

AlamedaPDX

Summer 2023

Volume 37 Number 2



L. TO R., RICHARD VOLLMER, SHAWNA O'NEAL, BELL O'NEAL, TIM O'NEAL, AND LORI VOLLMER.



GARDEN FEVER'S OUTDOOR NURSERY IS ADJACENT TO THE STORE.

Garden Fever Marks 20th Anniversary, Gets New Owners *by Blythe Knott*

If you live in the Alameda neighborhood, you are no doubt aware that very few businesses actually exist within our borders. But there are some that thrive here, and a perennial favorite (no pun intended) is Garden Fever, located at NE 24th Avenue and Fremont.

Recently the store celebrated its 20th anniversary, and announced the retirement of longtime owners Richard and Lori Vollmer, who opened Garden Fever in 2003. At an informal “Anniversary Cake Day” for customers on March 4, the Vollmers shared that they were turning the business over to “the next generation of Garden Fever,” Tim O’Neal, and his partner, Shawna.

Tim was an employee at Garden Fever for several years until 2020, when he and Shawna decided to buy Livinglandscape Nursery on N. Vancouver Avenue. They enjoyed running that business so much that when the Vollmers announced they were retiring, the O’Neals were immediately intrigued. Because they already owned a local garden store and Tim was already

familiar with Garden Fever and its staff, the transition made sense on both sides. This past winter, the business changed hands.

The transition went smoothly, with the existing staff remaining the same. Many of the year-round employees have been at the store for years. The O’Neals also share many of the same philosophies as the previous owners.

According to Shawna, “We believe in supporting the community through workshops, donations to local schools and organizations, carrying plants that are healthy for pollinators, and buying from small, local vendors who grow varieties that you can’t find at other places.”

She added that they also support local businesses that aren’t in a brick-and-mortar store, and BIPOC organizations, artisans, and makers. “We plan to bring in more local people to showcase their candles, cards, glass work, screen printing, pottery, and artwork,” Shawna noted.

The store also offers workshops, which are listed in its weekly newsletter (visit gardenfever.com to subscribe). Some upcoming topics include monarch butterflies and Northwest pollinators.

The O’Neals have accrued a number of certifications in gardening and landscape design over the years, including Master Gardener, Permaculture Design and Herbalism certificates on the medicinal plants in our bio-region. They take pride in selling locally sourced, high-quality soil, fertilizer, plants, and seeds, and also offer tools, furniture, outdoor rugs, and home decor. The adjacent outdoor nursery contains a variety of seasonal plants, grasses, vines, ornamental shrubs, trees, and conifers.

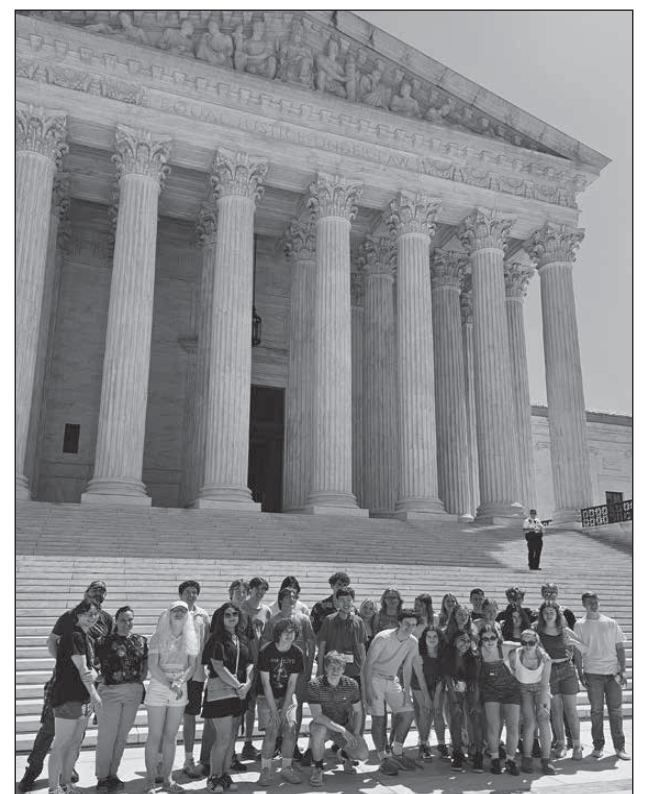
On the store’s website, Tim and Shawna note that Garden Fever is “A place where gardeners, novice or expert, can find good plants, good tools, good dirt, & helpful advice on sustainable gardening practices.”

Grant Takes 2nd at National Finals

The Grant High School Constitution Team took 2nd place at the We the People National Finals, and Portland’s Lincoln High School came in 6th at the competition, which saw 48 teams vie for the national title April 22-24. The winning team was the Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School for Government and International Studies from Richmond, Virginia.

The finals were held in Washington, D.C., marking the first time students participated in person since 2019. In addition to participating in the competition, Grant students also had the opportunity to visit national landmarks including the Smithsonian Institution, Arlington Cemetery, the National Portrait Gallery, and the National Gallery of Art.

A statement from the team sent to donors after the trip reads in part, “The experience of exploring the Capitol and the Supreme Court drove home the power of our founding ideal, ‘of the people, by the people, for the people.’ Thank you so much for helping nourish the spirit of democracy in our hearts and minds, as young citizens.”



THE CONSTITUTION TEAM VISITED THE U.S. SUPREME COURT BUILDING.

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Editor's Message by Annette Bendinelli



It's hard to believe summer's just a few days away, but don't worry - *AlamedaPDX* will help you get ready! A good place to start the season is our local Alameda garden store, Garden Fever. The store recently changed hands after 20 years, and new owners Tim and Shawna

O'Neal have seamlessly taken over the business that Richard and Lori Vollmer started in 2003. You can read about the O'Neal's plans for this longtime neighborhood favorite in our front-page feature.

If a new tree is on your shopping list, you'll need to give it lots of care during the hot summer months. Our instructions on Page 10 will help you determine the most efficient ways to water young trees during this critical period..

If you're thinking of throwing a summer block party, we've got you covered - look for permit info and helpful tips from Portland Parks & Recreation on Page 8. If you're someone who spends summer evenings around a fire pit or outdoor fireplace, be sure to check out Multnomah County's online air pollution status report at multco.us/woodsmokestatus before you burn. You can find more information on Page 9 about how wood smoke affects the air quality in our urban Portland neighborhoods.

For more summer fun, be sure to mark your calendar for Thursday, August 10, when the Alameda and Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Associations will team up to present the Walt Disney movie "Encanto" at Wilshire Park. This is part of Portland Parks' "Summer Free for All" series, and it's the first time we've had a showing in our neighborhood since before the pandemic. Festivities begin at 7:30, and the movie starts at dusk. These free, family-friendly events are always popular, so grab a blanket and be sure to get there early!

There's a lot going on in and around Alameda this summer.

We're excited to report that our neighborhood association is steadily rebuilding, with two new board members and two successful community events that were held this past spring (read more about them on Pages 6 And 8). But we still have a ways to go, and we hope you'll consider coming to an ANA board meeting or joining our ANA email list to find out how you can get involved. For more info, contact us at alamedanewsletter@gmail.com.

And finally, kudos to both the Grant High School Constitution Team for its 2nd place finish at the National "We the People" Finals, and to the Beaumont Jazz Ambassadors for winning the Junior Sweepstakes prize at the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival. We're fortunate to have such outstanding students and teachers at our nearby neighborhood schools! Look for photos of both teams in this issue.

Hope you all have a happy, healthy summer, and I'll see you in the fall!

— Annette

Meet New ANA Board Member Pastor Erin Martin

The Alameda Neighborhood Association recently welcomed two new board members, Pastor Erin Martin of Fremont United Methodist Church and longtime Alameda resident Michael Wood.

We asked Pastor Erin to provide a short bio for this issue, and will feature a bio of Michael Woods in our Fall issue. Thanks to both of these neighbors for volunteering to serve on the board!

I was born in Monterey, California, but my family moved around a lot when I was growing up. I have lived on both the East and West Coasts, and yet, I have deep ties to NE Portland. My grandparents lived on NE 34th Ave. and Going St., and my mother attended both the Kennedy School and Grant High School. When my family moved to Portland in 2015 after nine years in Eugene, it definitely felt like a homecoming. Our first home in Portland was in Irvington, and we moved to the Alameda neighborhood in 2019.

I have two adult daughters, one who lives in SW Portland, and two sons. My oldest son, Elijah, will graduate from Grant High School this month, and he has committed to attend American University in Washington, DC in the fall, and my youngest

son, Rowan, is finishing 8th grade at Beaumont Middle School. He plays trombone for the exceptional Jazz Ambassadors, and he looks forward to continuing to play in the band when he begins at Grant High School in the fall.

I am currently the Pastor at Fremont United Methodist Church, and my husband, Charlie Collier, is an editor for a publishing company, Wipf and Stock Publishers headquartered in Eugene.

We love Alameda. It's a beautiful neighborhood for walking our dog, Milton. We have wonderful neighbors, and we love being close to Alameda Elementary School. We are inspired to both enjoy the residential community, but also to do the hard work of knowing the restrictive history of Alameda and working for positive change.

I joined the ANA Board because I believe in the power of community. Namely, we can do so much more together than we can apart. After three years of a debilitating global pandemic, we need community now more than ever. I hope the ANA will take the lead on developing a common life for us to gather to have fun, to grow and learn, and to create a better world for us all.



PASTOR ERIN MARTIN

ANA Secretary Needed!

The Alameda Neighborhood Association is looking for a new Secretary! Our current Secretary, Mariah Hudson, is planning to step down this summer after five years in the position.

Responsibilities include taking the minutes at monthly ANA Board meetings, and keeping other records as needed. The Board meets from 7-8 p.m. on the second Tuesday of every month.

This is a great opportunity to meet your neighbors and learn about the issues and events in our community. The ANA needs your support!

To apply for this volunteer position, please email alamedanewsletter@gmail.com.

ALAMEDA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION STATEMENT OF INCLUSION AND SUPPORT

Our community declared the Alameda neighborhood a hate-free zone in 1995. Today, we reaffirm Alameda's commitment to be a loving, caring, supportive and inclusive community for all who reside, work, do business, or visit our neighborhood. We stand against hatred, racism, xenophobia, discrimination and/or marginalization of any kind. We are committed to growing, nurturing and sustaining a community where all feel welcomed, safe and included.

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Pastor Erin Martin - Board Member

Michael Wood - Board Member

David Sparks - Layout and Design
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The ANA meets on the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. at Fremont United Methodist Church.

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Prices are per issue. To place an ad, contact Teresa St. Martin at alamedatreasurer@gmail.com.

Publication dates:	Deadlines:
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March 10	February 10
June 10	May 10
September 10	August 10

Please submit pdf, jpg, or Adobe Distiller X-1A compliant artwork at 300dpi or greater.

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Beaumont Band Wins Junior Sweepstakes at Festival by Krista Hagenbuch Rider

On April 19, after an unexpected two-hour delay, a Blue Star charter bus filled with 23 middle school musicians, five parent chaperones, student teacher Kevin Jacobs, and band director Cynthia Plank pulled away from Beaumont Middle School and began their journey to the 56th Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival in Moscow, Idaho. The energy, excitement and camaraderie were palpable!

The festival, held at the University of Idaho, welcomed more than 2,000 students, and provided an opportunity for the Beaumont Jazz Ambassadors to not only compete, but to listen to other school bands from Washington, Utah, Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Ohio and British Columbia.

The Ambassadors performed *Got Blues* by Steve Spiegel, *Randi* by Phil Woods, and *Para los Congueros*, which was written for the band by contemporary jazz composer Michele Fernandez. Soloist awards were given to Theo Robertson and Marilyn Ruthruff for their outstanding performances.

That evening the band made their way to the ICCU Arena on campus and waited to see if they had made a big enough splash to win. The pros were amazing, and in between musical sets the winners of the day's competitive divisions were announced. When Beaumont Jazz Band from Portland, Oregon was declared winner of Instrumental Large Ensemble, screams erupted from their section in the arena. They hugged, high-fived and congratulated each other, and ran outside to celebrate!

Moments later it was announced that the Ambassadors were also the Junior Sweepstakes winners, which recognizes the outstanding group for the entire division. Everyone ran back into the arena to celebrate this amazing surprise, their second Sweepstakes award this year! That's a first for the Ambassadors, and the band



THE BEAUMONT JAZZ AMBASSADORS WITH THEIR SWEEPSTAKES TROPHY.

received a special trophy for this award that they get to keep for one year. The joy and sense of pride in a job well done was shared by all, and especially by their director, Cynthia Plank!

The Beaumont Jazz Ambassadors and Mrs. Plank would like to thank the friends, family and community - especially Amalfi's and other local businesses - who donated to help them meet their fundraising goal. This experience was made possible in part by the generosity of so many, and the belief that arts in school is a valuable part of education.

You can stay in touch with the Jazz Ambassadors through the website Beaumontmusic.net. If you'd like to see a recording of their performance at the Lionel Hampton Jazz Festival, visit the Beaumont Jazz Ambassadors group on Facebook and YouTube.

Before boarding the bus to return home, the Ambassadors gathered together for a photo holding up the Sweepstakes trophy, often referred to as The Bowl. They accomplished what they came to do, and then some. Friendships were formed, memories created, their talents acknowledged. Truly, they are The Little Band That Could.

Krista Hagenbuch Rider is a Beaumont band parent chaperone who traveled to Idaho with the band.

Madeleine E-Waste Event a Success

A persistent drizzle didn't keep members of The Madeleine Parish and their NE Portland neighbors from bringing in tons of electronic waste for the church's annual E-Waste event on April 23. The event collected 18,079 lbs. of electronic and miscellaneous waste, which exceeded last year's total by 4,000 lbs.

Volunteers filled two and a half panel trucks with 26 cardboard totes of electronic waste, and nearly filled up a Ridwell van with plastic clamshell containers. Neighbors also brought in more than 50 boxes full of well-worn athletic shoes to be ground up at Nike and re-purposed.



Join us at Wilshire Park
for a FREE showing of the Disney animated classic

ENCANTO

Grab a blanket and bring your friends and family!

Thursday, August 10
Event begins at 7:30 p.m.
Movie starts at dusk

Co-sponsored by the
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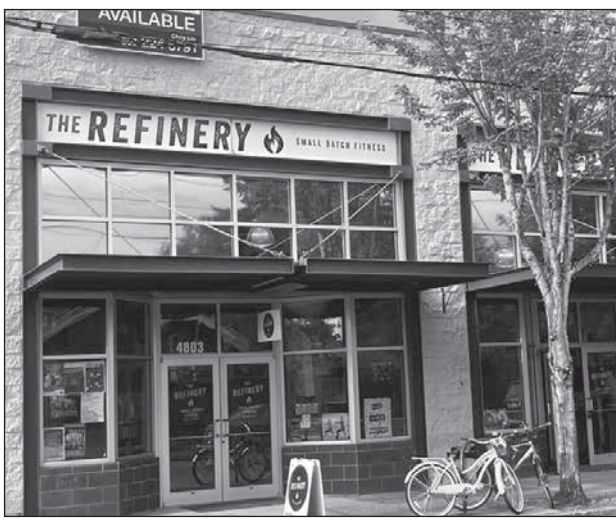


Refinery Closes After a Decade on NE Fremont by Sonia Acharya

After a strong 10-year run, The Refinery is closing its doors. The self-described “small batch fitness” gym at NE 48th and Fremont will hold its final classes June 3, according to owner Ashleigh Kayser, who is stepping away from the business to focus on family and other projects.

Kayser started the gym in 2013, just after she sent the last of her four children to nursery school. As she balanced a large family with community volunteering and church commitments, she noted that “Every day was an exercise in controlled chaos. I was working out daily to stay sane, so why not spread the gospel of movement to my fellow mommies? We were in this together!”

So at the age of 39, with the encouragement of her husband Chris, Kayser decided to pursue her passion for fitness and teaching and became a personal trainer.



THE REFINERY OPENED IN 2013 AT NE 48 TH AND FREMONT.

She began by spending early summer mornings at Wilshire Park training friends, some of whom became clients. She moved to the tiny space that was Portland Team Fitness for a few months, then borrowed money to buy equipment and signed the lease on Fremont Place, the building that would house her gym for the next ten years.

At first The Refinery offered bootcamp classes and barre. Kayser had an opportunity to expand when The Children’s Place book store was priced out of the space next door. She took over that space and the spin bikes came in.



THE REFINERY’S TAGLINE ECHOED PORTLAND’S ARTISANAL SPIRIT.

Spin was a game changer, not only for The Refinery clients’ fitness but for the gym. The space Kayser created was a warm and welcoming mix of grass and rubber, mirrors and warm wood, where most clients knew each other from her previous lives and new ones came to join the community.

Noted one member, “It was sort of like Cheers,” the bar from the 1980s TV sitcom “where everybody knows your name.” Various music styles would clash, rap vs show tunes. There was room for them all, just as there was room for everyone.

Then came 2020 and the devastation of the Covid-19 pandemic. Kayser was determined to keep the business running during the shutdown, and she did. Zoom classes were filmed at the gym, and a government loan allowed her to build a covered outdoor space in the parking lot so classes could take place during cold, rainy weather. Members often lifted weights with gloves on, and raincoats often stayed on during workouts.

“The pandemic provided an opportunity for me to test my dedication to my passion project,” said Kayser. “It was a difficult few years, but The Refinery successfully survived the pandemic and as many can tell, has made a complete recovery. Like a fit body, our success story came with a bit of pain and lots of resilience. The fact that we never faltered is a group victory!”

Now, as she looks ahead to her fifties, Kayser has begun to feel an urge to slow down. To maybe not have quite so many have-to’s and a few more want-to’s.

“I have a desire to start building a life chapter marked by simplicity and spontaneity. I want to reconnect with Chris, my children, my mom, my grandmother, and my community in a different way.” Kayser explained.

As Kayser put it in her closing newsletter to members, it’s the end of an era.

And as some doors close, others open.

Said Kayser, “At this moment I sit squarely in the space where success and happiness meet. But my gut tells me, too, that there are less complicated ways to volunteer besides running a business. While there may be a sense of loss and sorrow, I hope we can all feel a sense of pride and accomplishment in this fitness community we have built and belonged to together.”



FOUNDER AND OWNER, ASHLEIGH KAYSER.

As a member, I can attest that what The Refinery gave back to the community was so much greater than just a place to exercise. It was a remarkably tight knit gym, where working out was fun, the space was beautiful, the playlists were energizing. Careers were built as a number of stay-at-home moms who began personal training there with little experience became entrepreneurs in their own right, and started businesses of their own.

Trainers came from large, chain gyms and brought the wealth of their experience, then left to form smaller, more personal practices like The Refinery. No one left the space empty handed. Not the trainers, not the clients, and not Kayser.

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Dairy & Orchards in the Heart of Alameda | The Homedale Tract *by Doug Decker*

Third in a series about the hidden maps—called plats—that make up the neighborhood we know today.

Homedale is the name of the property plat—once part of an orchard and dairy—that occupies the landscape bounded by Fremont and Ridgewood, between NE 19th and NE 24th. Today, it's considered part of the Alameda neighborhood. Here's a look at that geography.

While today it's an orderly grid of streets and homes dating from 1922, before that, this sloping landscape just below Alameda ridge was an important part of Portland's eastside agriculture. Several interesting descriptions feed our curiosity and challenge what we think we know about this place. Read on, from local resident Rod Paulson written in January 1976:

"Before 1921 and 1922 when city lots were staked out, much of this was an apple orchard, the remnants of which can still be seen in some back yards. The trees grew right down to the edge of the Fremont Street [side]walk and there were several old buildings on the place, residential and otherwise, including a large farmhouse painted light brown which was located close to Fremont in the vicinity of 21st Avenue. This house dated back to the 1890s or before and people lived there in apparent comfort in a rural setting, yet in the midst of modern houses that [were being built] in all directions."

"There was another farmhouse set back a considerable distance from the street more or less in the eastern part of the orchard, and a barn was situated opposite the end of 23rd Avenue."

Owners Michael G. Munley and James T. Barron bought the entire 20-acre property in 1905 for \$6,500 and kept it in agricultural use with an eye to eventual development, but market conditions didn't make that worthwhile until the 1920s. Not coincidentally, Munley was the son-in-law of E.Z. Ferguson, who was president of the Alameda Land Company which owned and developed the Alameda Park Addition. Barron was a Ferguson business partner.

Meanwhile, the Irvington Dairy operated from a barn situated at the northeast corner of NE 21st and Fremont from the 1890s until 1916 when a catastrophic fire destroyed 28 cows, a horse and a barn. The terrible fire marked the beginning of the end of dairying in this area. Combined with the early 1920s resurgence in Portland's real estate values, the time was at hand when Munley and Barron would execute the land-use change and end the property's agricultural past:

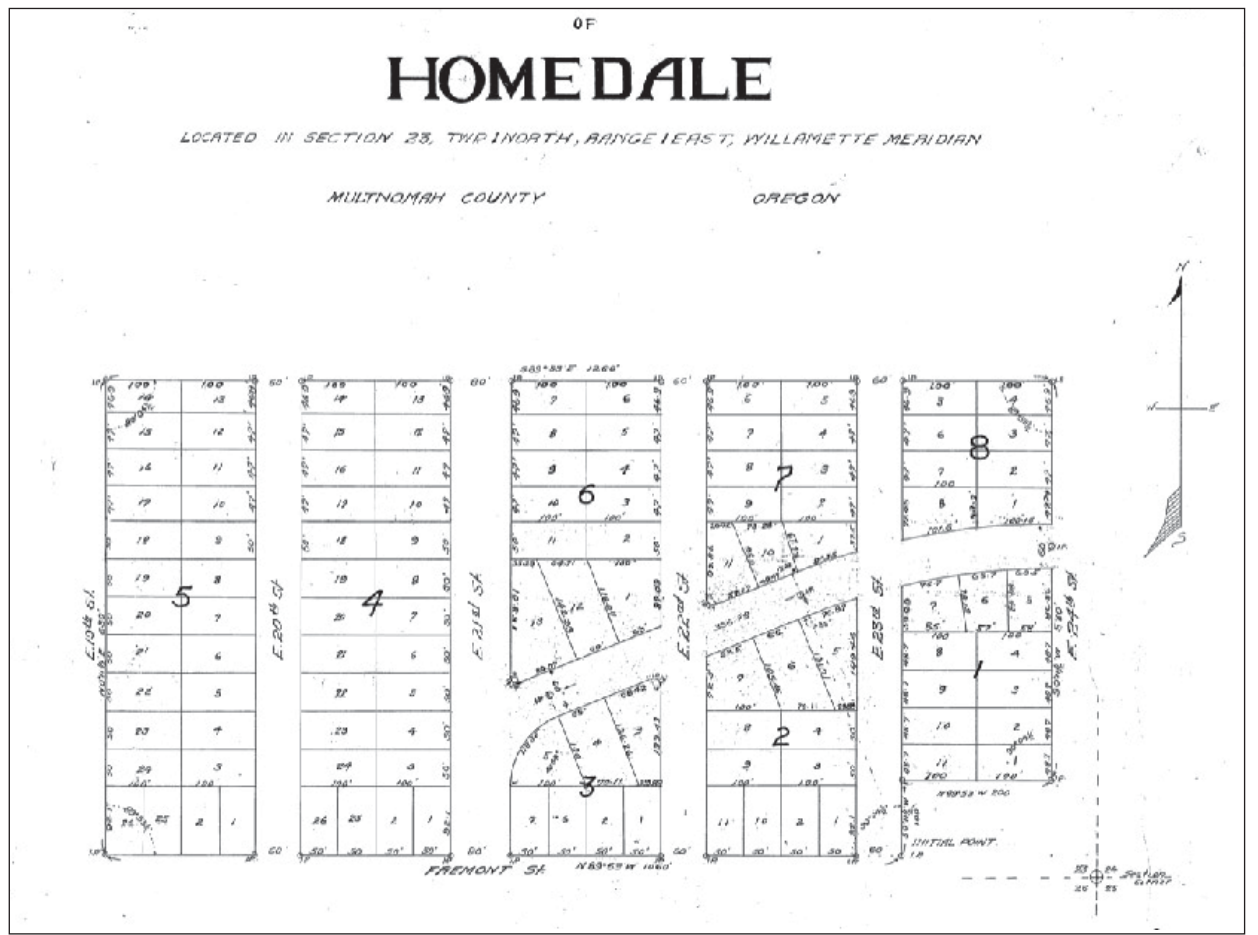
ADDITION TO BE SUBDIVIDED

Old Munley Property to Be Used for High-Class Residential Section.

Plans are being perfected for the subdivision and placing on the market as a high-class residential addition of the old Munley property located north of Fremont street and west of East Twenty-fourth street. The property is now owned by Mary N. Munley and Elizabeth M. Barrows. It has been used for a number of years as a dairy farm and orchard. This addition will be known as Homedale, and 20 acres will be subdivided. Street work, sewers, electric light and telephone systems underground will be installed, says J. A. Wickman, who is to handle this property. Paving of streets will be undertaken within a few months, with 24 and 34-foot driveways and wide parkings.

Among those who already have obtained lots and are making plans for homes are Mrs. Laura Austin, who built one of the first homes in Irvington at East Seventeenth and Brazee streets; Vance Ferguson, H. C. Harvey and R. R. Routledge.

FROM THE OREGONIAN, MARCH 12, 1922.



DETAIL OF THE HOMEDALE PLAT, FILED IN 1921.

By September of that year, the streets of Homedale had been carved into the south-facing slopes, and 200 home sites were available for sale. Interesting to note that prior to 1921, Regents Drive did not go through to NE 21st because the orchard and open fields were in the way. Regents came down the hill and tee'd into NE 24th before heading south.

Small and mid-size dairies were quite common in this part of Portland. One of our all-time favorite news stories from that time illustrates the consequence of this early day change of land use from agriculture to residential. Dixon Place is the next subdivision to the west of Homedale making up much of today's Sabin neighborhood, just a few blocks over, from Fremont to Shaver between NE 15th and NE 19th. What a great headline:

COWS MOO AT DAWNING

Slumber of Dixon Place Residents Disturbed and Lawns Ruined.

Early-morning slumbers in Dixon Place, just north of Irvington, are rudely disturbed each morning of the week by a chorus of deep contralto-voiced cows, that immediately following the concert delight in taking slow, measured walks on the lawns and newly-planted gardens of the residents of the district.

This was the complaint made to the city council by a delegation of 20 citizens who asked that steps be taken to prohibit the pasturing of cows in this district.

"These cows that are parked on our lawns are brought into the neighborhood from other districts," said E. W. Wheeler, one of the residents of the district. "I live in this bovine district and have to listen to a chorus of voices every morning, and the voices are not lyric sopranos, either."

Commissioner Mann, to whom the complaint was referred, said that he would confer with City Attorney Grant to outline some plan of bringing relief to the residents of the neighborhood.

FROM THE OREGONIAN, MAY 3, 1923.



Neighborhood historian Doug Decker prepares history studies of homes, leads history walks, and makes presentations to groups interested in learning about local history. To learn more about Alameda and surrounding neighborhoods, visit Doug's website at www.alamedahistory.org.

Do You have an Alameda History Question?

Are you interested in learning more about the history of our amazing neighborhood, your street, or the surrounding area? If so, AlamedaPDX and Doug Decker invite you to send your question to doug@alamedahistory.org, and Doug will respond in our next issue. Submissions must be 75 words or less.

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Mother + Child Connects, Educates, and Supports by David Spencer



JESSICA RENGO

For 52 years, new mothers have found help with the demands of parenting at an unobtrusive wood-frame house just across from Trader Joe's on NE 41st Avenue. Before, during, and after pregnancy, the Mother + Child Education Center (MCEC) offers client-appropriate resources to help expectant women, single fathers, and families.

The local nonprofit serves anyone who's caring for a child, with a special focus on those recovering from trauma. Some of the services offered include:

- Classes on newborn topics such as childbirth, responding to baby, safe sleep, understanding your baby's crying, calming a crying baby, and incorporating self-care into caring for your baby.
- Young Parent Fair—an annual event put on by MCEC and several community partners to show parents under age 25 what's available to them.
- Referrals from hospitals, doctors, and community partners for supplies, books, and other items new parents might require but may not know how or where to get them.
- Packets with books and materials to change the possibly overwhelmed new parent's trajectory through better information.

- Supplies such as baby soap, wipes, bags with handles, and formula.

Mother + Child takes a solutions-based approach to any difficulty, and serves both individuals and families in a judgement-free space. Some clients lack housing or are fleeing domestic violence. Others are coping with poverty, resolution of refugee or immigration status, or substance abuse.

Jessica Rengo was a single parent herself. She remembers two people, a counselor and a mentor, who she met at a point when life felt impossible. "I had to figure out how I was going to provide for my three children," she says. "Working with them, I was able to find my way back into school to complete a four-year degree." Now, as MCEC Program Director, she gives the same kind of help to others. She says, "To show up is an honor; I feel it in my bones."

Rengo has been with MCEC for 10 years, beginning as an intern. She and Executive Director Maura White are the two permanent staff members. They have two part-time staff members, four interns and three or four volunteers.

Most interns join MCEC to earn college credit. Others come to the program straight out of college. Interns learn skills that apply in other public service careers, such as quiet conversation, trauma awareness, empathy, follow-up calls, connecting parents to supplies and local resources, working with at-risk populations, and understanding other cultures.

Depending on the type of degree they are seeking, MCEC aligns the intern's activities to both support the requirements of their internship, and be of help the MCEC program. The partnership's goal is always to provide a win-win for both the intern and Mother & Child.



MOTHER + CHILD OCCUPIES AN OLDER HOME ON NE 41ST AVENUE.

MCEC depends on volunteers for much of its hands-on operation. Without the help of these individuals and groups, the organization could not serve the thousands of families that it does each year.

MCEC welcomes monetary support and donations of items that new parents need. The list of items that are almost always requested are the expected things, such as baby soap, wipes, bags with handles, and formula, and some things you might not expect, such as reusable bags, hand soap, dish soap, and detergent.

To donate or volunteer at MCEC, visit momchildpdx.org. If you are interested in interning for college credit, email an intern application with your cover letter and resume to mauraw@momchildpdx.org. Jessica Rengo can be reached at jessicar@momchildpdx.org or 503-249-5801.

HereTogether Shares Plans to Help Area Homeless

On Tuesday, April 11, neighbors gathered at Fremont United Methodist Church to attend an informational program titled "Proven Solutions to Homelessness" presented by Cole Merkel, Co-Director of HereTogether.

The program was part of the Fremont United Methodist Church Community Impact Series, and was co-sponsored by the Alameda Neighborhood Association.

In his presentation, Merkel explained that HereTogether is a local coalition of service providers, business leaders, elected officials, leaders from communities of color and faith, and community advocates who are working together to alleviate homelessness in the Portland area.

In 2020, the coalition helped develop and pass the region-wide Supportive Housing Services Measure, and in January of this year, they compiled a 2023 Roadmap. The Roadmap "lays out comprehensive recommendations to help our neighbors experiencing homelessness move indoors on a faster timeline, while providing the individualized services and compassionate care they need to succeed long-term in a safe, stable housing."

Merkel listed the Roadmap's four major goals, which include:

- 1) Expedite the path from living outdoors to indoors by prioritizing ready-to-go infrastructure.
- 2) Grow and retain the workforce needed to address our region's crisis at scale.
- 3) Improve efficiency through better coordination and streamlined processes.
- 4) Ramp up data collection, integration, and reporting.

Merkel noted that financial support to keep people from being evicted is the least costly way to reduce homelessness, and transitional housing such as the purchase of motels to get people off of the street is showing to be effective.

A shortage of affordable housing adds to the problem, and it's estimated that approximately 40,000 units will be required to meet current needs statewide. Merkel added that we also need better data on how people become homeless, and we need to more efficiently track those who are already being served.

To learn more about HereTogether and view the 2023 Roadmap, visit heretogetheregon.org. Portions of this article were used with permission from the May 2023 Fremont United Methodist Church newsletter.



COLE MERKEL, CO-DIRECTOR OF HERETOGETHER, OUTLINES STEPS TO ALLEVIATE HOMELESSNESS.

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2023 Neighborhood Association Summit Results by Teresa St. Martin

The invitation was open and enticing. “It is a time of change—and a time of opportunity—for our neighborhood associations to come together, unite, and help lead the change. Please join your friends and neighbors at the 2023 Neighborhood Association Summit to find common ground, a united voice, and a unified framework to address our public needs.”

The Summit was organized by Neighbors West-Northwest (NWNW), a community-based non-profit coalition serving Northwest and Southwest Portland. NWNW board member Vadym Mozyrsky hosted the March 9 session, which brought together over 100 representatives from 60 Portland neighborhood associations. The event was timely due to the upcoming changes in Portland’s City Council structure, which voters approved last November.

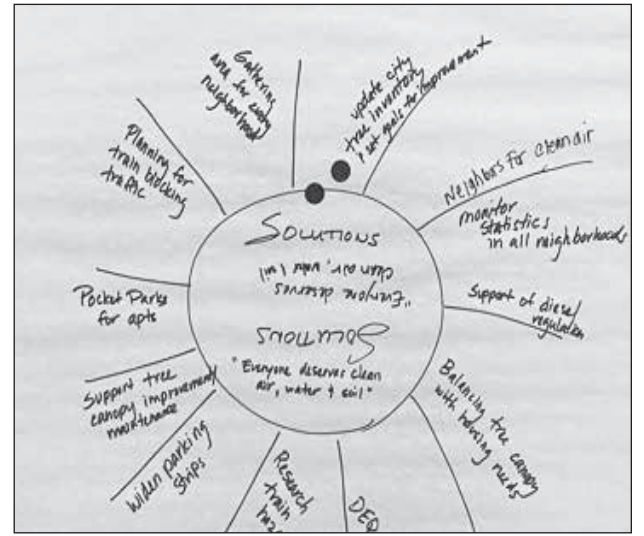
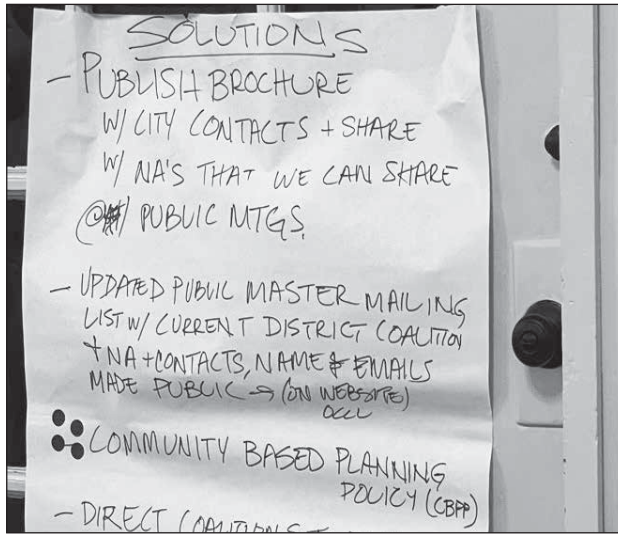
Re-districting efforts will change the makeup of City Council positions, as Portland switches from five citywide council seats to four districts, each represented by three City Council members. Neighborhoods from both sides of the river attended the Summit to share their thoughts, ideas and solutions. The meeting was held at the Laurelhurst Club in SE Portland, and proved to be an engaging and enthusiastic brainstorming session.

A survey asking questions about areas of concern was sent out to attendees prior to the session to help frame the process. The categories that surfaced were: Safety, Livability, Healthy Neighborhoods, and City Relations with the Neighborhoods

City Council member, Dan Ryan was present and opened the session. He also introduced T.J. McHugh, the Acting Director of The Office of Community & Civic Life for Portland. This is the organization that will be interacting with neighborhood associations, and replaces the previous Office of Neighborhood Involvement.

The agenda for the evening was dedicated to discussions, brainstorming, and prospective problem-solving, aimed at letting neighborhood representatives share ideas and inform each other about paths forward. Four topics from the survey questions were chosen for breakout discussion groups, and people were free to select their topics of interest, which were arranged by tables. The tables were staffed with facilitators and note-takers, who presented the discussion results to the entire group.

A spokesperson for each group presented the core issues and paths to solutions prioritized by their group. The results were then displayed so others could vote for the issues that most resonated with them.



NEIGHBORS AT THE SUMMIT SUGGESTED POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR VARIOUS ISSUES FACING PORTLANDERS.

Here’s a summary of the votes listed in order of priority:

Public Safety

1. Our City and County governments should improve their ability to address organized crime
2. Neighborhood associations should work together (through coalitions and in direct partnership)
3. Our city and county governments should improve drug addiction services
4. “Re-fund” the neighborhood associations
5. Tied for votes between providing incentives for building affordable housing and using data-driven solutions

Livability

1. Restore crime prevention
2. Tied between traffic enforcement/early engagement and incorporation of community input on transportation projects
3. Tied between connecting communities/building fellowship, and regular trash pick-up for homeless camps

Healthy Neighborhoods

1. Use precise resources for land use decisions/zoning changes
2. Monitor environmental statistics in all neighborhoods
3. In the next budget, add concise resources for communicating to city
4. Support tree canopy improvement and maintenance

Improving Government & Neighborhood Associations Partnership

1. Define and clarify relationship between City and neighborhood associations
2. Provide incentives for people to join neighborhood associations
3. Tied for votes among annual city-wide neighborhood association summit (like this), establishing city point of contact for neighborhood association leadership (neighborhood liaisons), and community-based planning policy
4. Address perceived lack of structured support of neighborhood associations from City
5. Change negative narrative regarding neighborhood associations (reputation/descriptors)
6. Follow Office of Neighborhood Development standards

The Neighborhood Summit participants will utilize these results to form committees and work to create action plans to accomplish improvements in these critical areas. The working committees will shepherd further development of the concepts, and work to gain buy-in from both City residents and officials.

All residents are encouraged to lend their voice and participate in the process of working on these priorities to shape action plans to present to the city. To learn more or to volunteer for a committee, contact NWNW at <https://www.portland.gov/neighborhoods/coalitions/neighbors-west-northwest>. For more information about the revisions underway at the City visit The Office of Community and Civic Life at <https://www.portland.gov/civic>

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Alameda History Presentation Draws a Crowd

Over 100 people gathered at Fremont United Methodist Church on March 1 for “An Evening of Local History” presented by neighborhood historian, Doug Decker, and sponsored by the Alameda Neighborhood Association.

In a slide show that included early maps, documents, photos, and newspaper accounts, plus memories collected from past residents, Decker explained how Portland’s east side evolved from forests and fields into the modern neighborhoods we know today.

Neighbors had an opportunity to socialize over refreshments both before and after the program, which Decker concluded by taking questions from the audience. The ANA is hoping to plan a similar event this fall.



DR. LEROY BARBER WELCOMED NEIGHBORS TO SOCIALIZE WITH WINES FROM HIS SHOP, GRINDS AND VINES.



OVER 100 NEIGHBORS ATTENDED THE PROGRAM, WHICH EXPLORED THE HISTORY OF ALAMEDA AND ADJACENT AREAS.

Get a Permit Before You Party!

Block parties are back! After a hiatus during the pandemic, it’s time to reconnect with your neighbors, have a potluck, and let the kids play safely in the street.

But before you close your street, remember that the City requires a permit. The good news is that they’re free, and simply require filling out a short, online application.

There are a number of rules to review. Parties must take place between 9 a.m. and dusk, inclusive of any setup and cleanup time, and must be free and open to the general public. The party cannot be on a block that is part of a bus or transit route, and can span up to two blocks, but intersections must remain open. Private events are not allowed.

To find the online application and a complete list of block party rules and requirements, visit <https://www.portland.gov/transportation/permitting/apply-block-party-permit>

The City encourages everyone to talk to their neighbors before applying for a permit. This helps with scheduling and ensures you’re not conflicting with any construction or other event that might bring extra vehicles to your block.

Once you’ve applied, you are required to notify all residents on the block(s) at least two days before your permit starts. Talking to neighbors before you apply counts as notification.

If your street closure event will be a larger affair (more than 100 people) or include multiple vendors (one is permitted per block party), it will require a Community Event permit.

Questions about block parties and permits? Contact Portland Bureau of Transportation at pboblockparty@portlandoregon.gov or call 503-823-4003.



Letter to the Editor

I may be a bit contrarian when it comes to potholes, due perhaps to an idyllic youth on one of Multnomah’s famous unpaved streets. Not much speeding there!

Speeding motor vehicles are a much bigger concern and much more deadly affair than potholes. Indeed, I wish we had a couple more good bumps on NE 27th Avenue, where parents regularly race to get their kids to Alameda school on time. The recently renewed Fremont St. is smooth...and fast! NE 33rd has some rough spots and is probably safer to navigate for those on foot.

Keep in mind we had a record number of pedestrians killed last year in Portland, and don’t forget, at some point in any journey, we are all pedestrians. Saving lives should be the focus of public resources. Potholes? Not so much...just slow down a bit, get off your phone, and they should be no problem.

Thanks for doing just that...slowing down.

Lenny Anderson, NE 27th Avenue

March 23, 2023

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Just How Harmful is a Fire? by Jonathan Cruz

Brendon Haggerty crouched beside a Solo Stove fire pit in his Portland backyard and stacked a few pieces of well-cured wood. This is a common scene for many households, hanging out with friends and family around a warm, bright fire. He crumpled sheets of newsprint and lit the flame.

Haggerty supervises the wood smoke curtailment program at the Multnomah County Health Department, and illustrated the impact of fires on air quality for his friends as they gathered in his backyard. Within moments, the air quality monitor he was holding began to beep. As smoke from the flames blew across his backyard, the air quality shot right through the hazardous level, maxing out the device's ability to measure air pollution.

Haggerty's demonstration proved what public health officials have long warned people about: cozy backyard fires might feel good on a cool night, but even fire pits marketed as "efficient" or "smokeless" are not harmless. It's a key reason why Multnomah County regulates indoor and outdoor fires year-round.

"Most of us probably don't imagine that one fire could be a problem, but to a vulnerable neighbor it really could be harmful," Haggerty said. "So even if that fire brings some people closer together, chances are someone lives nearby who is going to suffer the consequences."

The problem is that wood smoke contains fine particulate matter (PM 2.5), a dangerous pollutant for human health due to its prevalence. The particulates, smaller than the diameter of a human hair, can cause respiratory irritation, coughing, sneezing, and shortness of breath. Long-term exposure to PM 2.5 may lead to preterm births in pregnant mothers, decreased lung function, bronchitis, diabetes, and increased mortality from cancer and heart disease.

Why do we burn wood?

With rising costs, many assume that people burn wood to stay warm. As an affordable source of energy, especially during hard times, wood is readily available and for a good price. Yet consumer data shows that most

households in Multnomah County are not building fires to stay warm, but for enjoyment.

The Oregon Department of Environmental Quality estimates that in the Portland area, about 3,500 households in Multnomah County rely on wood as their primary source of heat, or just about two percent of the population. Comparisons of income data from the U.S. Census Bureau and burning behavior from the American Community Survey underscores that most of the burning occurs in higher-income households that have other sources of heat. In particular, higher-income households in the inner-East Portland area burn more wood than communities in East Portland, often as a recreational or discretionary activity rather than a primary source of heat.

Why does my fire matter?

Wood burning may seem like a personal choice, since it is often done in one's own home or backyard. But the health impacts of smoke affect everyone in the community. The Environmental Protection Agency estimates that emissions from residential wood smoke account for 11% of cancer risk from air toxics in Multnomah County. Residential wood smoke is a significant source of human-caused particulate matter in Multnomah County. Wood smoke can also reach far more people because of the sheer volume of emissions and the dense urban distribution of people across the County.

Talking to your neighbors is the best way we can help people understand the impact of this problem. It can be difficult to explain to people who burn wood that their actions are having negative consequences, but it's worth having a conversation.

Air quality has improved overall since the 1970s under the Clean Air Act, but the benefits are not shared by all residents. Air quality is among many environmental justice concerns in environmental justice (EJ) communities in Multnomah County. EJ communities are low-income households and communities of color, and they face environmental injustices due to historically discriminatory policies, building codes, and



BRENDON HAGGERTY ILLUSTRATES HOW BACKYARD WOOD SMOKE CAN BE HARMFUL TO NEIGHBORS.

development that concentrated these communities along high traffic corridors. Unintentionally, higher-income neighborhoods, whose air has gotten cleaner over time, may be contributing more wood smoke and worsening disparities in air quality across the County through recreational burning.

The County is working to improve air quality for everyone and reduce these disparities by regulating wood burning and educating residents about the problem. Exemptions remain for residents with low incomes, for those in situations where wood burning is the primary source of someone's heat, for ceremonial purposes, or during an emergency. Cooking food is also exempt.

The regulation is expected to improve conditions throughout Multnomah County and will benefit everyone affected by wood smoke. The good news about air pollution is that it is a solvable problem. To protect your health and others', check the daily status at multco.us/woodsmokestatus before you burn.

Jonathan Cruz is a Program Specialist at the Multnomah County Health Department. A version of this article ran previously in the March/April 2023 issue of the Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Association newsletter.



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An Unexpected Rescue Just in Time by Dan LaGrande

This is a tale of trying to get the City urban tree emergency service to cut off a dangerous branch on my birch tree. For those who don't know, the City of Portland's Urban Forestry department has a free emergency service to deal with a tree on your property that is a hazard to the public.

I called the City to request this service for the big birch tree in our front yard, which had a large branch hanging out over the sidewalk that had split about 20 feet above the edge of the curb, and was dangling straight down and swaying in the wind. I was worried it would snap off and could strike a child on a bike or a pedestrian walking along the curb. I called the tree emergency number daily for four days to request they cut off the branch, but no one came out.

I learned when I finally got a return call on the fourth day (a Friday) that a crew had been dispatched, but they determined the branch did not qualify for removal, and I needed to hire person to cut it off. I asked that a supervisor call me to explain specifically why it did not qualify for the service, and that same Friday afternoon, a supervisor did call me.

Nathan, from the City's Urban Forestry department, explained that the tree crew determined that the location of the broken limb above the edge of the curb did not meet the City criterion as a danger to the public. I suggested to Nathan that the rules need to be clearer for the public, and callers need to be given a more accurate time of when an on-site assessment will be scheduled. He was patient in acknowledging my frustration and thanked me for my feedback. He said would relay my suggestions to the Urban Forestry department.

So, later that same Friday afternoon I decided to remove the dangling branch myself, as I was still concerned it was a hazard. I backed my pickup truck under the branch, put a step ladder on the bed of my pickup, and climbed up. I could just barely reach the end of the branch, which was about 20 feet above the street. I began to tie a rope around

the end of the branch and was prepared to tie the rope to my pickup, then slowly pull forward in hopes the branch would tear loose and come down.

Before I had finished tying the rope to the branch, a fellow walked up the street to ask me if I needed help. He said he had a tall ladder and could reach high enough to cut off the branch at the joint where it had split and was hanging down, swaying a bit as an east wind was beginning to blow. He walked back to his truck and trailer and I saw his business name on the trailer: Juan Vasquez Lawn Service.

I agreed to let him try, and asked him if he was Juan Vasquez. He nodded yes, positioned his tall ladder under the broken branch, and then climbed up and began cutting off three-foot sections, starting at the bottom end. When he got to the joint where the branch had split, he cut off the last section and the broken branch was completely removed. There was no longer any danger of a child on a bike or a walker along the street being struck, and no longer a risk of it damaging a car parked underneath it.

When Juan finished and was taking down his ladder, I asked if I could pay him. He replied that it was not necessary, but I insisted. I asked him to wait a minute, and went into the house and returned with a \$100 dollar bill, which I gave him. Juan said that was far too much, but I asked him if he had children, and he replied that he did. I told him to take the money and get something special for his children.

I also told him his recognizing my admittedly rather risky efforts, and then promptly offering to do the job for me — without any expectation of compensation — was a wonderful example of kindness and generosity. Something his children would be proud of.

This incident was a reminder to me — and perhaps you have your own examples — of the increasingly frustrating world we live in today. I find that dealing with government at all levels, is more difficult than it used



THE AUTHOR'S BIRCH TREE, WHICH PROMPTED A CHANCE ENCOUNTER WITH A GENEROUS PASSER-BY.

to be. I think one reason is that government has taken on many more tasks that we used to do for ourselves. My tree experience is just one small example.

This is not to say government agencies should not expand their services and do more for their constituents. It is to say, however, that they need to be mindful of doing so in a way that is helpful, and that citizens see as prompt and efficient - not as obtuse, confusing or ineffective.

And we should be forever grateful for men like Juan Vasquez, and for the many others who do countless other types of manual work. They are the salt of the earth and we all benefit from their presence in our community.

Get Young Trees Ready for Summer

We are starting to move into longer, warmer, drier days in Portland. That may mean more fun for many of us, but we need to remember our new and recently planted trees, too!

Until the rains return in the fall, trees that have been in the ground for about three years or less will need water each week.

The City of Portland's Urban Forestry Division is here to help you help your trees. Check out our tree care tips, and feel free to reach out to us for more information at www.portland.gov/trees.

Watering

- Young trees need 15 to 20 gallons of water per week. A deep, slow soak directly on the root zone close to the trunk is the best way to ensure their young roots will be able to use the water.
- Using a 5-gallon bucket with holes is a good way to water young trees. Pour out water slowly, or use a bucket with two or three holes to release the water. Refill the bucket three or four times in a week.
- When using a hose, leave it running on low for about an hour, or however long it takes to soak down six to eight inches deep.
- Overwatering can be a problem for trees, too. The soil should feel dry or mostly dry about two to four inches down between waterings.

Mulching

- Put down a layer of mulch about three inches deep, three feet around the tree, and at least three inches away from the

trunk of the tree. Mulch will help a tree retain moisture longer and keep weeds down.

Make sure the mulch is not touching the tree trunk. You should be able to see the base of the tree above the soil.

Make a Calendar Reminder to Water

Planting trees is an important first step in growing our urban forest. Caring for these trees until their roots can get water on their own is just as important. So, why not make a calendar reminder to check your trees once a week? Happy watering!

This article is reprinted from the City of Portland Urban Forestry Division website at www.portland.gov/trees/get-involved/news/2023/5/11/care-young-trees-summer.



YOUNG TREES REQUIRE DEEP WATERING.

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Picture Windows: Time For A Chat? by Gail Jeidy

In response to encroaching technology in the late '90s, I penned "keeping current, staying human" as the tagline for our first business website. We've experienced an epoch of change since, raising kids amid cell phones and social media while embracing shopping, entertainment, learning and connecting online. I still avoid sit-down restaurants that direct you to order via phone, but that's another story. After 25 years, (our business now in the rearview mirror), "keeping current, staying human" remains my personal mantra.

It's especially wise to remember in the swirl of AI chatbots, the "advancement" that's freaking out writers, creatives, and teachers, along with the technology leaders who invented it.

I first played with ChatGPT a few months ago. I fed it characters in a predicament and asked it to write a screenplay. It spit out three pages in seconds, which included some decent ideas, and then it gave the ol' college try at answering my silly follow-ups meant to stump the chat.

With the writer's strike in the news, I've been thinking about whether this 'thing' has already grown smarter than us. Will our film fictions (thinking 'Her' and 'Ex Machina') come true?

I pondered all this as I yanked weeds from my dahlia beds and unearthed the first earthworm of the season. Certainly, ChatGPT doesn't know that feeling, does it?

I asked, "What do you feel when you find your first earthworm after a long winter?"

The Chat admitted it doesn't "have emotions or experience physical sensation," then spilled facts about earthworms' importance to our ecosystem, ending with "It can be exciting for gardeners and farmers who

depend on healthy soil for their crops."

I worked my way across the dirt to eradicate some deep-rooted weeds. There, nestled in a clump of unwanted grass, was the neighbor boys' foam arrow and a tiny plastic hippo. The toys made me chuckle, a true LOL. I was swept back to memories of my son as a child and then myself as a girl amid three brothers. Certainly, the Chat doesn't know this feeling!

I asked, "How does a person feel when they find a child's foam arrow and a plastic hippo in their flowerbed?"

The Chat responded that a person's feelings can vary, and then listed these emotions, with a supporting description for each: *Confusion. Amusement. Irritation. Concern. Nostalgia.*

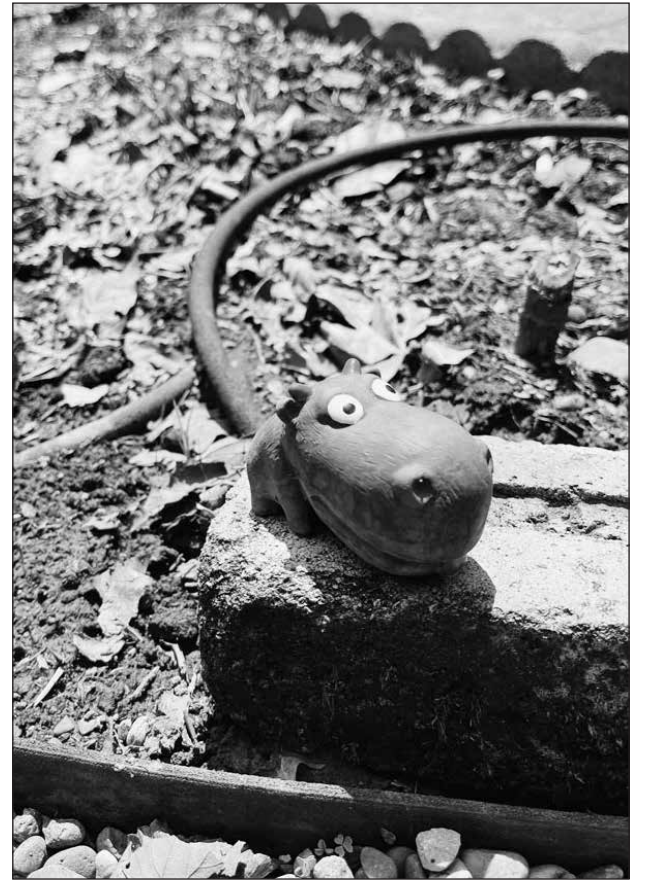
Ok then.

The Chat expounded on *amusement*: "The sight of a foam arrow and a plastic hippo in a flowerbed could be seen as humorous or whimsical. The person might find themselves chuckling at the unexpectedness of the discovery."

Are our questions to the Chat teaching it how to be more human? The thought gave me pause. Is ChatGPT the annoying know-it-all who always has the answer and is always right? Is he/she/it something to avoid?

The only thing I can do that the Chat can't is unpack my feelings and specific memories.

After finding the toys in my flowerbed, I thought back to my little boy and how he tossed his "He-Man" on the neighbor's roof, and how we never got it down. I thought further back to when I was a girl, and how my brothers always gave me the bad guy role in games like Cops and Robbers. They'd give chase, capture me and tie me to



A TINY, PLASTIC HIPPO HIDDEN IN THE GRASS CONJURES UP CHILDHOOD MEMORIES.

the clothesline. Once, my brother staked me to the ground and wet the twine around my wrists so it would grow taut under the hot summer sun. This was before the internet; he copied what he saw on *Bonanza*.

Scary.

AI chatbots, that is. I don't know where all this will go. Maybe we should all be quiet around the AI hivemind. Not let it in on the secrets of being human.

Maybe we should just chat among ourselves.

Wilshire Park Survey Results Are In by Mary Roney

Thanks to everyone who completed the Wilshire Park Improvement Survey! We had a great response, which shows the love we all have for our neighborhood park.

According to the results, the improvements people most want to see are:

- 1) Repairing the splash pad
- 2) Updating the playground equipment
- 3) Extending the off-leash dog park fence

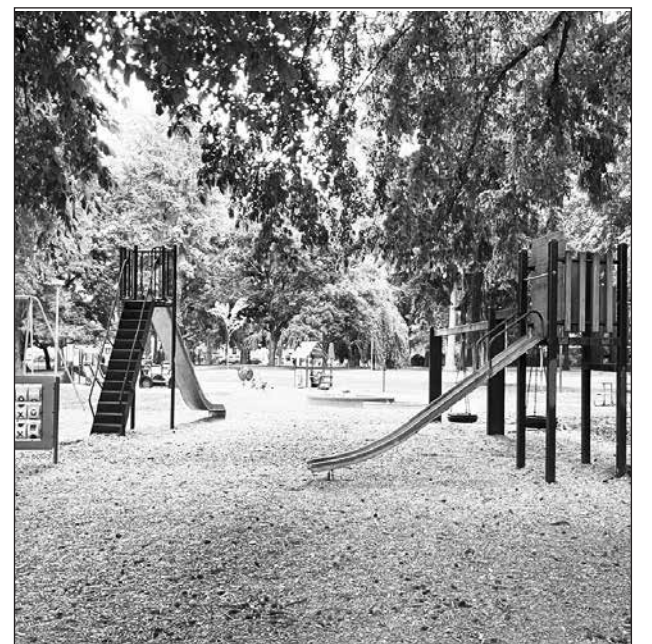
The survey committee will work with the Beaumont-Wilshire Neighborhood Association to decide which project to take on first. Stand by for more information!

In other park news, the Dog Park Water Fountain project is underway. The Portland Water Bureau has installed a meter so that the water can be on all year long. Next comes the Urban Forestry Survey, and then Portland Parks & Recreation can lay the pipes and bring water to the dog park. The hope is

that work on the project will be completed by this summer.

Mary Roney is the Volunteering and Fundraising Chair for the Friends of Wilshire Park.

Friends of Wilshire Park meets online every 2nd Wednesday. If you would like to join the monthly meetings, please send an email to friendsofwilshirepark@gmail.com or check out the website at www.friendsofwilshirepark.org.

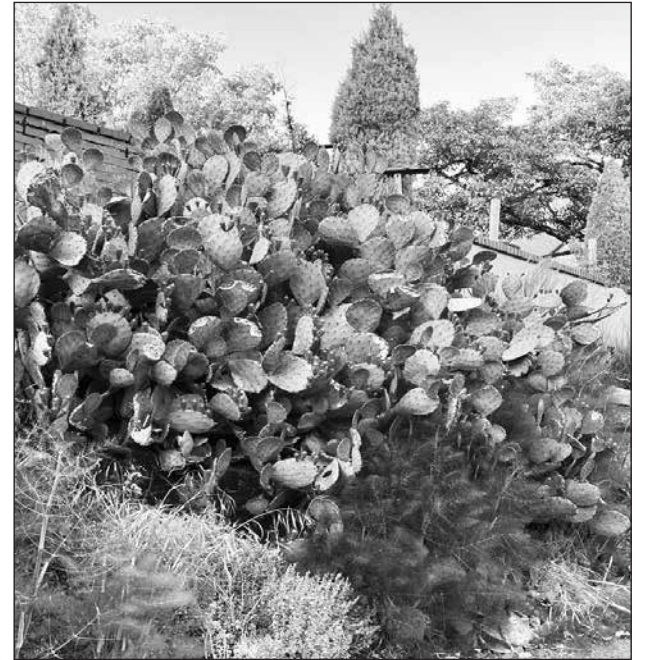
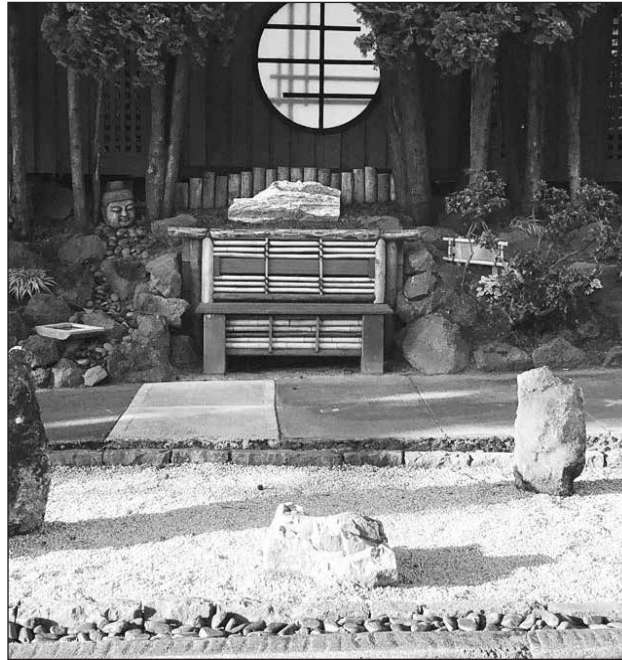


ACCORDING TO A RECENT SURVEY BY THE FRIENDS OF WILSHIRE PARK, NEIGHBORS WANT TO SEE IMPROVEMENTS AT THE OFF-LEASH DOG PARK, SPLASH PAD, AND PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT.



AROUND THE WORLD IN ALAMEDA

You can travel the world this summer simply by taking a walk through the neighborhood. On any given day you might come across olive trees and lavender reminiscent of Provence, an English cottage wall draped in honeysuckle, a Japanese Zen garden, a southwestern desert cactus, and of course, our own Portland roses. Bon voyage!



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