

SUNNYSIDE

Neighborhood News

October 2026

SUNNYSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

SunnysidePortland.org

board@sunnysideportland.org

News from the President

By Chris Waldmann, SNA President

Hi Sunnyside! It's the most wonderful time of the year! OK, it's not Christmas or a PNW summer, but it is that time of year where we get to exercise one of our most basic, hallowed rights as U.S., Oregon, and Portland citizens. I always feel a little warm inside as I sit down with my family, talk through the ballot together and make my choices. I know that I'm a nerd, but I do love our mail-in/drop-off ballot system!

At our September meeting, we kicked off election season with guests from Your 2 Cents PDX and Protect Our City Services to debate Measure 26-267, which, if passed, would mandate that an amount equal to a minimum of 2% of the city's general fund (~\$16-17 million next year) be open to the public for ideas and a public vote. Community members and groups would submit ideas—maybe funding an after-school program, refurbishing bathrooms at a city park, or funding more police officers. Ideas would then go to a city-appointed committee to vet for legality and feasibility. Finally, there would be a binding public vote. Your 2 Cents argues that this will promote budgeting transparency, give citizens a more direct voice in how their money is spent, take decisions away from powerful interests, and provide a more equitable process for historically disadvantaged communities. Protect Our City Services counters that we are in a budget crisis and that mandating 2% of our limited general fund would almost certainly harm core city services such as fire, police, and parks. Only about 10% of the Portland budget is in the general fund; the rest is restricted for items like transportation, water, and the Portland Clean Energy Fund. The folks at Protect Our City Services also worry about a process written into the city charter that

will provide little flexibility to our elected officials as we try to navigate out of our current budget hole.

There was a spirited Q&A. I would say that the tone of the questioners was fairly skeptical. Personally, I would chalk some of that skepticism up to worries about this proposal, and wariness about how the city, county, and state have implemented well-intentioned citizen initiatives in the past. There's a lot to think about. Learn more from the sponsors at your2centspdx.org and from the opposition at protectourcityservices.org.

Switching to the local election, all three of our District 3 City Councilors are up for re-election. We'll also need to elect a new Multnomah County chair. Not only can you vote for multiple candidates for city council but also for county commission. That's right, ranked-choice-voting (RCV) has gone Multnomah-county wide this year! You may vote for as many as six candidates in each race; only three candidates are running for county chair vs. 20 for city council. We aren't here to endorse any particular candidate(s), but I do have some advice:

- DO rank candidates who you are ok with winning. You can't hurt your top choices by voting for another candidate further down.
- DO NOT vote for candidates you don't want at all, even if you rank them last. Those votes could come into play!
- DO NOT rank more than one candidate with the same ranking! This may result in none of your votes in that race counting.
- DO read the city's guide to RCV at portland.gov/vote/ranked-choice-voting-rcv.

Upcoming SNA Meetings

Visit Sunnysideportland.org for location details and agendas

October

Board: Oct. 14th, 7-8:30 p.m.

LUTC: Oct. 21st, 7-8 p.m.

November

General: Nov. 11th, 7-8:30 p.m.

Board: Nov. 11th, 8:30-9 p.m.

LUTC: Nov. 18th, 7-8 p.m.

- DO talk through your ballot with friends and family! It's a complicated ballot with many choices. Help others out. Don't tell them how to vote, but help them understand the still-new RCV system.
- DO get your ballot in the mail early or use a ballot drop box. There's a list of ballot drop sites here: multco.us/info/official-ballot-drop-sites. The U.S. Supreme Court ruled against Trump's plan to restrict mail-in voting, but he is still trying to mess with the system by not prioritizing election mail. You want your vote to count!

Finally, thanks to everyone who helped make the 1st Annual Sunnyside Yard Sale a success. It was great fun and we look forward to doing it again next year!

The board will meet in October to hear a presentation from the Mt. Tabor Neighborhood Association about their program to support seniors in their neighborhood. I'm looking forward to hearing about ideas that we can implement in Sunnyside!



Clark and Ricky at Clark's Coffee.

Getting to Know Your Neighbors

By Sophia Babb, SNA Member at Large

A Q&A with Clark Johnson & Ricky Rickman of Clark's Coffee

We sat down with Clark and Ricky, the duo behind Clark's Coffee on Belmont, to talk about falling in love through coffee, starting a coffee shop in a garage, and how a space in Sunnyside came along at exactly the right time.

Tell me a little about yourselves. How did you both end up in Portland?

Clark: I grew up near Chicago. My brother had moved out here and I came to visit him in 2018. It was my first time in the Pacific Northwest and I immediately fell in love with it. The next year, I packed everything up and drove out here.

Coffee has always been somewhere in my life. I worked in coffee in high school. After moving to Portland I worked at See See Motor Coffee, Coava Coffee, and Floyd's Coffee.

Ricky: I grew up in California and moved to Portland in 2022. Growing up, I always loved coffee shops because of that community-oriented feeling. When I moved here, I worked at St. Honoré and then Nossa Familia, where I really got the opportunity to learn more about coffee. There's really no better place to truly learn coffee than in Portland.

Is coffee also how you met?

Ricky: Yeah, for a long time we were kind of circling each other. We had a ton of mutual friends. I would go to See See's all the time, but somehow we kept missing each other.

I lived around the corner from See See's and was trying to push myself to get out of the house and make local friends. See See's hosted a lot of events, and eventually a mutual friend introduced me to Clark at one. We started hanging out as friends, Clark asked me out, and we've pretty much been together ever since.

How long before you started talking about opening a coffee shop together?

Clark: On our second date!

Ricky: We realized really early on that we had both independently wanted to start our own shop one day. Eventually it became this question of, if we're going to work this much and be under this much stress anyway, why not put that energy into something of our own? Living in Portland made it feel possible. Coffee is so important and well-loved here.

How did Clark's Coffee start?

Clark: We always knew we wanted to start our own business, but wanted to start small and make sure we could actually work together. So, we thought, let's try it out of our garage. Maybe we'll do it once a month and see what happens. And then suddenly, we were open four days a week.

Ricky: We did not expect the garage, of all places, to pop. We had regulars!

It gave us a way to open the door to the community and let people understand what Clark's Coffee is. By the time we were ready for a shop, there were already people who knew us and wanted to see us succeed.

So how did this Sunnyside storefront enter the picture?

Clark: Funny enough, this neighborhood had been part of my Portland story from the beginning. When I first visited in 2018, two of the first coffee shops my brother brought me to were the Stumptown that used to be in this space and Bare Bones down the street. My friend Ash, who owns Mixtape, told us this space was going to become available. At that point, we weren't ready.

And then the opportunity came back?

Ricky: Yeah. We spent those next few months building Clark's Coffee and figuring out who we were. It grew way more than we expected. Then Ash came back to us and basically said, "Are you sure you don't want to reconsider this?"

By then, we had built a community around the garage. We knew we could work together. We knew people liked what we were doing. We tried the space for a month before committing to the lease, and everything just lined up. It really was the perfect place at the perfect time.

What do you love about Sunnyside?

Clark: I love that there's a school next to us. You have kids and families, artists, service workers, people who actually live here.

You look around the shop and somebody is talking about a mural they just got commissioned. Teachers are talking about the school. A family is talking about their vacation. We've overheard first dates. We love being a central place for our customers to come and feel like they belong here.

Ricky: We have some of the nicest customers I've ever experienced working in customer service. People come in and draw, or work or hang out for hours. That's exactly what we wanted.

What does being a "neighborhood coffee shop" mean to you?

Clark: It means being community-oriented, making people feel comfortable and welcomed the second they walk in the door. We want people to know they can rely on us. You can use the bathroom. You can ask us for hot water. You can sit at a table and stay as long as you need. You can come talk to us about an event. It sounds like little stuff, but that's what makes somewhere feel welcoming.

What would you like to see more of in Sunnyside?

Clark: More collaboration. More people coming in and saying, "Hey, I have this thing I want to try," and us being able to say, "Cool, debut it here." We want to work with groups like the Sunnyside Shower Project, support neighborhood events, and host pop-ups. We're still a small business, but the door is open.

This truly feels like the neighborhood coffee shop of our dreams. We love getting to know everyone and being such a big part of the Sunnyside community. It's a dream come true.

Clark's Coffee is at 3356 SE Belmont St. and it's open Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m.-4 p.m., Sat. & Sun. 8 a.m.-4 p.m. clarkscoffee.pdx.com.



Clementine outside her former home on SE Yamhill [Photo: C. Meier]

Sunnyside Tails: Clementine

By Jay Parasco and C. Meier, cat correspondents & SNA Members at Large

This month, we'd like to introduce everyone to one of our most iconic neighborhood cats, Clementine! This girl has been a showstopper on our walks.

Endowed with one of the more prominent "resting cat faces," Clem spent years delighting passersby at the south corner of Yamhill and 34th Avenue. But Clementine's backstory runs much deeper.

Her humans found her 11 years ago as a baby kitten on the edge of the White Salmon River with no mama or siblings in sight. Permascowl aside, Clem's sweetness and affability have won over countless humans. Her family describes her as "a sun-spot-dwellin', cheese-lovin', wouldn't-hurt-a-fly sweetheart," and we agree!

Clem and her humans recently moved, but fortunately remain in the neighborhood. Now you can find her near 30th and Stark and follow her on Instagram at @clembersonly.

Interested in joining a future cat walk? Like to nominate your pet for a Sunnyside Tail feature? Follow us on Instagram (@cats_of_sunnyside).

C. and Jay lead the Cats of Sunnyside community cat walk, which has received millions of views on social media and was voted #2 Best Tour in Portland by Willamette Week readers.

If you'd like to nominate a neighborhood pet for a future Sunnyside Tail feature, email newsletter@sunnysideportland.org.

News From Sunnyside Environmental School

By Sarah Rubin, SES parent

Harvest season at SES

October is a beautiful time at SES. The garden is transitioning from summer harvests to fall planting, students are getting outside for field studies and hands-on learning, and the school community is coming together for some of our favorite fall traditions. There are lots of ways for neighbors to get involved, whether you have a student at SES or simply want to connect with the school and support the programs that make our community special.

At SES, we believe that hands-on learning, music, and time in nature support student growth and well-being. Funds raised support garden-based education, music and field study programs. These are some of the experiences that make SES unique, giving students opportunities to learn by doing, exploring, and creating while building confidence and a deeper connection to nature.

Run Walk Move Fundraiser — October 7

Mark your calendars for Wednesday, October 7, from 9–11:30 a.m. for Run Walk Move, our first big peer-to-peer fundraiser of the school year. Students will celebrate healthy movement by running, walking, and dancing around the school while cheering each other on. Support an SES student or a neighborhood friend with a pledge. Fundraising from September 23 through October 16.

Dine Out for SES — October 20

Come for our pizza party at Pizzeria Otto (6708 NE Sandy Blvd) on October 20th. Pizzeria Otto is a neighborhood favorite devoted to Neapolitan-style pizza, made with thoughtfully sourced ingredients, including many from local providers.

Harvest Fair — October 24

Join us for our annual SES Harvest Fair on October 24, rain or shine!

The Harvest Fair is free and open to everyone. You can purchase carnival tickets and play fun, student-made carnival games, spend time with neighbors, watch a teacher or two "Beat the Bucket," enjoy fresh-squeezed apple cider, and fill up on sugar in the Cookie Palace or do the Baked Goods Boogie. Fall at SES wouldn't

be complete without this celebration of the season and our community.

Harvest of the Month

Fall has arrived in the SES garden! We've started clearing out the sunflower forest, and the corn and pumpkins have been harvested. The sunflower seeds are drying, while cover crops—including fava beans!—and winter vegetables will soon be going in. It's also been one of our best dahlia years yet, with the plants continuing to push out beautiful blooms. If you're walking by the garden, please pick a dahlia! Picking the flowers encourages the plants to produce more blooms.

Have questions about SES? Email SunnysideEnvironmentalNews@gmail.com

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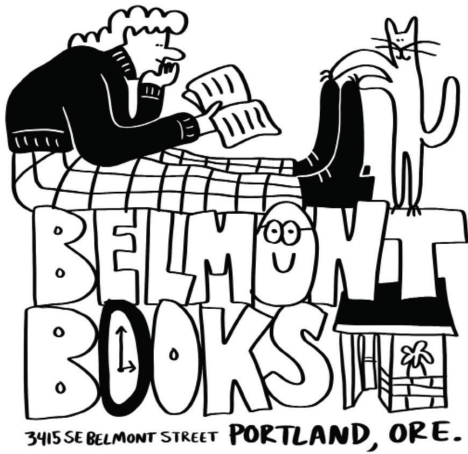
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Any opinions expressed, unless specified, are not necessarily those of the Sunnyside Neighborhood Association or its board. **Sunnyside residents are welcome to submit articles for consideration that concern neighborhood issues, by emailing newsletter@sunnysideportland.org. Deadlines are the 15th of the month prior.** Many wonderful volunteer Sunnyside residents distribute the Neighborhood News.



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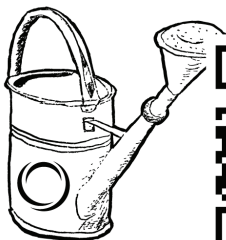
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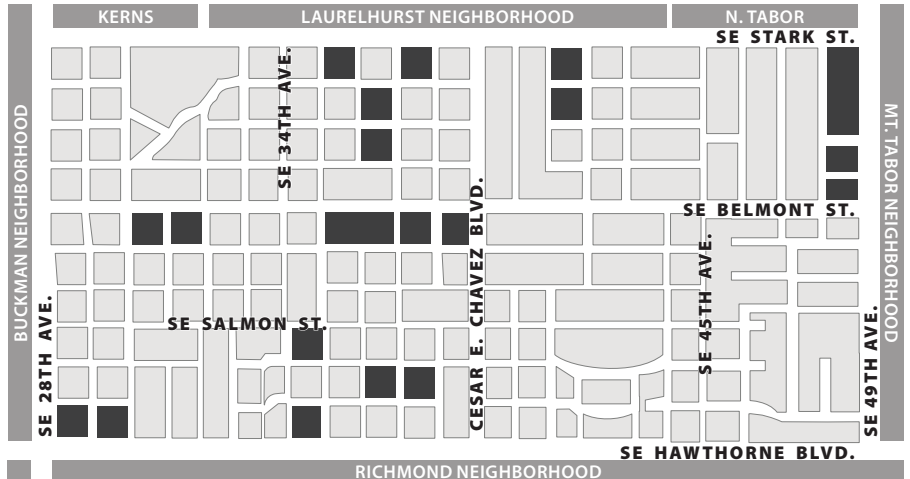


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