



The Other Side of the Fence

E-News from ONI ~ December 2003

Enhancing the quality of neighborhoods through community participation.

Administration

By Paul Stewart

ONI is one of three pilot bureaus testing a new City budgeting software tool called "BRASS". Paul Stewart is working with staff from PDOT and OMF (the other two pilot bureaus) in development, testing, training and documentation. Thomas Lannom is involved as one of the members of the project's steering committee. This endeavor has required much time and energy, but promises to provide the City with an excellent tool for budget development

Elders In Action

By Vicki Hersen

We hope that the various ONI staff may have occasion to refer seniors who may need assistance with problems in the areas of housing, health care, crime, and abuse. We have helped many seniors with getting free and low cost prescriptions as well as people who have been victims of fraud or scams.

Elders in Action Ombudsman... "Can help you find solutions"

Elders in Action has specially trained volunteers available to assist seniors (60+) and people 18 and older with a long term disability with:

- Handling threat of eviction
- Denial of services by health plan
- Identity Theft/Scams
- Other types of problems

Ombudsman can help improve the quality of life by:

- Providing problem solving assistance
- Advocating for your rights, safety, dignity & well being
- Providing information and link you with community services
- Providing emotional and peer support
- Providing physical support in making phone calls, filling out paper work, accompanying clients to appointments
- Educating and encouraging client in self-advocacy

These services are available free. Elders in Action volunteers are also available to speak to senior and community groups about "**Senior Scams and other Bad Stuff**", "**Home Safety and Security**" and "**Breast Health Awareness**" If you need an Ombudsman, or to arrange for a speaking engagement call our Ombudsman Services Line 503 823-5293.

Information & Referral (I&R)

By John Dutt

The last few months have been busy one's for the I&R unit. It appears our phone volume is overall increasing slightly. Over the summer months of June-October the calls received was up about 6%. John is still working to get caught up on all the stats for the past 8 months so look forward to a complete update in the year-end issue of the Other Side of the Fence.

Staffing was pretty stable during the summer months. Our temporary staff, Doyle Thibert and Aaron Lucchessi, has respectively done a good job filling in while 2 of our staff are out on medical leave and on a job rotation. Doyle has been filing in for Barbara while she has been out on leave since late May. Aaron has been filing in Carol's spot while she has been filing Amanda's spot while she has been doing a job rotation at Neighborhood Inspections. We got word in November that Walter Garcia had been selected for one of the Crime Prevention Specialist positions to start December 1st. We hate to lose Walter, but it is great to see him advance his career within the ONI bureau and he won't be far. We will be short-staffed much of the month of December with Walter's departure and working to fill his position. HR is surveying the list for Spanish speakers as we need a Spanish speaking OSS2 to fill this position. We should have a list by 12-8 and will interview that week any qualified candidates. Barbara is on leave until at least 12-31-03. Also near the first of the year we expect an OSS2 to join our group from the NIT group. So we will have 2, and potentially 3, new I&R staff starting over the next month or two. So lots of change and lots of training.

We are currently working on another round of database updates hoping to get most of the information back and entered by the end of the year. Traditionally Christmas and New Year's weeks have pretty slow phone volume so we like to use this opportunity to get database updates completed.

We continue our work with rewriting our database and progress has been very slow over the past several months due to the Website and Web-based calendar taking priority. This rewrite will make possible the sharing of this database outside the unit through the internet. We now expect this project to be completed by February.

The County has asked for an update to the County printed directory so we will be completing this near the end of the year as well, once the majority of our current database updates are completed.

We will be updating, printing and distributing the Pocket Directory in January.

ONI Web site

John was quite busy over the summer months moving ONI to the Portland Online site. We flipped the switch on October 1st and the majority of the content has been moved, created and updated. John has been working with key ONI program staff and the coalition offices to train them to manage their own content to keep the site up-to-date. This has been going well. We still need to work on moving our Access Database to Sequel so that we can then completely disconnect our old Website. Presently users are redirected to the old site to access the Neighborhood Directory until this issue is resolved. We are also still working on the creation of Neighborhood Pages on the site. These will be pages that will summarize all the information for each of the 95 neighborhoods. Presently a user has to go to different places on the site to find maps, demographics, meetings, news, calendar items, etc for a

particular neighborhood. John has also been working with BTS and Bureau Public Involvement staff to improve the new Citywide Web based calendar. ONI was the key player in pushing the Ordinance through that mandated all City Bureaus to use this great new tool for public involvement. The ordinance took affect October 1st and several training session and meetings have taken place since to help bureaus get on board. BTS has asked John and ONI to work with them to come up with recommendations for improving the tool. With this goal in mind John has held several meetings and has had much written communication with key Bureau staff to come up with these recommendations. This Web Calendar Workgroup will meet again in December and hopes to finalize these recommendations. The recommendations will include a prioritized list of calendar enhancements, a suggested posting policy and a suggested way to categorize events by geography and type.

Neighborhood Inspections Team (NIT)

By Dick Gassman

The Neighborhood Inspections Team is in the middle of several long-term projects. We are working with the Auditor's Office in their foreclosure process. Prior to the Auditor initiating the formal foreclosure, our staff is reviewing each lien for accuracy and notifying the owner of the property of their chance to submit information to us to try to settle the lien. We then review the owner's information, make a decision, and send that back to the Auditor who also reviews it. The foreclosure preview process is nearing the end of the first phase, which included commercial or vacant properties. About 200 liens were in this phase. We will soon start the second phase of rental properties, which also has about 200 liens.

Another long-term project involves the NIT staff reviewing all our older housing cases, trying to find a way to bring them to resolution. About 90% of the properties are brought into compliance within two years, but some others may remain open for years and accrue thousands of dollars in fees. We are analyzing a sampling of these older cases to see if we can find any patterns and then devise solutions to achieve compliance and move toward closing these older cases.

The NIT staff is also reviewing our current policies and procedures for housing violation case management, in order to be more pro active both at the beginning of the process and during the process to assist property owners to achieve compliance. Issues we are reviewing include when to open and close housing cases, establishing a Review Panel for cases still open after two years, implementing a new 30/90 day violation letter, developing a Fire, Life, Safety Matrix, developing a new "Warehouse" Waiver for vacant houses, and recheck properties more often.

North Portland Neighborhood Services Center Pilot Project:

The North Portland Neighborhood Services Center, located in the Historic Kenton Firehouse, is now scheduled to start on December 15. The mission is to provide more city and other agency services closer to North Portland citizens and to better coordinate those array of services to the community. Neighborhood Inspections will have one of our housing inspectors located in the Kenton Firehouse beginning on December 15.

We are also ready to go with our ordinance changes as soon as we have coordinated a date with BDS and the Council. The major news for us if the Council follows our recommendations will be the addition of citation authority. Staff is currently working on the

policies to implement this enforcement tool. We anticipate that in the beginning it will be used on those properties with chronic repeat offenders.

In Other NIT News...

By Crystle Cowen

Neighborhood Inspections staff Tiffani Penson and Kathy Saunders participate in the S.M.A.R.T. program, which helps children to develop their reading skills. They volunteer at the Woodlawn school. Each enjoy participating in the program, and encourage others to join them. The program pairs a volunteer with 1 or 2 children for an hour once a week. SMART has donated books that the children pick from. The time is spent helping them read or reading to them. The school needs about 25 additional volunteers. If your interested, contact Kate Pistone at (503) 402-1955.

In an effort to assist disadvantaged property owners, Neighborhood Inspections Supervisor Ed Marihart has put together a list of programs and services that will help in the abatement of violations. Many of them have criteria, such exclusive senior services or low income. Violations property owners are often sited for are; accumulations of trash and debris in the yard area, disabled vehicles, overgrown yard areas, vegetation over the sidewalk, and housing maintenance violations such as deteriorated roof, missing guardrails, deteriorated gutters and siding. When the City abates nuisance conditions additional penalties are added. Code Enforcement fines for Housing cases are assessed monthly. If assistance can be obtained for a property owner this can be avoided. Some of the services inspectors work with to try and avoid city abatement of property are: NE Project linkage, Christmas in April, Community Court work crews, REACH, PDC, and others.

Neighborhood Resource Center (NRC)

By Brian Hoop

Neighborhood Summit

Over 325 people participated in the annual Neighborhood Summit on Saturday, November 15, 2003. The event succeeded in bringing neighborhood and community leaders together from across the city to network and discuss issues related to Portland's neighborhood system and public involvement processes. The event provided lively group discussions to identify priority issues and action ideas that neighborhood coalitions and associations should attempt to work on together. While the event did not result in a clear list of priority actions there was much progress towards sorting out a broad array of concerns to address. ONI will work with the leadership of the neighborhood coalitions to identify next steps. Overall, it was an important opportunity for neighborhood leaders to step out of their roles as advocates for their immediate neighborhood issues and collectively consider how to address citywide issues impacting Portland's neighborhood system.

Public Involvement Task Force

This task force of 30+ citizens and staff is moving towards completion of their DRAFT recommendations for improving public involvement efforts by the City of Portland. Six workgroups have been meeting since August to develop specific recommendations relating to the following topics: public involvement principles, process design and implementation (or how do City bureaus develop public involvement plans), accountability and transparency, diversity and accessibility, communications, and education and training. Each group presented their proposals before the full task force at the October and November meetings. A key proposal is to require bureaus to develop written public involvement plans based on common guidelines for major policy, capital improvement and

planning projects. A final report will be considered and voted on at the December 17 meeting, 5 PM, City Hall, Lovejoy Room. The recommendations will then be open for public review and feedback in January thru mid February. They will be presented to Council sometime in the spring of 2004.

ONI Guidelines Committee - GREAT

This task force of neighborhood leaders has completed proposed updates to the ONI Guidelines in the past several months. The Guidelines outline the roles and responsibilities of the neighborhood system - neighborhood associations, coalitions, and ONI. Recent completed updates include a new outline for open meetings and public record requirements for the neighborhood association system. Since the early 80's City Council has required neighborhood associations to comply with State Open Meetings law, despite court rulings that the neighborhood system falls outside of the jurisdiction and intended purpose of the state rules. The hope is the proposed language would be a simpler yet meaningful outline that is more accessible for a volunteer driven neighborhood system. In addition we have updated the ONI section that includes new expectations for assisting with diversity and inclusion efforts with neighborhood association participation. The group is now considering significant changes to the roles of business associations. Commissioner Francesconi's office and the PDC have also been taking the initiative to consider increased visibility and purpose for business associations. Lastly, the group has begun considering changes to the Grievance process that will provide a clear step-by-step outline of how to proceed with grievances related to the ONI guidelines.

ADA

By Jan Campbell

Advocates in the community have been working for a long time to get the Streetcar in compliance to The American with Disabilities Act (ADA). On November 5th, City Council approved Measure 1304 to amend the contract to retrofit the bridge plates. The slope of the ramp is now in ADA compliance. It should be useable and safe to anyone who wants to use it. Thanks to Commissioner Francesconi's office and the advocates who made this happen.

Neighborhood Service Center (NSC)

By Eric King

The Neighborhood Service Center (NSC) was recently formed to group existing ONI programs that provide direct neighborhood services. The programs and staff involved in implementing them include (click on the link for more information about these programs):

- [Liquor License Notification](#)- Kimberly Mark-Villela;
- [Graffiti Abatement](#)- Marcia Dennis; and
- [Community Residential Siting](#)- Eric King and Marcia Dennis.
- Contract management for [Neighborhood Mediation](#)- services provided by Resolutions Northwest- Eric King, contract manager

We are all located in the 1900 Building in Rm. 40- stop by and visit us!

Graffiti Abatement

The Graffiti Abatement Program is pleased to announce the new Portland Online [reporting form](#) for graffiti check it out! This reporting form is the first step in building a regional graffiti database that will allow us to report, track, and query tags more efficiently. Look for more information about our efforts in the next few months.

Also, thanks to Stacey Stack (working with the Sustainable Procurement Task Force) a new Graffiti Prevention brochure has been printed and is available to disperse to neighborhood associations, coalitions, business associations and anyone who is interested in the latest information in the City on graffiti abatement. The brochure is also available through our website at: <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=30638> Contact Marcia Dennis, Graffiti Abatement Coordinator (503-823-5860) or mdennis@ci.portland.or.us, to request brochures.

Community Residential Siting

The Community Residential Siting Program is beginning to develop an educational video in partnership with Portland Cable Access. We are in the process of forming a work group with members from the Siting Advisory Committee to help us with this project.

We have recently completed a yearlong process with Buckman community members, the St. Francis Parish, Dining Hall Council Clients, and nearby businesses to address livability issues. The group has developed rules and regulations for the St. Francis Park, a procedural guideline for tracking and reporting incidents, and has identified and prioritized potential solutions to various livability issues to be part of an ongoing communications process. A big congratulations to this diverse group of community members who committed countless hours of volunteer time over this past year!

Liquor License Notification

The Liquor License Program, Crime Prevention and Neighborhood Services are currently working on the [Time, Place, Manner](#) (TPM) Ordinance that will assist in addressing/resolving issues with neighbors and licensed liquor establishments. If you would like more information on this subject please call our office at 503-823-3092.

In the near future, we will be developing a link on the ONI Web Page that will allow neighbors to view a current list of liquor license applications. The information will contain the Name of Business, Location, Type of Application, the Neighborhood associated with this application and the date comments are due into our office. This will allow us to reach neighbors who do not, by state code, reside in the specified notification area. We are very excited about this new tool and encourage everyone to watch for it in January 2004. *(Remember to stay in contact with your neighborhood association as they are notified of all liquor license applications received by the City of Portland)*

Training Opportunities are available to Neighborhood Associations and Neighborhood Coalitions upon request. The Liquor License Notification Program is gearing up for the new year, with changes occurring at OLCC as well as ONI, and outreach is essential. We are available to attend Neighborhood Association/Neighborhood Coalition Meetings upon request, with a minimum of 2 weeks advanced notice for scheduling. For more detailed information please call our office at 503-823-3092.

Another project we are working on is updating and improving our notification letters. If you have ever received our letter you will note that it could be very easily overlooked as junk mail. We would like to revise this letter to make it a lot more noticeable to those who receive it. If you have any suggestions or idea's please contact Kimberly Mark-Villela at kmarkvillea@ci.portland.or.us or by mail to Liquor Licensing Program, 1900 SW 4th Avenue #40, Portland, OR 97201. We are looking forward to your comments and ideas.

Resolutions Northwest (RNW)

By Claire Bell

Resolutions Northwest (RNW) provides a variety of mediation and training services. RNW's comprehensive neighborhood mediation services, funded by the City of Portland, help neighbors and families in Portland resolve conflicts in a positive and personal way, outside of the legal system. We offer no/low cost, confidential, and effective solutions to many common neighborhood disputes:

- **Neighborhood:** noise, pets, property maintenance, nuisances, boundary disputes
- **Interpersonal:** harassment, threats, minor assaults
- **Landlord/Tenant:** repairs, damages, public safety, evictions
- **Organizations:** consultation and facilitation for neighborhood groups, churches, other public or private agencies

Resolutions Northwest also offers family/teen mediation services at no/low cost. Adult and teen mediators help families sort through problems, find the most important issues, and create a set of agreements everyone can accept. This program is particularly successful for families wanting a more peaceful home, looking for a short-term alternative to counseling, or simply wanting to enhance their communication and problem-solving skills.

Other available services:

- Workplace mediation
- Victim/offender mediation
- Conflict resolution and communication skill building workshops
- Basic mediation training

If you're interested in services or would like to refer someone to the program, please call (503) 823-3152. Resolutions Northwest is located at the NE King Facility as well as the Juvenile Justice Center.

Coalition News

Southwest Neighborhoods Inc. (SWNI)

By Sylvia Bogert

Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. is hosting a Holiday Bike Drive on Saturday, December 6th, from 11 to 3 pm in the Key Bank Parking Lot, 3515 SW Troy. Unused, lonely bicycles lie dormant in basements and garages all over Portland, but SWNI is going to help match them up with new owners. This is a community effort. SWNI is partnering with the Community Cycling Center to provide 1,000 bikes for children from low-income families through their Holiday Bike Drive. Donations are tax-deductible and receipts will be provided. You may bring all conditions and styles of bikes as well as bicycle parts. For more information check the website at <http://www.communitycyclingcenter.org/>.

Celebrate the holidays with your neighbors: SWNI is helping our member business associations to sponsor a number of holiday events in Southwest Portland. A World of Traditions will come to life in Multnomah Village December 5 - 7. Have breakfast with Santa at the Lucky Labrador Public House from 8 to 11 am on Saturday. Take a horse-drawn carriage ride from 10 to 2 on Saturday or visit the Multnomah Arts Center Annual Holiday Arts and Crafts Sale. The whole family will enjoy A "Kristmus Karel", a parody of

Dickens' A Christmas Carol presented by the Multnomah Arts Center and the American heritage Theatre. On Sunday, December 7th don't miss the Hillsdale Holiday Farmers' Market, local schools' vocal and instrumental groups and of course Santa.

SWNI Litter Patrol plans cleanup of Multnomah Blvd: We are planning another SWNI/SOLV litter pickup of Multnomah Blvd. on Friday, December 12, 10 am to noon. We will do the stretch of Multnomah Blvd from the village to Garden Home Road.

SWNI and the Far Southwest Neighborhood Association invite you to a special holiday gathering to celebrate our community and say farewell to Alice Jacobson, the Executive Dean of Portland Community College, Sylvania Campus on December 16th at 6 pm at PCC Sylvania Campus, 12000 SW 49th Ave., Cedar Room. Enjoy refreshments, meet your neighbors and join them in a special toast and tribute to Alice Jacobson who has worked with our neighborhood association for years to build community, improve the livability of the area and to provide educational opportunity to thousands.



Happy Holidays!