA Chairman.

reduce blackberries and clematis. They concurrently seeded the treatment area with grass, although grasses probably won't sprout until warmer spring weather returns. Limited physical removal of plants will also occur over the next several months.

#### **Wildfire Risk Reduction Committee**

An Overlook Neighborhood "wildfire risk reduction committee" is being formed to coordinate with and support Portland agency efforts to reduce fire risk on the Willamette bluff. Please contact Steve Lanigan (lanoman@wanet.com) if you would like to be on the committee. More information on the wildfire risk reduction project can be found at www.portlandonline.com/wildfire.

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#### WHAT DO NEIGHBOR-HOOD ASSOCIATIONS HAVE TO DO WITH IT?

By Tom Griffin-Valade, Director North Portland Neighborhood Services

The recent rush of attendance at neighborhood association meet-

ings to either support or oppose the idea of changing the name of Interstate Avenue to honor Cesar E. Chavez raises the question: What do neighborhood associations have to do with it? Portland's neighborhood system has a national reputation for its unique ability to engage residents in the decision making process and to support their efforts in community-building projects and programs. However, many residents living here, while aware of the neighborhood association phenomenon, often have no real idea of how it functions. And, when an issue pops up that brings folks out to an association general meeting for the first time, there is often a wide range of perception regarding just exactly what the neighborhood association can do.

Although officially recognized by the City of Portland in the decision making process, neighborhood associations have no statutory authority. The legal authority to make policy decisions instead lies with bodies like the Portland City Council that is composed of elected officials.

So, if neighborhood associations have no power to make decisions, what's the point?

The answer to this varies from group to group. In the case of policy questions, neighborhood associations, after studying the issues and listening to residents, often provide advice to elected decision makers. The advisory role of these groups is often tempered by lack of funds to communicate with all residents within its boundary. Thus, there is no guarantee that the associations' findings can get "out there." But they do potentially have a <u>chance</u> to emphatically influence the decision making process of the City Council and other government elected bodies.

These organizations may also choose not to provide direct advice but, instead, act to facilitate the input of engaged residents through the decision making process of the appropriate elected body. This often is the case when residents are split on a policy decision or when there is not enough opportunity to gather community opinions due to lack of funds or the lack of time to seek a response. Because engaged neighborhood groups have experience with community and governmental processes, they can serve an important role in helping individuals trying to influence decision makers.

Still other neighborhood associations may

choose to remain neutral and not comment at all. But in all cases, these groups and their active members are hard working volunteers; they are your neighbors who put in many hours committed to making our community better.

Unlike the current situation where there is only the opportunity to influence rather than make decisions, there has been debate since the founding of the neighborhood association system as to whether statutory power should be shared with neighborhood groups. Many have argued that such a sharing of authority would make the democratic process more authentic, along the lines of the New England Town Hall meetings where all residents are invited to vote and make legally

binding civic decisions. Until then, neighbor-

hood associations will continue to join other en-

gaged groups and active residents in providing direction to decision makers.

And for those that find the process of trying to influence policy makers frustrating, remember that some of the best work done by neighborhood associations is in their community building activities. Here local activists through their neighborhood associations do take on authority as they plant trees, form foot patrols, develop farmers' markets, create community based art organizations, develop local opportunities for cross cultural communication, operate community centers, run tool libraries, remove graffiti and organize many other projects and programs that make Portland neighborhoods some of the most envied and admired in the United States.

Notice: Due to foreseen circumstances, the next newsletter will be an April/May edition to be distributed the last week in March. Deadline for articles will be March 7.

#### DRIVING IN AND ABOUT OVER-LOOOK



By Brad Halverson, Chair, Transportation Committee

Let's look at three different transportation issues that affect almost everyone who lives in Overlook.

First, many of you already know about the closure of the southbound right turn from Interstate Avenue to Greeley Avenue. A number of accidents have occurred there recently including two with bicyclists, one of whom died. The closure of that turn is temporary for now. Final plans for what will happen there have not been determined by PDOT. Stay tuned. At this time, please continue south past the closure to Russell and turn right to loop back to Greeley. Or you can head north to Going which leads me to...



...the new signal controllers for Interstate Avenue are here! They should be installed at the major intersections from Kenton to the Rose Quarter by the end of

2007. This was paid for with urban renewal funds. These controllers are "smarter" so they will learn the traffic pattern and be able to adjust their timing to operate more efficiently. The old version had to start the signal sequence (who gets the green) over every time a train went by. The new equipment should keep those who have waited in the queue to be next for the green. The signal guru at PDOT is also able to tie signals that are close to each other together again (e.g., Killingsworth & Willamette). This was tried before, but the technology could not keep up. If you see big problems with the new system, please contact PDOT at 503-823-5185. They will ask for location, direction, time and day of week of your observation.

Finally, the first cut of the proposals for the new I-5 bridge to Vancouver are out. Do nothing, tear out the old bridges and build new ones, keep what is there and add another bridge, and bus rapid transit vs. light rail are the big decisions. Redoing the Marine Drive



and Hayden Island intersections are the other choices on the Oregon side. Plenty of information already and much more to come. See <a href="https://www.columbiarivercrossing.org">www.columbiarivercrossing.org</a> for more information. The public comment period for the draft environmental impact statement will be open from February to April. Expect a decision by the task force in March.

### OVERLOOK NEIGHBOR-HOOD ASSOCIATION EMAIL LIST POLICY

By Kal Shobaki

As a means of communicating with residents of the neighborhood, the Overlook Neighborhood Association (OKNA) maintains an email address list (the List). Residents may subscribe to the List through the OKNA web site at <a href="http://www.overlookneighborhood.org">http://www.overlookneighborhood.org</a> or by sending an email to <a href="mainto-modeoutle-info@overlookneighborhood.org">info@overlookneighborhood.org</a>. The names and email addresses of members are accessible only by the Chairperson, Chair-Assist, or Secretary of OKNA, and will not be shared or used for any purpose other than those explained here.

The List is intended as a tool to help the OKNA Board communicate with residents about events relevant to members of the Overlook community. Typically, the email list is used to send out time -sensitive information about



OKNA activities, government activities or hearings of interest to the community, community events or crime reports. The List is not intended for any commercial use. The OKNA board considers the List a valuable resource for communicating with the community, and is committed to keeping the number of mailings manageable and relevant.



All messages to the List are approved by the Chairperson, Chair-Assist, or Secretary of the OKNA before being sent out. If you want to send a message to the List, you should send it to

info@overlookneighborhood.org. Messages about upcoming com-

munity events or crime reports will be forwarded to the List. Messages that do not clearly fall within those boundaries will be circulated to the OKNA board in order to determine if there are any objections to the posting. If no board member objects to the message within 24 hours, it will be posted. If a message intended for the List is rejected, the OKNA board will provide an explanation to the sender.

Subject to approval by the OKNA board, and consistent with achieving the goals of this policy, access to the List and authority to send messages may be delegated to other board members as necessary. This email list use policy will be made available through the OKNA web site.

# MAKING A HOUSE — A HOME FOR COMMUNITY ENRICHMENT

By Jerry Lindsay

The "Community" part of Overlook House Community Center is getting bigger and better with each passing year. Prior to four years ago when a neighborhood group took over operation of Overlook House from the Parks Bureau, very few Community events were held there. How things have changed! By the close of business 2007, Overlook House will have <a href="https://www.hosted.over.500">hours of Community focused events & classes this year.</a>

Fun for the younger set has become a focus at Overlook House. Bean Sprout, led by Esther Brock meets each Thursday, 10:30-11:30 a.m. Esther leads an enchanting story and craft hour that truly mesmerizes the under 5 set. The parent/ infant group led by Catherine Reynolds (catherinereynolds@comcast.net) and Nicole Goldman (udon15@yahoo.com) continues to meet every Monday at 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. The annual Halloween party, Easter egg hunt and Santa's annual visit (he was sighted there just last Sunday) are big goings-ons for the under 10 crowd. For parents of all ages, Janet Allison, a professional family coach and parent educator, has a Monday, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. class in the "Language of Parenting." Discover a new way of listening and expressing yourself as a parent. Contact Janet at janet.familycoach@comcast.net for details.

Heidi Jo Timm has been leading a stress reducing yoga class on Monday and Wednesday evenings from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m. for almost 2 years. She welcomes walk in newcomers, the only criteria is to bring a yoga mat and a willingness to try something new. Contact Heidi at 503-341-4688.

Steve Marsh has introduced T'ai Chi Chih to our community at his Thursday evening and Saturday morning sessions. This class has an enthusiastic following but still has space for newcomers. Call Steve at 503-283-4991.

Warren Cassell is hosting a new forum focused on "Aging at Home" with the next meeting scheduled for January 16, 2008 at 7:00 p.m. This group will investigate proactive solutions to enhancing the aging at home experience. Warren can be contacted via email at w.cassell@comcast.com or call him at 503-288-8323.

I hope that you did not miss all the wonderful offerings at the third Annual Christmas Bazaar, the first weekend in December. (If you did, next year's is just 11 months away). Also, mark your Calendar for the Neighborhood Ice Cream Social on August 3 from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. A dollar buys a sundae and the opportunity to meet many of your neighbors is free.

If you need more information about any of these classes or events, or perhaps if you want to initiate a class or some other activity, call Overlook House's charming and helpful Program Coordinator Carol Padden at 503-823-3188 or call the instructor. Carol will happily answer your questions. Her e-mail is

coordinator @historic overlook house.org.

Just a note: Some of these activities are free but others have a discounted cost. The instructor or Carol can give you the correct information.

## A NEW COURSE FOR PARENTS AT OVERLOOK HOUSE

By Warren Cassell

Janet Allison, an Overlook resident, a parent educator, Waldorf consultant and family coach will teach a new term of "The Language of Parenting" at OH in a five-session class starting Monday, January 21. The course will run from 7-9 p.m. Mondays through February 18.

Designed for parents of toddlers to teens, this course focuses on language—the words we choose and the way we say them. The emphasis is on how those words can affect our children in a positive manner, by building co-operation and self-esteem into every verbal interaction. As most parents know, this is not an easy task. The aim of the course is to simplify the process through discussion and written reflections, all woven together through lectures and stories. This will be a fun and dynamic class in which practical skills are learned and can be used immediately. In addition, participating parents will discover their own learning style and how it relates to their children's learning style. Parents will also enjoy the deep connection achieved with their children through words, voice quality and body language.

This is a class that truly has life long implications. One former student/parent noted that: "I've had lots of revelations through the work in class and in general feel a calmness in my parenting that wasn't there before."

The fee for this class is \$75.00 plus \$50.00 for materials. For additional information and registration, call Janet Allison at 503-493-7404 or email: janet.familycoach@comcast.net.

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION: T'AI CHI CHIH CLASS

Resolve to carve out special time for yourself this winter while learning this flowing moving meditation. Requiring no special abilities, this easily learned set of 19 movements has many health-related benefits. A free ongoing monthly group practice ensures both support for those familiar with the benefits of T'ai Chi Chih, and a sense of communal welcome to those who are coming to it for the first time. Eight-week class begins Thursday, January 10 from 6:30 p.m. - 7:45 p.m. Steve Marsh M.Ed, accredited teacher. Register at 503-283-4991 or tecmarsh@hotmail.com. The \$60 fee is payable at the first night of class at the Overlook House.



#### **ACTOR'S WORKSHOP**

A new, innovative workshop for actors is being offered at Overlook House starting in January. For more information, call: Jessica at 541-683-1674 or

email: jessica@theactingworkshop.com or go to www.theactingworkshop.com.

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OVERLOOK HOUSE----THANKS
TO VOLUNTEERS from Carol Padden
By Warren Cassell

This past December has brought a myriad of community events to Overlook House, which could not have joyously happened without the contributions of a cadre of hard workers contributing their time and energy to benefit so many others. Following in less than alphabetical order are the Santa at Overlook House Volunteers on December 8.

**Phil Horine** 

Esther Brock
Matthew Werres
Clarice Barrett
Kendra Padden
Allan Padden
Carol Padden
Kylie Skalbeck
plus
A Generous Raffle Donation
from Harbor Freight Tools

In addition, several individuals made substantial donations to both the Santa event and the Holiday Bazaar. These were:

Josh Armstrong, Alan Cranna, Esther Brock, Carol Padden, Pat Hazlett and Carol Cushman, Jeanette Stoddard.

A week earlier another creative crew of hard working volunteers helped make the Holiday Bazaar and Bake Sale a huge success. In addition to neighborhood bakers who contributed their goodies to the bake sale table, the following on-site contributions of their time and presence are very much appreciated:

Tammy Boren-King Barbara Brooks Debbie Butzen Jane Finch-Howell Claire Mathias Marsh Parks Julie Rawls Matt Scoggin Nancy Wallberg Annegret Wolford

Finally, we offer our thanks for the efforts made by our neighbors who brought the joy of baking from their kitchens to the Overlook House. All of the proceeds from these bakers' handiwork go toward future children's events programming at the Overlook House:

Deliliah's Catering
Janet McPherson
Beth Horine
Matt Scoggin
Annegret Wolford
MaryEllen Baldauff
Rich Cassidy
Clarice Barrett
Tammy Boren-Ving





## You're invited to the **Beach School Winter Carnival Friday, January 25<sup>th</sup>, 5:30-8:30pm**

Bring your friends and family for an evening of carnival games for kids, food, free crafts, free entertainment, our annual basket raffle and much more!

> Admission is free. Sponsored by the Beach School PTA. Beach School is located at 1710 N. Humboldt Street, Portland









### Están invitados al Carnival de Invierno de la Escuela Beach viernes, enero 25, 5:30-8:30pm

Traigan su familia y amigos para una noche de juegos de carnival para los niños, comida, artesanias gratis para niños, entretenimiento gratis, nuestra annual rifa de canastas y ¡mucho mas!

Entrada a heste evento es gratis. Organizado por la Organización de Padres y Maestros (PTA) de la Beach School se localiza en el 1710 N. Humboldt Street, Portland





#### "GOT TREE TIME ON FEBRUARY 16?"

By Cynthia Sulaski

If you've thought about helping Overlook homeowners plant their trees during our neighborhood's annual tree planting, here's your chance. Just show up at the Friends of Trees building (3117 NE MLK Blvd, 97212) on Saturday, February 16 at 9:00 a..m. to volunteer. You will be assigned to a crew that will plant trees in a section of the Overlook Neighborhood. You don't need to pre register. After the planting, we will have a warm, yummy lunch for all volunteers and homeowners. If you have any questions, please call me at 503.249.7728. Thanks in advance for helping to beautify our neighborhood.



#### **REAL ESTATE UPDATE** PORTLAND/OVERLOOK

Thanks to Overlook neighbor Bob LaDu of RE/MAX (503-495-5431) for providing the information for this real estate market update.

**2**007 began as a Buyer's market for Portland residential real estate for the first time in a decade or more. The traditional dividing line between a Buyer's and a Seller's market has been five months of housing inventory for sale (Buyer's market when the inventory is above five months, Seller's market when the inventory is five months or less). January began with 6.2 months of inventory, September and October had 8.6 and 8.4. While the market has been considerably slower for sales yearto-date (about 40% slower) and the number of sales has declined, home values, have not only held firm but also have increased more than 6%. This was due to steady employment rates and the increased number of new arrivals to the Portland area—as opposed to most of the rest of the nation where housing prices have fallen compared to a year ago.

As of the end of October 2007, average time for a residential property to sell in the Portland Metropolitan area was 64 days, compared to 47 days a year ago. The number of new listings decreased by 5.1% compared to October 2006, pending sales declined by 22% and the number of closed sales fell by 25.5%. The average sale price for the Metro area increased by 6.7%.

In North Portland, at the end of October, there were 582 active listings (including 204 new ones), 93 pending sales, and 82 closed sales with an average sale price of \$254,300 and an average market time of 59 days. Appreciation has increased by 8.5% from a year ago. Listed below are properties that have sold in Overlook since the last newsletter.

Address	Bed/Bath	<u>List Price</u>	Sold Price	Days on Market
2604 N. Emerson St.	3/2	\$275,000	\$275,000	1
1614 N. Emerson St.	2/1	\$279,950	\$279,950	46
3735 N. Longview Ave.	3/1	\$317,000	\$308,500	15
2047 N. Summer St.	4/2	\$324,900	\$322,125	5
5535 N. Wilbur Ave.	3/1.1	\$346,900	\$338,000	91
2325 N. Webster St.	3/1	\$365,000	\$350,000	80
1655 N. Jessup St.	3/2	\$364,900	\$350,000	46
4066 N. Castle Ave.	4/2	\$449,950	\$400,000	47
2220 N. Alberta St.	4/2.1	\$549,950	\$543,000	78

#### **IMPORTANT NITTY-GRITTY**

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

> Or via snail mail: **OKNA** 2209 N. Schofield St. Portland, Or. 97217

#### **OKNA OFFICERS**

**Chair**: Eric Gale 503-737-5227 ericsgale@gmail.com Treasurer: Kent Hoddick 503-286-9803 Hoddick@teleport.com Secretary: Kal Shobaki 503-740-2020 kal@shobaki.org

#### **OVERLOOK VIEWS**

A bi-monthly publication of the Overlook Neighborhood Association Made possible by a very generous grant from Freightliner L.L.C.

Co-editors: Warren and Melisa Cassell Poet in residence: Melisa Cassell

Distribution Captains: Alan Cranna and **Carol Cushman** 

Thanks to the following lovely people whose contributions made this edition possible: Brenda Bokenyi, Brad Halverson, Jay Hunt, Bob La Du, Tom Griffin-Valade, Linda Hunter, Sally Kavanagh, Steve Lanigan, Jerry Lindsay, Claire Paris, Susie Silva-Strommer, Kal Shobaki and Cynthia Sulaski.

The Overlook Views is published six times a year and your comments, suggestions and/or contributions are welcome. This really is your newsletter! Deadline for the next issue is March 7. Articles must be submitted electronically and should not exceed three hundred words unless there is prior agreement with the editors. Submissions should be sent to: w.cassell@comcast.net. For additional information, either email above or call 503-288-8323.

# New Year's Greetings to All







# Prospero Año Nuevo









# LEARNING FROM THE GROUND UP

By Brenda Bokenyi Dual Language First Grade Teacher—Beach School

One of the tangible results of Our United Villages' involvement in the Overlook Neighborhood was the formation of the Edible Schoolyard group at Beach School. OUV was very involved in the initial meeting, which resulted in a long-term plan. Membership of this group is made up of parents, teachers and community members. The core group consists of about eight individuals. We began work on this plan immediately by digging up and demolishing the garden that had been in place. We then rebuilt a new garden over two weekends in the spring with help from all of our core members and others in the community. Over the summer, four individuals shared the responsibilities of water-

ing. We could use more help with this vital function next year.

We tend to hold meetings whenever there is action needed. Given the nature of our group, we have more action than talking. We had an amazing harvest this fall. I lost track of how many tomatoes we harvested. We still have some in the garden that have yet to ripen. We have grown lettuce, broccoli, onions, herbs, squash, three very large pumpkins, green beans, strawberries and quite a few flowers as well. I harvested quite a bit with my classes and this was a real life-learning experience for them. At least a few children were converted to becoming vegetable eaters. We are now focusing on winter gardening, including cold frames and cover cropping.

We have great ideas for the future, including an entryway and sculpture for the center of the garden. We are always looking for more volunteers to help with the garden, especially those with in-depth knowledgea about the subject. We were just awarded a grant from the Namaste Charter School in Chicago. Grants have been our only funding so far, so this is another area where we could use help in the form of financial support or grant writers.

We are also hoping to get our teaching staff more involved. We see this happening if individuals who are expert gardeners could inspire small crews of teachers to come and spend short periods of their already stretched time without having to prepare or research. We want the garden to be part of the whole school, so it can be a strong symbol for growing, nurturing and learning.



#### REPORT BACK: News from Our United Villages By Linda Hunter

Our United Villages has been hosting Neighborhood Conversations, History Storytelling, Idea Development Plan Work-

shops, and other special events in the Overlook neighborhood since January, 2006. To honor and recognize neighbors' deepening relationships and moving their ideas for strengthening community into action, Our United Villages is hosting a Neighborhood celebration. (Continued bottom of next page)

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## GRAB YOUR SCISSORS—HERE'S THE OCC SURVEY

## THE NEW KID IN TOWN— Overlook Community Connect By Warren Cassell

One result of Our United Villages' outreach objectives has been the creation of a community-building group called Overlook Community Connect (OCC). Their goal is to make it possible for people to exchange skills, develop and share their interests as well as offer and give help where it is needed. OCC will implement this program using a digital database as well as a hard copy equivalent directory. When completed, the result will be an "asset map" of the Overlook community where you will have the ability to look up neighbors who have mutual interests and skills they are willing and able to either teach or share. The survey on this page is the tool OCC will use to launch this laudatory effort. We urge you to fill in, return\* the survey to place yourself on the Overlook neighborhood's asset map. Through these OCC's efforts, the Overlook community will become an even more vibrant place to live. If you have questions or need additional information, do not hesitate to contact OCC's chair, Corey Omey, by calling 503-349-4179 or email at <a href="mailto:OverlookConnect@yahoo.com">OverlookConnect@yahoo.com</a>.

Place a <u>single</u> check mark to the right of any of the following specific activities that match your interests and which you would like to <u>share</u> with neighbors.

Place a <u>double</u> check mark to the right of any specific activities that you would be willing to <u>lead</u> or <u>host</u> with your neighbors.

#### Arts/Crafts/Hobbies

- \* Music: playing, jam sessions, listening, learning, teaching
- \* Photography/Video: watching movies, making movies, sharing photos, learning photography
- \* Crafts: clay, paper, paint, drawing, knitting, sewing

#### Food & Wine

- \* Canning: share your fruit, teaching canning, learning to can, canning parties
- \* Cooking: learning to cook, learning to bake,

- \* Dinner parties: potlucks, tea, desserts
- \* Neighborhood food drive
- \* Healthy/organic foods: buying local, food clubs
- \* Trade recipes: community cookbook
- \* Wine: winemaking, tasting, wine club

#### Gardening

- \* Shared garden: plant sharing, community gardens
- \* Flowers
- \* Organic gardening
- \* Fruit
- \* Vegetables

#### Groups/Social

- \* Book club
- \* History sharing

#### Home Maintenance

- \* Share/trade work
- \* Senior home maintenance

#### **OVERLOOK COMMUNITY CONNECT NEEDS:**

- Name
   Address
- 3. Email/

Phone

- 4. Interested in helping with this project \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: Feel free to write in the margins of this form to express your ideas, comments and suggestions.

#### Recreation/Sports/Exercise

- \* Boating
- \* Bicycling: riding, repair
- \* Camping
- \* Hiking
- \* Running
- \* Walking
- \* Yoga
- \* Tai Chi
- \* Martial arts

List below what other skills, interests or hobbies you have to be included in OCC's neighborhood asset: map:


#### \* SURVEY RETURN INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Make sure contact info in box above right is included. 2. Cut along the delightful scissor borders and 3. Drop off at one of these locations:

Overlook House-3839 N. Melrose Dr. 97227 or Omey House-2105 N. Webster Ave. 97217 or the following businesses deserving your patronage: **Di Prima Dolce Beaterville Sobet** 

Fill in the Overlook Community Connect Survey above online at: http://www.hostedsurveylite.comtakesurvey.asp?c=OCC1.

# (REPORT BACK—CONT'D)



Overlook neighbors are invited to join us:

Overlook Neighborhood Celebration January 19, 2008 at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

In order to share stories, accomplishments, and outcomes of neighbors coming together at these events, Our United Villages is publishing a Report Back that will be sent to every address in Overlook at the beginning of January. Look for the Report Back in your mail-box!

If you are unable to join us on January 19, you can learn about the activities with Our United Villages by going to our website at <a href="https://www.ourunitedvillages.org">www.ourunitedvillages.org</a>. On the website you will find:

- Neighbors' survey responses from the 2006 Overlook Survey
- Neighbors' ideas that were shared at Neighborhood Conversations
- The Idea Development Plans created by Overlook neighbors

There were 685 ideas shared in the 2006 Survey from Overlook neighbors. These ideas were categorized into themes to form the topics of Neighborhood Conversations.

Neighbors gathered at various locations in Overlook, enjoyed a delicious meal together,

and brainstormed ideas for a healthier, more vibrant community. These topics included:

- Neighborhood Beautification
- Elder Support
- Schools & Education
- Community Building
- Neighborhood Safety
- Neighborhood Businesses
- Health & Fitness
- Youth Activities
- Farmer's Market
- Music, Art & Culture

Please join us on January 19, 2008 for the Overlook Neighborhood Celebration