



IN & ABOUT

SERVING NORTH PORTLAND AND THE COLUMBIA/WILLAMETTE CROSSROADS SINCE 2001 – VOLUME 5 ISSUE 1 JANUARY 2005



Sarah Moskowitz and Shannon Guthirt set it off at WAX
PHOTO BY: MATT WONG

New Home for Hip-Hop Opens on Interstate

By DJ Cobretti and Cornelius Swart

Club Wax, an all ages hip-hop dance club and cafe/lounge officially opened its doors in November at 5101 N Interstate. It's the yellow building across from the MAX line. Wax is all readying beginning to draw some of Portland's hottest DJ's.

North Portland native and Jefferson High School graduate Sarah Moskowitz moved to San Diego after graduation. There she met her current business partner Shannon Guthirt. The two hit it off and quickly started promoting hip-hop events around town. But Moskowitz's dream was to come back to North Portland some day and start her own club.

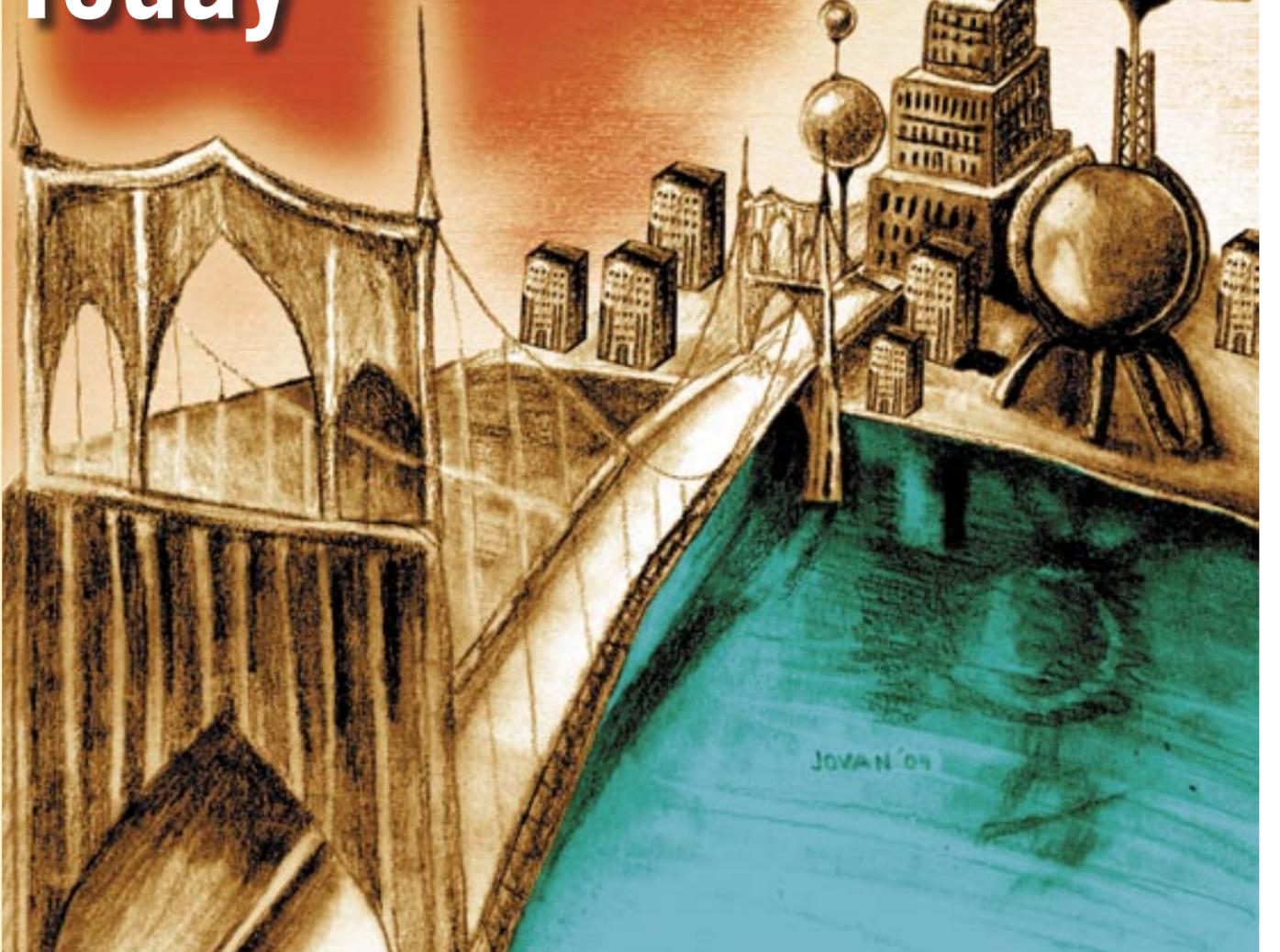
The day came last year when Moskowitz and Guthirt packed bags and moved north—north side, that is. "This spot was perfect," Guthirt said of the space they landed on N. Interstate. "There's no place in Portland for the Hip Hop scene to go. Kids can't do their graffiti without getting harassed. There's no clubs other than Quest and Meow-Meow. So now we're here catering to the hip -hop community?"

Wax offers a range of scenes. The spot is open to 16 year olds and up, with certain age restrictions on certain nights.

Wednesday nights feature break dancing. Thursday is Reggae and Dance Hall with DJ Unity. Friday is spoken word open-mike. Saturday is hip-hop with DJ Puma, and DJ Shilo and Sunday is an all elements free-style night featuring open-mike for MCs, guest DJs, graffiti, and break-dancing battles.

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Building the Future Today



What does the future hold for North Portland and the Columbia/Willamette Crossroads? The communities that sit between and along the mighty rivers of this region face a year of dramatic change: a new city government, the seeds of economic revitalization, the specter of gentrification, and the hope and promise that the New Year always brings.

In & About's Future issue looks at what's ahead:

Feature Story

The Vision Thing
First in a two-part series.
North Portland residents have spent years

in achingly boring meetings drafting community and land-use plans that are designed to shape the economic future of our neighborhoods. What can they tell us about issues that the community will face next year such as urban renewal, light rail, and conflicts between businesses and residents? In our first installment, the In & About talks with City Councilor Elect-Sam Adams to get his view.

Transportation and Development News

What will the future look like on Interstate Avenue, along the Willamette River in Linnton, high above the Columbia, or strolling down Mississippi Avenue? The future is being built today.

The Viper's Nest

Not all new neighbors are welcome. When Fat Cobra Adult Video moved onto Interstate Avenue across from Ockley Green Middle School, city officials claimed they had more complaints about it than any other such business in the city's history. The accusations fly from both sides of the building's smoked-glass windows. Will neighbors oust this locally-owned business? Will Fat Cobra be charmed into "just getting along"?

What does the future hold? Gaze into our crystal ball and see what's in store for you...the reader!

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Publishers Page

New Year, New Look, New Vision

We continue to make changes here at the In & About: Now coming to you in Technicolor. This issue is small, due to the holidays, but fancy.

We hope we appeal to the unique blend of diversity that calls the region home. Whether you are young and coming up in the Northside, or one of our senior citizens; whether you are black, white, Latino, Asian, an immigrant, or born and raised in the "City of St. Johns," we hope you'll find something to your liking in these pages.

More importantly, we see this paper serving a unique regional interest in the Portland/Vancouver area. Residents have often wondered what it would be like if St. Johns had realized its dream of becoming a center of commerce and industry in the Northwest. We see the paper as serving this unrealized city, as well as the entire area that lies in the crosshairs between the Columbia and Willamette Rivers. It is a region that stretches from Sauvie Island all the way down the Willamette to the footings of the Fremont Bridge, up the ragged edge of Williams Avenue, to the shores of Hayden Island.

In the City of Portland, so neatly divvied into Northeast, Southeast, Northwest and Southwest, this region west of Northeast Portland gets the odd designation "North," as if it had been sandwiched into the municipal lexicon as an afterthought.

In the countryside, the communities of Linnton and Sauvie Island sit on the fringes of the region, with a Northwest tacked in front of their street names. But few things could be farther from Starbucks, the new age bookstores, and professional classes associated with NW 23rd St. and the Pearl District. Indeed, the odd label "North" is common to both sides of the St. Johns Bridge.

Historically, this region has sat over the left shoulder of progress as commerce and development increasingly shifted from the East/West Columbia River corridor of the early 20th century, to the North/South I-5 corridor of its later half. For this reason, our uniquely overlooked wedge of territory has, by the nature of its obscurity, become home to those who have been pushed out of the flow of mainstream.

In many ways this obscurity has been a blessing. North Portland has become home to generations of Oregon's minorities, artists, and restless thinkers. At its edges, we have only seen modest suburban development pressure. To this day, lush forests and farmlands still abound, minutes from downtown Portland, just on the other side of the St. Johns Bridge. We are still an area tied to a maritime economy and lifestyles left over from a century ago, with people working in shipping facilities and living in villages of floating homes.

For these reasons, we feel the whole region shares a common economic and cultural heritage. For the purposes of this

publication we'll be referring to this area as the Columbia/Willamette Crossroads. What's in a name? Nothing really. But it gives us a way to refer to our market without having to list St. Johns, Greater North Portland, Linnton, Sauvie Island, Multnomah Channel, etc. The Columbia/Willamette Crossroads: the area that might have constituted the City of St. Johns and its environs, in our alternate vision of the future.

We at the In & About are confident that this new century will turn our long neglected micro-region's handicaps into strengths. We see great days ahead. As they say in Alaska, "North to the Future."

See you in the neighborhood,
Cornelius Swart
Publisher



Digital Community

Got a story about North Portland, the Peninsula, Sauvie Island, Linnton? Let us know!

We want to hear from you! Come on down and tell us what stories we should be covering next month.

We can't guarantee anything but it's an opportunity to have your voice heard in your community.

Come on down to Café Xenós, 8527 N. Lombard, at 7pm on January 5th. Call In & About Community News for details, 503-287-3880.



Development & Transportation

By Will Crow

East Slope and Sauvie Island:

Linnton, Forest Park, Sauvie Island, and Points West

Linnton

The developer of Portland's Pearl District and South Waterfront, Homer Williams, has signed a purchase agreement that may lead to mixed-use development of 50 acres of Linnton's waterfront.

Pat Wagner, Linnton Neighborhood Association chair, said the intent-to-purchase agreement between Homer Williams of HGW Inc. and owners of Linnton Plywood was the result of two years of negotiations. According to Wagner, the initial plans include a mix of condominiums and shops, and closely parallel longstanding plans within Linnton for the waterfront.

"This is a dream come true," she added.

Jim Stahly, General Manager of Linnton Plywood, said that he could not discuss the matter due to a contractual agreement. Williams did not return phone calls.

Wagner said that the purchase agreement

is contingent upon the agreement of two other nearby businesses to sell to Williams.

First contact with Williams occurred shortly after the Linnton Plywood mill closed, when part of its property was leased by Glacier Northwest mining company. The prospect of constant truck traffic and sprays of sand and gravel concerned neighbors, Wagner recalled.

"I had read about Homer Williams in the newspaper," Wagner said. The article said Williams liked riverfront developments, so one day, while visiting the Pearl District, she stopped by his office and told Williams about the Linnton waterfront.

"The next thing I know, he calls me on my cell phone," Wagner said.

Sauvie Island

The \$34 million Sauvie Island Bridge replacement project is in its final design stages.

Mike Pullen, public affairs coordinator for Multnomah County, said the county is also acquiring rights of way for the new bridge and working on environmental permits. Pullen said that depending on approval by the Oregon Department of Transportation, construction is expected to begin in January of 2006, with the new bridge opening late in 2008. Removal of the old bridge will occur throughout 2008-2009.

The new bridge was designed by David Evans & Associates and H2L2 architect James Fox, with additional input from a citizen advisory committee. It will feature wider traffic lanes, sidewalks and shoulders,



■ Living on the right side of the tracks? Will the Linnton Plywood factory be the next Pearl District?