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The Portland Observer

Volume LVI • Number 15



'City
of
Roses'

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Committed to Cultural Diversity

Zenger Farm Joins Community Effort to Fight Hunger Local Partners Work to Expand Food Access

Last week, Zenger Farm, representatives from the Multnomah County Health Department, Oregon Rep. Lamar Wise (D-48), and DoorDash kicked off Hunger Action Month by marking 150 million meals delivered nationally via Project DASH, DoorDash's initiative to power charitable deliveries from food banks, healthcare institutions, and other community organizations. This milestone reflects more than 9 million deliveries powered by over 300 partner organizations — among them Zenger Farm, where produce is prescribed by clinicians and delivered to patients' homes.

Officials marked the occasion by providing a ceremonial Project DASH delivery to a DoorDash Dasher.

DoorDash also announced its first grants dedicated to Food as Medicine: \$150,000 available to existing Project DASH partners in grants of up to \$15,000, supporting partners' 2027 initiatives. Applications are open through Nov. 30, 2026.

Zenger Farm runs the largest Produce Prescription program in Oregon, Commu-



Juliet Bates, Multnomah County Health Department; Sylvia Ness, Multnomah County Health Department; Laura Perdue, Oregon Health Authority; Kelly Randolph, Friends of Zenger Farm; Representative Lamar Wise, Oregon HD-48; Kierra Phifer, DoorDash; Christina Magana, local Dasher

nity Supported Agriculture Partnerships for Health (CSAP4H), working with Multnomah County Federally Qualified Health Centers and other local farms to provide nutritious CSA boxes to patients as a form of preventive care. These boxes consist of produce and resources to reinforce a

healthy lifestyle, such as recipes, a seasonal produce guide, and weekly newsletters. Zenger Farm works with insurers to cover CSA much as they would cover prescription medicine, directing health-care spending into local agriculture and removing the cost from the patient.

Project DASH powers the delivery leg of that program. Once Zenger Farm and its partner farms harvest and pack each box, Dashers carry it from the farm to the

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Meet Zenna, Miss Black Oregon Candidate



Zenna Nwokoma, Miss Black Oregon Candidate

Her Platform Centers on Health, Wellness and Creativity

Zenna Nwokoma is honored to represent Clackamas County as she competes for the title of Miss Black Oregon. Through her journey, Nwokoma hopes to highlight her platform, personal experiences and commitment to making a positive impact within Oregon's Black community.

As a candidate for Miss Black Oregon, Nwokoma is focused on using her voice and platform to inspire others, celebrate the Black community and contribute to positive change across the state. Her participation in the competition provides an opportunity to share her story while connecting with and uplifting communities throughout Oregon.

Zenna's platform centers on health, wellness and creativity, with an emphasis on making healthy living approachable, sustainable and empowering. Through her platform, she hopes to encourage individuals to make simple, realistic changes to their everyday lifestyles, including developing healthier eating habits, prioritizing self-care, staying active and building confidence.

For Zenna, wellness is about creating lasting habits that support both physical and mental well-being while encouraging individuals to feel confident in their own journey.

A particularly important part of Zenna's mission is empowering young girls and young men within the Black community, ages 12–40, to recognize their value, embrace their individuality and develop confidence in who they are. She believes wellness extends beyond physical health; it also includes mental well-being, creativity,

self-expression, confidence and having a strong sense of purpose.

Through her platform, Zenna hopes to create encouragement and opportunities for young people to prioritize their well-being, discover their strengths and feel empowered to become the best versions of themselves.

With experience in healthcare, Zenna has seen firsthand the importance of education, prevention and taking care of ourselves before health concerns become more serious. She hopes to use her voice and platform to show that healthy choices do not have to be complicated or restrictive. Small, consistent changes, she believes, can lead to meaningful improvements in overall health and quality of life.

Zenna's participation in Miss Black Oregon is about more than competition. It is an opportunity for her to connect with the community, collaborate with local organizations and creatives,

Beat the Traffic During 5-Week I-5 Closure

TriMet's MAX can Help Riders Avoid Road Congestion

No one enjoys scrunching over the steering wheel in bumper-to-bumper gridlock, wondering how much longer they're going to have to pump the brake more than the gas. It's times like these, as traffic grinds to a standstill, when TriMet helps you beat the backup and keeps you moving.

Starting Friday, Sept. 11, as the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) begins its weeks-long closure of southbound Interstate 5 as part of the I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project, TriMet's MAX trains will be the best option to avoid the closure and the expected traffic nightmare. MAX trains run on their own restricted right-of-way and don't share the track with other vehicles. There are places where autos cross the tracks, but for the most part, trains can keep moving even when nearby roads are clogged with traffic.

The MAX Yellow Line will likely be the best choice for those traveling between the Vancouver area and Downtown Portland. It runs parallel to I-5, with Park & Rides at Expo Center and Delta Park/Vanport to make it easy to connect with trains. Yellow Line trains arrive every 15 minutes or sooner throughout most of the day.



Photo courtesy of TriMet

A typical trip on the MAX Yellow Line from the Expo Center to Downtown Portland takes about 30 minutes.

During ODOT's closure, southbound I-5 traffic will be redirected onto Interstate 405. Heavier-than-usual traffic is expected on the portions of I-5 that remain open, as well as on Interstate 205, I-405 and surface streets, especially those that run parallel to I-5.

MAX Blue and Red lines are also options for those traveling into Downtown Portland from Vancouver or elsewhere. Red Line trains are an alternative to driving on I-205, as they depart the Park Rose/Sumner Transit Center every 15 minutes. Meanwhile, Blue and Red Line trains

move riders past I-84 traffic, with trains departing the Gateway/NE 99th Ave Transit Center every seven to eight minutes.

MAX Orange Line is an option for those who normally start their drive from south of Portland and travel to Vancouver. Two Park & Rides are located at the southern end of the Orange Line, at the SE Park Ave. and SE Tacoma/Johnson Creek MAX stations. Trains arrive every 15 minutes and become MAX Yellow Line trains as they travel north toward Delta Park/Vanport, where riders can transfer to C-TRAN buses to Vancouver.

Because TriMet buses rely on surface roads, they may experience delays as traffic is redirected from I-5. In North and

Northeast Portland, Lines 4-Fessenden, 6-Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., 8-Jackson Park/NE 15th, 17-Holgate/Broadway, 35-Macadam/Greeley, 44-Capitol Hwy./Mock's Crest and 77-Broadway/Halsey could be particularly vulnerable to congestion. Other routes near I-84 and I-205 may also experience delays. Riders are encouraged to consider taking MAX when possible, as trains operate largely on their own right-of-way and can avoid much of the congestion on area roads.

TriMet's Park & Rides can help riders avoid traffic during the southbound I-5 closure beginning Sept. 11. Options include the Expo Center with 200 spaces, Delta Park/Vanport with 304 spaces, Parkrose/Sumner with 193 spaces, Gateway/NE 99th Ave. with 690 spaces, SE Park Ave. with roughly 700 spaces and SE Tacoma/Johnson Creek with 318 spaces. Riders can connect to MAX Yellow, Blue, Red or Orange lines, depending on the location. TriMet says parking is usually available at these Park & Rides.

The traffic impacts of the weeks-long closure of I-5 south won't necessarily start or stop with the freeway. More vehicles on nearby streets may mean slower trips for buses and drivers alike.

TriMet recommends that you give yourself extra time, check conditions before leaving and consider whether MAX can take some of the uncertainty out of your commute.

Oregon Parks Staff to Move into ODOT Headquarters

Move Will Make Use of Vacant State Office Space

This fall, ODOT will begin leasing space on the first floor of its headquarters on Salem's Capitol Mall to the Oregon Parks and Recreation Department. The move is the latest effort ODOT has taken to consolidate office space. The efforts are saving roughly \$6 million a budget cycle.

"This move is a win for both agencies," ODOT Interim Director Chris Warner said. "We're looking everywhere we can to be more efficient and cut costs as transportation agencies across Oregon face flattening gas tax revenues and rising costs."

Over the last six years, ODOT has consolidated space to reduce leases and the expenses that come with them. In 2020, ODOT had 16 office leases for facilities around the state. To date, ODOT has ended nine of those and will be ending another in December 2026, reducing its leased space by 222,000 square feet.

In addition, since 2020, ODOT has leased out ODOT-owned space totaling over 19,000 square feet to five other state agencies. Between consolidating space and leasing out excess space, ODOT has reduced its office space by about 242,000 square feet, or roughly 20%.

ODOT plans to evaluate its larger office buildings, looking for more opportunities to consolidate its workforce and free up space to lease to other state agen-



Photo Courtesy of ODOT

cies. However, many of the buildings ODOT owns, such as sheds, scale houses, and maintenance bays, are not suitable for lease to others.

For Oregon Parks and Recreation Department, the move to the ODOT headquarters building will allow them to work in a more modern space and move their headquarters closer to the Capitol while saving them around \$250,000 per budget cycle.

"We're excited to relocate our Salem office into the heart of State Capitol State

Park," said OPRD Director Lisa Sumpston. "This move saves money we can reinvest in Oregon's state parks, and ODOT has been a great partner throughout the process."

This lease, which will generate about \$675,000 in income for ODOT each two-year budget cycle, helps further ODOT's efforts to use space more wisely and save money on facilities costs. Discussions on the move began last fall. OPRD will begin moving into the building in September and the 10-

year lease will officially start Nov. 1.

Because of a structural revenue issue caused by flattening gas taxes, inflation, and legal restrictions on available funding, ODOT has reduced spending by about \$500 million since 2019 to stay within available funding. Some of these savings have come from efficiencies like consolidating office spaces. Other examples include increasing self-services options at DMV and for truck drivers and shifting service center hours to reduce staffing during hours with lower call volumes.

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Crime Stoppers of Oregon will dissolve after 43 years of helping solve crimes and improvement to public safety. Photo courtesy of Crime Stoppers.

Crime Stoppers of Oregon to Dissolve Sept. 30

Organization to End Operations After Years of Service

Crime Stoppers of Oregon will dissolve effective Sept. 30, 2026, ending a 43-year effort to help solve crimes and improve public safety across the state.

Henry Groepper, chairman of Crime Stoppers of Oregon, said declining tips and rewards, a shrinking program and an aging board contributed to the

decision to dissolve the organization. Groepper, who has been involved with the program since its creation in 1983, said the board had been discussing dissolution for some time.

The organization also faces increased challenges managing program data. Crime Stoppers of Oregon uses Navigate360 to host its program data. The company experienced a data breach in March 2026, and the organization is still awaiting a report from Navigate360 regarding the potential impact on Oregon

Crime Stoppers data.

Despite the decision to dissolve, Groepper said the organization wants to recognize its contributions to public safety over the past four decades.

"It's actually a sad time for me, but times change," Groepper said. "We are grateful to have helped families and helped solve crimes."

Groepper said board members are proud of their years of service and the role Crime Stoppers played in communities throughout Oregon.

2026 MLK Dream Run: Registration Is Open!



Photo courtesy of the MLK Dream Run

Run for the Community Run to Make an Impact!

The 15th Annual MLK Dream Run Weekend Celebration returns September 19–20 at PCC Cascade Campus for two days of movement, music, wellness, culture and community—culminating with the 5K, 10K and 15K races on Sunday morning. This milestone year celebrates 15 years of bringing Portland together while raising funds to support the Soul District Business Association's youth entrepreneurship and workforce development programs, small-business

training and technical assistance, digital navigation, leadership development and community economic empowerment.

The fun starts Saturday, September 19, with the Movement Market, featuring the FREE Kids Race, Nike Shake-Out Run, live music and entertainment, local vendors, health and wellness activities, pickleball, raffles, community resources and an '80s-inspired group fitness experience.

Then Sunday, September 20—it's race day! Run, walk or cheer as participants take on professionally timed 5K, 10K and 15K

courses through North and Northeast Portland.

With Nike and Alaska Airlines leading an incredible lineup of sponsors and community partners, there's even more to race for: top male and female finishers in the 5K, 10K and 15K will win Alaska Airlines round-trip tickets, with additional chances for finishers and volunteers to win!

Come for the run. Stay for the music, movement, food, fun and community. Together We Win!

Visit MLKDreamRun.com to register and explore the full weekend of Movement Market activities.

CLASSIFIEDS/BIDS

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The Portland Observer

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Zenger Farm Joins Community Effort to Fight Hunger



The Zenger Farm (Photo from Zenger Farm's Instagram)

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

participant's door, reaching patients experiencing disabilities, the lack of reliable transportation, or scheduling difficulties that prevent them from attending a distribution. Since the start of their partnership in 2023, Zenger Farm and Project DASH have powered over 20,000 deliveries.

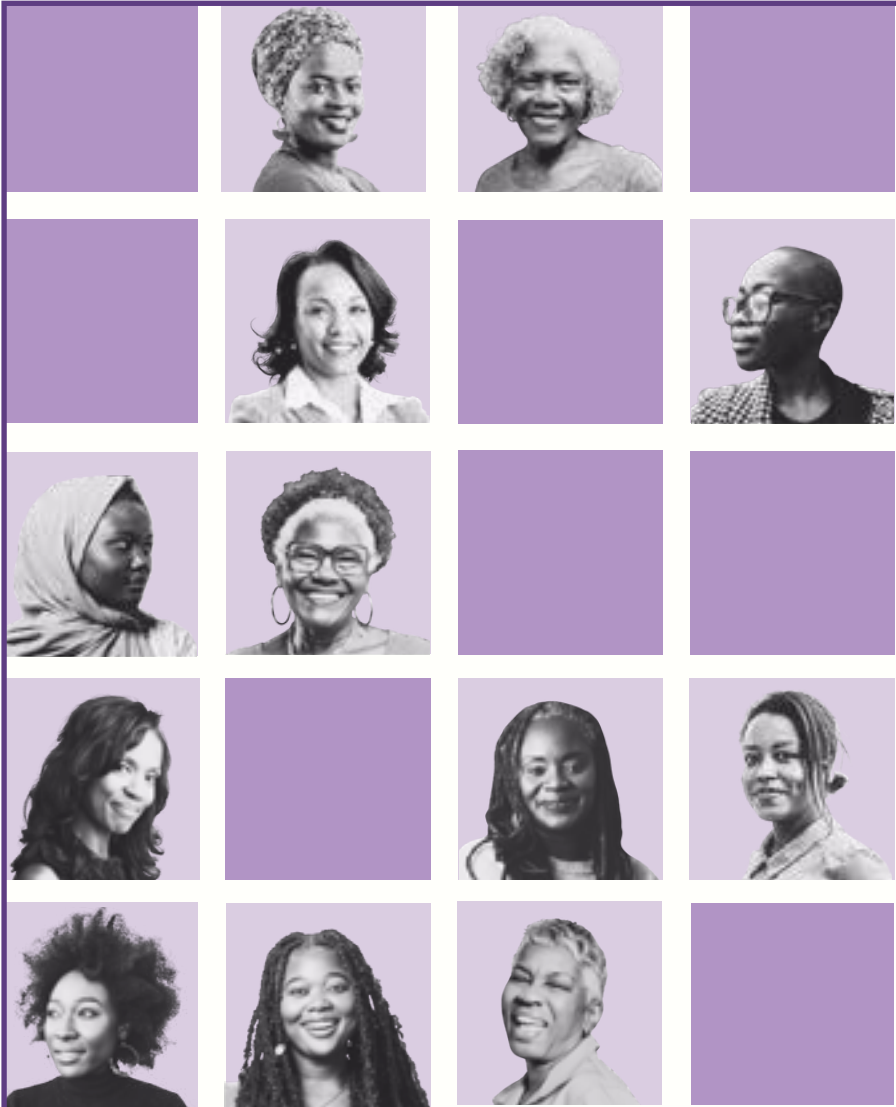
"CSA Partnerships for Health (CSAP4H) participants are managing health conditions with limited financial resources, and can face a range of barriers to accessing the farm-fresh, local food we provide, including transportation and mobility,"

said Kelly Randolph, Program Manager, CSAP4H at Friends of Zenger Farm. "Project DASH gives us a reliable, sustainable way to deliver that food directly to their homes."

"Zenger Farm and Multnomah County built a program that treats food as part of care," said Kierra Phifer, Head of West Public Policy at DoorDash. "We're proud that Project DASH can extend their reach in the community. Home delivery is what turns a clinician's recommendation into produce on someone's counter — every week, for as long as the prescription runs. There are a lot more programs like this one waiting to be

built, and logistics shouldn't be the reason they aren't. We'd like to be the reason they are."

"Too many families in East Portland and across Oregon are one missed paycheck, shift or broken-down car from going hungry," said Representative Lamar Wise (HD-48). "I know what that's like to count on food assistance programs, and it was programs like those offered by Zenger Farm that supported me when I needed it most. I'm proud to stand with Zenger Farm and DoorDash in supporting this work to show Oregonians that we're serious about driving lasting impact in our communities."



CHANGING THE ODDS: Black Women, Breast Cancer & the Power of Participation

Join Legacy Cancer Institute for an empowering community event exploring breast cancer disparities affecting Black women and how prevention, screening, treatment, research, and participation can help change outcomes.

FREE COMMUNITY EVENT

-  Saturday, October 3, from 10:00 A.M. to noon
-  Lorenzen Conference Center at Legacy Emanuel Medical Center



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A **40%** higher breast cancer mortality rate is more than a statistic.



Lost Art Finds New Life at Community Warehouse



Photo Courtesy of Community Warehouse

A Celebration of Art, Reuse and Second Chances

Give forgotten art a second chance and join Community Warehouse Furniture Bank for the Lost Art Show, a one-night celebration of art, reuse, and community impact, Thursday, October 1, 2026, from 6:30–8:30 p.m. at the Portland Furniture Bank, 3961 NE Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Portland, OR.

Browse a curated collection of vintage, antique, and handmade artwork that was once discarded, donated, or forgotten. Each piece has a story—and an opportunity to begin a new chapter in your home. Whether you're searching for a unique addition to your collection or simply love the thrill of discovering hidden treasures, you'll find plenty to explore.

Every purchase supports Community Warehouse's furni-

ture bank, helping local families transform empty houses into homes filled with comfort, dignity, and stability.

The evening will also showcase Community Warehouse's Children's Chair Program, a beloved tradition where local artists transform child-sized chairs into one-of-a-kind works of art. These imaginative creations are sponsored by community members and

then selected by children visiting the furniture bank, giving young people a special piece of their own to take home.

Come discover unique artwork, celebrate local artists, and support Community Warehouse's mission of providing essential furniture to neighbors overcoming adversity.

Admission is free and all are welcome. RSVP at community-warehouse.org/lost-art-show

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Photo courtesy of Home Forward.

Project-Based Voucher Waitlists Open September 9

Affordable Rental Assistance to Eligible Households

Home Forward will begin accepting applications for four Project-Based Voucher (PBV) program waitlists at 9 a.m. on September 9. The application period will remain open through 11:59 p.m. on Monday, September 21.

The Project-Based Voucher program provides deeply affordable rental assistance to eligible households throughout the Portland region. Unlike tenant-based rental assistance, PBV assistance is connected to a specific property rather than directly to an individual or household.

Applicants will have the opportunity to apply to one or more of the four Home Forward PBV-designated property waitlists. After the application period closes, Home Forward will randomly select enough applicants to maintain each waitlist for approximately the next three years. The number of applicants selected will be based on sever-

al factors, including the current number of people on the waitlist and anticipated unit turnover.

Applicants selected for a waitlist will receive a randomized assignment. When a unit becomes available, applicants will be contacted based on their position and screened for program eligibility. Those who meet the program requirements will receive rental assistance as long as they continue to live at the participating property.

To be eligible, a household's income must be below 50% of the Area Median Income for the Portland region. Current income limits are up to \$44,950 for an individual and \$64,150 for a family of four, although these amounts are subject to change. The head of household must be at least 18 years old or an emancipated minor, and at least one household member must be a U.S. citizen or have eligible immigration status. Applicants must also agree to participate in a criminal background check.

Home Forward encourages anyone who believes they may qualify, as well as anyone who is unsure about their eligibility,

to apply when the waitlists open on September 9.

Home Forward is also inviting community partners to participate in upcoming training webinars designed to help organizations prepare for the waitlist opening and assist clients and community members who are interested in applying. The first webinar will take place Wednesday, August 26, from 10:30 a.m. to noon, followed by a second webinar on Wednesday, September 2, from 3 to 4:30 p.m.

Additional resources will be available to partners in the coming weeks, including frequently asked questions, a partner toolkit, written application instructions, video tutorials, and access to a Help Team support hotline.

Community organizations and partners can help make this opportunity more accessible by sharing information about the upcoming waitlist opening through their networks and helping interested households understand the application process.

For additional information and updates, visit Home Forward's waitlist information page.

There's a New Coach in Town!

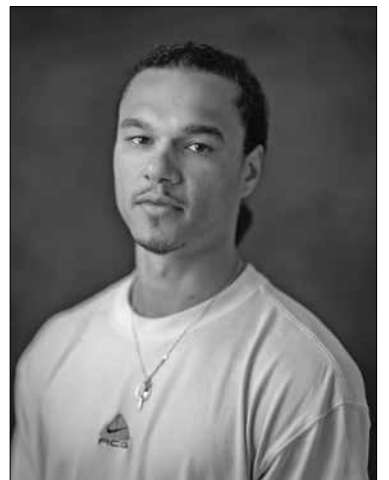
MHCC Names Lucas Hunter as the New MHCC Baseball Head Coach

Mt. Hood Community College has named Lucas Hunter as the eighth head baseball coach in the 58-year history of the Saints program. Hunter succeeds Korey Kier, who led MHCC Baseball since 2022.

A Portland native and Central Catholic High School graduate, Hunter brings extensive baseball experience, deep ties to the Portland-area baseball community, and a passion for student-athlete development to Mt. Hood Community College. Hunter was selected by the Miami Marlins in the 31st round of the 2012 Major League Baseball Draft before continuing his collegiate career at the University of Portland.

Beyond his playing career, Hunter has remained actively involved in growing the game throughout the region. He currently serves as program manager with Friends of Baseball, a nonprofit organization dedicated to expanding opportunities and access for youth baseball and softball players throughout Oregon and Southwest Washington.

"Lucas brings tremendous energy, a strong understanding of player development, and a deep connection to the local baseball community," said MHCC Athletic Director Dr. Kim Hyatt. "His vision for the program aligns with our commitment to student success, competitive excellence and meaningful engagement with our community. We are excited to welcome him to Mt. Hood Community College and look forward to the future of Saints Baseball under his leadership."



Lucas Hunter, the new MHCC Baseball Head Coach

Hunter also comes from a family with deep baseball roots. His father, Brian Hunter, enjoyed a 12-year Major League Baseball career and led the American League in stolen bases in 1997.

The Saints baseball program enters a new chapter under Hunter's leadership, building on nearly six decades of tradition. MHCC Baseball has long provided a pathway for student-athletes to continue their academic and athletic careers at four-year institutions and beyond.

As the Saints welcome a new era under Hunter's leadership, the college extends its deepest gratitude to Coach Kier for his dedication to the program and its student-athletes. Throughout his tenure, Kier fostered a culture of accountability, resilience and personal growth while positively impacting countless players both on and off the field.

Kier's commitment to student success, passion for Saints Athletics and stewardship of the baseball program have left a lasting mark on Mt. Hood Community College. The entire Saints community thanks Coach Kier for his years of service and wishes him and his family continued success in the next chapter of their journey.

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25 Years After 9/11, TSA Loosens the Gatekeeping

Some Visitors Can Now Pass Security Without a Ticket

(AP) — For decades, the airport security checkpoint has marked the end of the road for friends and relatives seeing off a traveler. That is changing for some travelers.

The Transportation Security Administration has launched a new program at some U.S. airports allowing eligible TSA PreCheck members without plane tickets to pass through security and enter the gates, reviving a tradition that largely disappeared after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks nearly 25 years ago.

“As an exclusive benefit for our most trusted travelers, this new program makes it easier to return to the gate for welcomes and send-offs, meet friends during a layover, and enjoy dining and shopping along the way, bringing back the moments that once defined air travel,” TSA said on its website.

Before 9/11, people without tickets generally could accompany travelers to the gate. The attacks prompted sweeping changes to airport security, including restrictions on access to secure areas of airports.



Travelers walk through TSA security lines at George Bush Intercontinental Airport on March 30, 2026, in Houston. (AP Photo/Ashley Landis, File)

The program, called “Gateside by TSA PreCheck,” is free, but people must apply online one to three days before their planned visit and receive approval before going to the airport. If approved, they can enter through a TSA PreCheck lane with an acceptable form of identification. The pass is valid for one calendar day, and visitors can re-enter that day.

TSA says members of other trusted-traveler programs who have a Known

Traveler Number also can apply for access to the gates.

The program is initially available at 13 airports including Los Angeles International Airport, Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport, Harry Reid International Airport in Las Vegas and Salt Lake City International Airport, according to TSA. But the agency says it plans to expand the program to more airports in the coming months.





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The Creston Senior Living: A Community Where Connections Flourish



Photos courtesy of The Creston Senior Living

With National Assistant Living week approaching, it is an ideal time to highlight what makes The Creston Senior Living more than simply a place to live. A day at The Creston Senior Living quickly reveals that its “neighborhood” is about much more than its wonderful Portland location. It is about the vibrant, joyful life taking place within the community every day. At The Creston Senior Living, a fulfilling lifestyle is built around connection, laughter, friendship, and shared experiences. Residents have opportunities to connect with neighbors, explore new interests, participate in activities, and enjoy meaningful time together. Each day brings new possi-

bilities to socialize, create memories, and build lasting friendships.

The Creston Senior Living fosters a warm and welcoming atmosphere where residents feel valued, included, and connected. Neighbors have the opportunity to become friends, creating a strong sense of belonging that extends beyond the walls of their individual homes.

The residents themselves are at the heart of The Creston Senior Living. Their stories, personalities, laughter, and enthusiasm bring energy to the community and help create the welcoming spirit that makes The Creston Senior Living feel like home.

Life at The Creston Senior Living offers a balance of lively social experiences and quieter moments. Social gatherings bring residents together for conversation, music, laughter, and opportunities to make new memories. Other days may be spent enjoying a quiet cup of coffee with a neighbor, sharing stories, or simply appreciating good company.

Whether residents are interested in staying active, discovering a new hobby, attending a social event, or enjoying meaningful conversations with friends, The Creston Senior Living provides opportunities for connection and engagement.

As National Assistant Living week,

The Creston serves as a reminder that the true heart of any community is its people. While location, amenities, and beautiful surroundings all contribute to the experience, it is the relationships between residents that truly bring a community to life.

At The Creston, friendships, conversations, shared experiences, and moments of laughter create a rich social tapestry. Each resident contributes something unique, helping shape a community where connections flourish and everyone has the opportunity to feel at home.

For The Creston Senior Living, community is more than a concept—it is a way of life.

OREGON PROBLEM GAMBLING RESOURCE

OPGR

NEW SEASON, NEW GOALS

For some, the return of football season means more opportunities to place a bet. From college rivalries to professional matchups, gambling can feel like part of game day.

But if gambling has started to feel less like entertainment and more like a source of stress, you're not alone—and help is available.

Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (OPGR) offers free, confidential support for anyone who wants to build a healthier relationship with gambling.

Whether you're concerned about your spending, finding it hard to cut back, or simply wondering if it's time for a change, talking with someone can help.

Reaching out doesn't mean you've lost control. It's simply a step toward understanding your habits and making choices that align with your goals.



Call, text, or visit OPGR.org today. Support is free and confidential. A new season is an excellent opportunity for change.



Find information, tools and support to help at OPGR.org