

art on Alberta Community Canvas

Art on Alberta, 1614 NE Alberta Street, Portland OR 97211

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What's new at Art on Alberta? New Website! New Newsletter! New News!
www.artonalberta.org

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Meet the Board

Art on Alberta (AoA) recently expanded its board to a team of ten mighty members. While a vibrant array of skills, interests, personalities, and backgrounds are represented, AoA Board members are all committed to our mission of *promoting the Alberta Art District's distinct cultural identity through art and educational activities.*

Hilary Pfeifer, Art on Alberta President, has lived in the Alberta Arts District since 2002, although her roots in the area go much deeper. Her great grandfather was the construction foreman for St. Andrews Church on 10th and Alberta Street, and her great great grandparents lived here almost a century ago. She makes her living as an artist and runs a small business from her home studio called *Bunny with a Toolbelt*.

Peggy Pfenninger, Art on Alberta Vice President, escapes the rigid constraints of her 9 to 5 existence as a graphic designer at Camera Graphics, by painting, taking photographs, mentoring for the Oregon Youth Challenge Program, and volunteering for Art on Alberta. This fiery Italian is a regular bike commuter who loves karaoke and owns a home in the Concordia neighborhood. Peggy graduated with a BFA from Savannah College of Art and Design.

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Collaborating to Create a Safe and Sane *Last Thursday* Event

Each month, people - thousands in the summer - flock to our neighborhood to join in what has become one of the most popular events in Portland: *Last Thursday Art Walk* on Alberta Street. The informal arts-related festival began with just a few businesses and artists in 1997, and has expanded to reach not only the entire stretch of businesses on Alberta (roughly 20 blocks), but entices street vendors, performers, and other organic attractions to participate as well. Galleries, studios, restaurants, and other art venues on Alberta Street open their doors for a celebratory evening of art, usually from 5 to 9:30 P.M. Street vendors and performers (and enthusiastic participant-observers), usually stay much later (again, primarily in the summer months). People in our neighborhood seem to have a love-hate relationship with this event. Many look forward to the night of festivity and fun, while others dread trying to make it home on time to secure their street parking.

Please see *Last Thursday* on page 3

Meet the Board continued

Our new Treasurer is **Kristin Shiga**, Extension Program Director at Oregon College of Art and Craft. Though Kristin lives closer to St. John's than the Alberta neighborhood, her devotion to uniting Portland's arts organizations and establishing Portland as a destination for fine art and craft drew her to work with this board. When she is not playing the role of treasurer, you can find Kristin wearing one of her other hats as metal-smith, teacher, speed Scrabble player and tool junkie.

Kathe Swaback is not only our **Exhibitions Coordinator** but serves as the Director of Art Up, LLC on Alberta Street. She is the liaison between The Johnson Collection and the Board and has had over 20 years experience working in community arts. For the last ten years she has worked with the Massachusetts nonprofit arts studio called RAW Art Works, and currently serves as their Program Consultant in program design and evaluation.

Jenn Woodward joined us this year and oversees the website at <http://artonalberta.org>. Originally from Texas, Jenn received her MFA in studio art from the joint degree program of Tufts University/ The School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. After weathering many brutal New England winters, Jenn, her fiancé, and their two cats moved to Portland two years ago. She and her crew are happy to be here - still marveling at the beauty of Portland, and how nice everyone here is!

Secretary Ingrid Berger grew up in Seattle and moved to Portland three years ago after spending her college years in New York City. She is currently the Curatorial Assistant at the Portland Art Museum. With special interests in Modernism and women in the arts, she is thrilled to be helping to organize Art on Alberta's upcoming exhibition of Thelma Johnson Streat's work for *Art Hop 2009*.

Volunteer Coordinator Ken Houseman is a project manager and manufacturing operations specialist, specializing in technology manufacturing and quality product systems design. His interests in art and the

community range from volunteering for Art on Alberta, burning with the masses at Burning Man, ceramic dry brushing, and dabbling in any form of art that allows for exploration and creativity to combat the monotony of corporate life. Ken also sits on the local steering committee of Human Rights Campaign, Portsmouth Neighborhood Association, and teaches at Portland State University as an adjunct professor.

Public Relations Coordinator Jaye Campbell started her Flying Shuttle Weaving Studio custom handweaving business in 1979. One of her ongoing clients is Timberline Lodge which was featured last year in the PBS series, "Craft in America" she experienced a nanosecond of fame in the filming of the segment on the lodge. Jaye is the Textiles Coordinator, the Gallery Coordinator, and a weaving instructor at the Multnomah Arts Center in Portland and also volunteers as a textiles consultant to Frank Lloyd Wright's Gordon House in Silverton.

Membership Coordinator Alice Orleman McLean has a BFA in sculpture and BA in Art History from Boston University and California College of Arts and Crafts. She lived and worked in San Francisco as a product designer and floral designer before helping a friend establish her mosaic company, quickly becoming the project manager. Alice relocated to Portland in 2006 where she feels settled in this art-filled and inspiring city. When not driving up membership numbers for Art on Alberta, she works as a mosaic assistant for large-scale commissions.

Eve Connell's realm spans the newsletter and volunteering for *Last Thursday*. This California native relocated to the Concordia neighborhood over three years ago only to immediately consider Portland home. Eve is a retired college/graduate school professor and former art gallery owner who now spends billable hours writing, editing, training, and flower arranging. Her favorite words include community, art, music, books, politics, yoga, and ice cream.

Collaborating to Create a Safe and Sane *Last Thursday* Event continued

The positive elements of this event include some peaks in business, attention to the Alberta Arts District, a general focus on casual fun for all. However, negative elements do exist, and are not limited to the obvious: lack of parking, excess trash visitors to the neighborhood. More serious issues include safety (e.g., excessive and potentially dangerous traffic, public exclusivity (e.g., longtime neighborhood residents do not feel welcome to participate). Some people took it upon themselves to monitor the event on their own - one robust yet informal group even attempted unofficial street closure in June, which indicates that *Last Thursday* is reaching a tipping point.

Open discussion began mid summer (2008) to address the issues that top the list of concerns. The City of Portland has been fabulously cooperative with business owners, street vendors, and the public. Because there's nothing official about *Last Thursday*, the City could choose to shut it down, but they choose to cooperate with neighbors, business owners, vendors, and other participants. With swelling crowds this summer (July's *Last Thursday* event brought over 8000 people -- and 75+ open container warnings as well as eight tickets for the same offense), just how to proceed is being discussed with City officials from Sam Adams' office, the Office of Neighborhood Involvement, the Police, Alberta Business Association, Art On Alberta, and concerned neighbors, both for and against the event.

Some ideas that have been proposed span closing Alberta Street to traffic, including rerouting busses; offering more public health facilities like porta-potties (there are currently only six used for this event), trashcans and recycling bins; issuing more citations for open container and pedestrian violations.

Meetings held at the Acadian Ballroom in August with the stakeholders mentioned above have resulted in the creation of task-force committees to address the issues. The *Last Thursday* Steering Committee formed as an ongoing group with local government agencies playing a large part of the group, but who will phase out as strategic solutions are rolled out. Three additional subcommittees (or workgroups) have also been formed: Communications, Street Closure Logistics, and *Last Thursday* Preservation Society. The Communications group will develop avenues of effective communication between the Steering Committee and the surrounding neighborhood. The Street Closure Logistics group will plan for the exact logistics of closing the street, such as obtaining barricades and arranging for their placement. The *Last Thursday* Preservation Society will be in charge of security planning and volunteer coordination.

Anyone eager to participate in creating a safe event for ALL neighbors and guests to our neighborhood are encouraged to email: info@tribewinds.com. For additional details on *Last Thursday Art Walks*, gallery maps, and vendor information, please see: www.artonalberta.org. The *Last Thursday* event offers the community a rare opportunity to interact with neighbors, business owners, artists, and performers. It certainly has the potential to be a successful and fun event for EVERYONE.

Tis the Season! Give the Gift of Membership!
Give an Art on Alberta Membership to all your friends this year!

Art on Alberta is always accepting new members. Your donation helps in so many ways.
We are a non-profit art organization with an all volunteer board.

A membership form is available to download and print from our website.
Just fill it out and mail it in with your tax deductible membership fee.
Please visit our website www.artonalberta.org or
email: membership@artonalberta.org for more information.

Artist Project - Neighborhood Diaries

Portland artist Abe is engaged in a new project titled "Neighborhood Diaries" that has to do with our neighborhoods, specifically the Buckman, Boise, Downtown, Northwest, and King/Vernon neighborhoods. He is recording the location-based memories of normal residents and then making free "walking-tour" podcasts that guide listeners through these neighborhoods' seemingly mundane street corners, swing sets, and benches, and communicate the rich, emotional history that make up our surroundings.

Abe needs people to (anonymously) volunteer their memories. With his mobile recording rig, he is able to

meet people anywhere they like to record their memories (after 6 P.M. on weekdays, and anytime on the weekend). Consider your happiest memories, your saddest memories, funny memories, and any other momentous occasions. No memory is too small or too large, short or long.

Even if you don't want to participate, but would like to stay informed about the project, you can sign up for his mailing list. If you'd like to contribute money (anything helps!), then please visit <http://www.hoodturkey.com> where you can donate, and listen and see other work. You can also search Abe's "The Flight and the Fall" in iTunes (it's free!). Contact Abe at hoodturkey@gmail.com if you'd like to participate in this art project and/or if you'd like to offer comments, feedback, insights.

Board Member Drive - *Interested in contributing to our neighborhood?*

Art on Alberta is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote the Alberta Art District's distinct cultural identity through art and educational activities. Our biggest event of the year is May's Art Hop, which in 2009 will celebrate the work of Thelma Johnson Streat, former Portland resident and the first African American woman to be in the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art. We are currently accepting applications for two board positions to help organize this event, as well as smaller ongoing projects. Available positions are: volunteer coordinator and oversight on grant applications (does not include grant writing, just organizing and meeting deadlines). Please direct questions to president@artonalberta.org.

For more information, please visit our website at: www.artonalberta.org.

Application deadline: December 1, 2009.

Art on Alberta also has many volunteer opportunities for short-term projects. Please contact us at info@artonalberta.org if you are interested in being a part of our fantastic team.



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