

Football  
playoff  
picks

Page 11



High tech  
in education

by Matthew Prophet

Page 5



Multnomah County's  
new commissioner

Pages 3, 10

# THE NEW PORTLAND OBSERVER

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## Oregon leaders pledge commitment to people



Representative James Hill takes the oath of office to become the only black member of the House of Representatives and only the second black member in Oregon's history.

## Apartheid envoy visits Portland

Last week the Portland City Council was visited by the South African Consul General, Sean Cleary, from Beverly Hills. Mr. Cleary requested a meeting with Commissioners after reading a November *Oregonian* article stating that the Council had been asked to consider a resolution supporting withdrawal of state funds from banks and corporations that do business with South Africa.

The visit by the Beverly Hills Consul General is part of a multi-million dollar public relations campaign by the South African government to improve its image and win support for its policies.

The government of South Africa has also been active recently in Massachusetts and Michigan, attempting to counter campaigns for withdrawal of South Africa related state funds. However, in spite of the South African lobbying, this past

week brought major success for groups working to end U.S./South African economic ties.

In Massachusetts, three years of working toward withdrawal of state

funds from companies that do business in South Africa culminated in the passage of a bill requiring the withdrawal of \$101 million of state (Please turn to page 10 col. 1)

## Murder questions unanswered

by Harris Lavon McRae

There is a continuing controversy surrounding the death of Trina Hunter of Portland, whose body was found in a marsh near Battle Ground, Washington.

The Black United Front held a press conference last week to discuss media coverage of Ms. Hunter's death.

"Media accounts of Trina Hunter's life, death and family have contained fabrications, misinformations, and outright lies. Her family

has been forced to needlessly suffer even more because of slipshod, sophomoric media irresponsibility", said Ron Herndon, co-chairman of the Front.

"Several people have said there were individuals trying to force Trina into prostitution. There are accounts of two people beating Trina and forcibly taking her from Cascade Campus on December 6th. On December 12th a friend went to a house where Trina was reportedly being held. He found her in a dark (Please turn to page 10 col. 3)

With pomp and ceremony Victor Atiyeh was sworn into office for a second four-year term as Governor of Oregon. The special joint session of the 62nd Legislative Assembly was attended by former Senator Mark Hatfield and Robert Straub, but the festivities were dampened by the death Saturday of former governor Tom McCall.

Referring to the challenges and obstacles that were met in the 1981 legislative session, Atiyeh said state government was put to a test in November "in the midst of a recession so deep that—to all but a few—these are the hardest times in memory. . . . Oregonians, in an historic vote, have given us another chance.

"But make no mistake, it is our last chance. We have a final opportunity to reforge the bonds of public trust.

"We must make meaningful and lasting reforms in our runaway system of property taxation. We must preserve our priceless achievements in statewide land use planning by improving the system."

The Governor spoke of running

the state, with its \$5 billion budget, like a business. However: "Government cannot fail to uphold the civil rights and property rights of citizens. Government cannot fail to provide for education and roads, to find aid for the helpless, and to fight for the common good. Government cannot fail to enforce the law, and arrest the lawbreaker.

It has been truly said that the role of government is not to confer happiness, but to give people the opportunity to work out happiness for themselves."

The Governor's legislative priorities are: tax reform that will limit the growth of property taxes; changes in land use planning procedures; economic development; expansion of jail space, police and district attorney budgets; aid the forest products industry; create a new partnership between higher education and economic development.

While considering budgets, the overwhelming concern should be people, he said: "People—Oregonians of all ages—who need jobs, who need security, who need a decent education. People must and will con-

tinue to be the number one priority of state government.

"... it has never been more important to remember the commitment to human rights, human dignity, and equal opportunity for every Oregonian. This commitment is never more important than in hard times. It is especially incumbent upon us, the elected representatives of the people of Oregon, to join together with all citizens and strongly reaffirm that the rights, the dignity, and the equality of every Oregonian are matters to us of first importance."

Rep. Grattan Kerans of Eugene, elected Speaker of the House, said, "Our citizens are demanding compassion, sensitivity and understanding as many of them daily confront deprivation."

The Senate opened under the gavel of Senator Fred Heard, still unable to elect a new Senate President. On Tuesday the 12 Senators who support Senator Frank Roberts of Portland threw their support to Senator John Kitzhaber, but Kitzhaber also failed to gain the 16 votes needed.



Governor Victor Atiyeh addresses a joint session of the Oregon Legislature following his oath of office. Seated to the Governor's left is newly elected Speaker of the House Grattan Kerans.

## Increasing unemployment Oregon's 1982 legacy

The statistics are not all in but it is clear that Oregon's economy went from bad to worse in 1982 and there is no recovery in sight. The upturn projected for late 1982—based on the Reagan Administration's tax cuts and slowing inflation rates—failed to materialize.

Oregon's official unemployed reached 156,200 by November 30, 1982. In its third straight year of recession, Oregon began the year with an 11.0 percent unemployment rate; increased to 11.5 percent in March; then dropped to 10.7 percent in July. Since July there has been a steady increase in unemployment, reaching an all-time high of 12.5 percent in November. Unemployment for this year is estimated at an 11.5 percent average.

Oregon's unemployment rate has risen from 6.8 percent average in 1979 to a projected 11.5 percent average at the end of 1982.

Unemployment is expected to average 150,000 for the year; at least one out of every four workers will have experienced unemployment in 1982. This does not include those whose jobs have shrunk to part-time.

A new phenomenon has hit Oregon. For the first time, the labor force declined by about 20,000 persons who left the state to look for work elsewhere. Even in the 1974-1975 recession, Oregon's labor force continued to grow, though more slowly than usual.

The Portland SMSA had an unemployment rate of 9.8 percent, a

25 percent increase in unemployment since November, 1981.

It is estimated that the unemployment rate in inner Northeast Portland is double that of whites and that unemployment of minority youth is at least 40 percent.

### Wage and salary

Oregon's seasonally adjusted wage and salary index also shows a grim picture. Since late 1979, when the index peaked at 138.7, this index has fallen non-stop except during the last half of 1980 when lower interest rates temporarily boosted the construction industry. In January of 1982 the wage index was 128.3 and it has dropped every month except October, reaching 123.3 in November, the lowest level in more than five

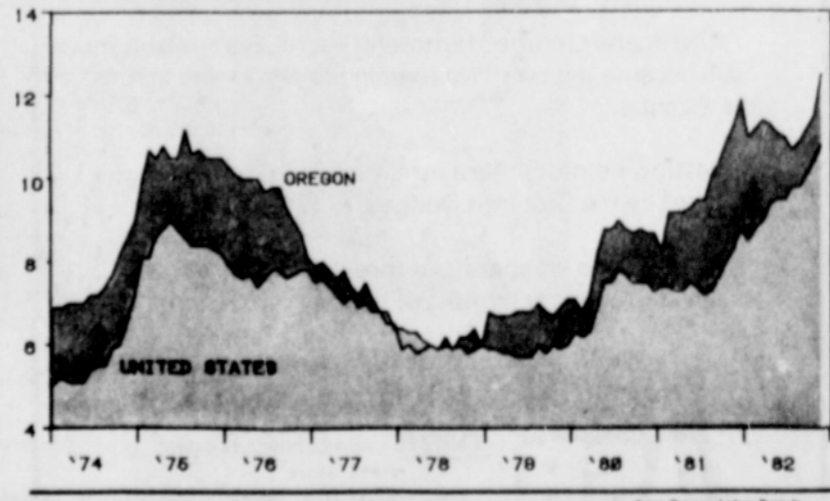
years. Oregon's economic problems are reflected in wages and hours worked.

The durable goods sector of manufacturing lost 1.2 hours of work and 5¢ per hour in earnings. Trades lost 0.3 hours per week while losing 13¢ in wages, caused by hiring of more low-paid personnel for the Christmas season. Construction had an increase of 1.1 hours per week but lost 8¢ in hourly wages due to fewer people working longer hours, (34.6 hours per week average.)

### Industry-wide losses

Although the plight of the timber industry has been highly publicized, the economic stagnation has cut across Oregon's business and indus- (Please turn to page 10 column 3)

SEASONALLY ADJUSTED UNEMPLOYMENT RATES OREGON and the UNITED STATES, 1974 to 1982



from Oregon Labor Trends