

Vocational program spots open

There are a number of openings remaining for new students this fall in Mt. Hood Community College's technical vocational programs.

Space is available in architectural technology, civil engineering and drafting-design programs.

The programs are two-year, associate degree programs, but credits earned at MHCC can be transferred to the Oregon Institute of Technology if students wish to attain a bachelor's degree.

Classes begin Sept. 28, but applications should be filled as soon as possible. For more information, call 667-7480.



The Oregon National Guard Reserve band brought its kilts and bagpipes to the Sandy Mountain Festival Parade Thursday. Photo by Mark Floyd

Brain grows in spurts

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The manner in which children are able to learn is receiving some shocks these days with the introduction of a new theory on brain development.

Herman Epstein, a Brandeis University biophysicist, believes that the human brain undergoes most of its growth in two-year spurts, not through continual growth as has long been believed. He bases his assumption on studies of both human and dead brains.

That concept has now been translated into theories on how a youngster learns by Conrad F. Toepfer Jr., associate professor of middle school education at the University of Georgia.

"Up to this time, the process of schooling has been organized on the assumption

that the human brain grows on some sort of continuum, and that the task of education is to challenge the learner," Toepfer said. "Although regarded as fact, no data exist to support the reality of this assumed brain growth."

According to the new theory, the brain develops in spurts between the ages of 2 to 4, 6 to 8, 10 to 12 and 14 to 16-plus years. During each period the brain grows between 5 and 10 percent in size in 85-90 percent of humans.

Just as the brain grows during two-year periods, there are two-year plateaus where no significant growth is found. These plateaus come between ages 4 to 6, 8 to 10, and 12 to 14 years.

"During these plateau periods, it becomes almost

impossible for youngsters to initiate and develop new and higher level thinking skills," contended Toepfer.

What this means for parents and educators is that higher level thinking skills should be taught children during the growth periods and reinforced.

"Learning experiences during the plateau intervals should focus upon helping youngsters to consolidate, refine and mature the new and higher level thinking skills they initiated during their just-completed brain growth spurt," according to Toepfer.

When the next growth spurt comes between 4 to 6 years, higher level skills, such as explaining and discussing, should be introduced.

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