



JOHN WOODS

## New director of city personnel

by Nathaniel Scott

The new director of city personnel, John Woods, expects to make his initial recommendation to the City Council by the first of September.

In a recent interview, he said, "I don't make snap judgments."

Woods was Commissioner Dick Bogle's first bureau head appointment. His duties as director of personnel include employee relationship, affirmative action, compensation and administrative responsibility over the operations for the Civil Services Division.

He also has the responsibility for making salary recommendations for non-union employees who work for the city.

Previous to coming to Portland, Woods had been director of personnel for the state of Nevada.

He has been involved in public service work, in one form or another, for the past 25 years. And his motto is: "I am me and whatever job I get I will give it my best shot."

Woods characterizes his new position as one that is "not in disarray." However, he admits, "There are probably some organizational changes I am going to make."

Whatever "organizational changes" Woods intends to make, does not mean getting rid of personnel because all budget cutbacks had been made when he joined the city.

The changes that Woods has in

mind are ways to streamline the system and make it work more efficiently.

For instance Woods said he is not only looking at the number of minority working for the city, but equally so, the kinds of jobs they are in.

"People can play all kinds of games with numbers," he said, adding that he has a basic problem with people who are married to the past. "If I were married to the past, I would still be a slave," he said.

Woods is a native of Atlanta, Ga. He earned his Masters degree at the University of Denver. And at age 54, he is a veteran air force pilot and has a wife, LaMonte, who teaches school, and two children, a daughter 13 and a son 12.

Woods said whenever policies involve Commissioner Bogle as the primary moving force, his dialogue will be with him. Otherwise I will have dialogue with the mayor's office and the other commissioners, he said.

He added that protocol demands that he make his report known to Commissioner Bogle before presenting it to the full council.

Woods has wanted to live in Portland for some time and considers this the last leg of his moving days. And as soon as time and circumstances permit, he intends to become active in the community.

He said, "If I were to summarize me, I'd say I am a pretty simple, simple-minded person."

## Alberta Street improvement

by Robert Lothian

Harold L. Johnson has a vision. He sees the blighted N.E. Alberta Street corridor as it could be 20 years from now.

Johnson, 29, founded the Alberta Development Corporation in April, and the Alberta Street Merchants Association in January. As president of ADC, Johnson has staked his future on the future of the Alberta business district from Union Ave. to 33rd Ave. He thinks that a revitalized Alberta district could be the model core area that could pave the way toward revitalizing other areas in inner Northeast.

Johnson envisions his development company playing a leading role in the process, helping new businesses with planning, design and construction. Job creation will be a welcome offshoot, said Johnson.

Sixty businesses operate along the corridor, often next to abandoned and boarded up storefronts. Many of the once active shops closed as the district spiraled into decline after WW II. Drugs, prostitution and related crime contribute to problems on the west end. About five percent of the corridor's businesses are minority owned. Nearly 70 percent of its structures are designated to be in poor or bad condition.

Johnson wants to bring the district back, with a mall, with landscaping and with magnet businesses that can attract more business. His objective is to make Alberta Street a nice place to stroll, to window shop, to have a bite to eat, and to bring some pride back to the community.

It's not all talk, either. Johnson's efforts paid off earlier this year with the opening of a new magnet business, the Olympian Fitness Center, 1829 N.E. Alberta St. ADC is now in the process of developing professional offices at another site, he said.

Alberta Street has seen development schemes before, but they didn't meet with much success. "I think we have the formula that can get it done for the first time," said the energetic former disc jockey and television reporter.

But it won't happen without the participation of business owners — Johnson feels strongly about that. That's why he organized merchants along the corridor into an association.

Organized, merchants can enlist the aid of neighborhood associations, work with city and Portland Development Commission officials, possibly get an urban development grant, Johnson said.

Johnson has met with the mayor, the office of neighborhoods, historical commissions — anyone who will listen. Such contacts led to the University of Oregon School of Architecture sending up a group of students for a spring project. They produced five schematic design options that could be incorporated into a long term development plan for the corridor.

One of the options calls for a tower and pedestrian mall with street trees and landscaping at 20th and Alberta. The tower would offer a panorama of Portland from Northeast to downtown.



Harold Johnson (left) and Marlo Edman discuss exterior restoration of Alberta Theater building, 3000 NE Alberta. (Photo: Robert Lothian)

## Concordia Community Assn.

by Robert Lothian

On the day before he died in a police shoot-out at a house near N.E. 16th and Alberta St., Thomas L. Graves told a teenager who was moving into a nearby house, "You'll be sorry you moved into this neighborhood."

Graves had gotten into an argument later that day at The Pub Tavern, 1526 N.E. Alberta St., before retreating to his house, where he began shooting in a rage.

Many taverns line Alberta Street, as do many blighted and boarded up storefronts. The district has seen better days. It's not the kind of environment designed to make neighborhood residents feel good about themselves.

Responding to the blight along the Alberta corridor, the Concordia Community Association decided last week to organize a volunteer effort to help restore the exterior of the Alberta Theater building, 3000 N.E. Alberta.

"I think it's time we involve ourselves in actual physical improvement of our neighborhood environment," said Marlo Edman, association president.

The project's purpose is to help make the area along Alberta Street more livable, said Edman. Neighborhood volunteers, working in coordination with the congregation of the Macedonia Temple Church of God in Christ, which occupies the building, will help with painting and restoration of the historic structure's exterior during weekend work parties, said Edman.

The church congregation has improved the interior of the building, but needs help with the exterior, according to Edman. "It's a small neighborhood church and they don't have the funds to do anything to the outside," he said.

"It does have some nice lines on the stucco facade and I think properly decorated it would be a very handsome building. . . very nice to look

at." Edman said the volunteer fix-up idea developed in meetings with Harold Johnson, president of the Alberta Development Association, and with J. W. Booker, pastor of the church. Johnson has been working for a year to organize Alberta corridor merchants into an improvement effort. He has already brought one new magnet business to Alberta Street — the Olympian Fitness Center, 1829 N.E. Alberta St.

Johnson and community association members suggested that following Concordia's example, the two other neighborhood associations concerned with the Alberta corridor, Vernon and King, could also "adopt an eyesore."

"We have an organized base of support along the corridor," Johnson told the group. "I think that when we can get some bodies together we can get some work done in a very short time. It's time to take that leadership."

Johnson suggested that the paint scheme be consistent for the entire corridor, but one neighborhood resident wondered whether the cost of materials would be prohibitive.

"I'll bet you a dime to a donut that Miller Paint will donate materials, that Neil Kelly will donate materials . . . I don't think materials will be a problem," Edman replied. An architect who lives in the neighborhood has already looked at the building, and a Concordia woman who works at the Oregon Historical Society is researching the history of the Alberta Theater, he said.

"Long before summer's out, we could do this, and it would feel really good," Edman continued. "I think we'll be able to turn around a situation that everybody moans about, but nobody wants to do anything about."

"When you're done, come over to my house; I need some help with my garage," quipped an association member.

## Mental Health Service

(Continued from Page 1, Column 6)

Slattery continued. "The structure is to help the mentally ill when they become dangerous and since those who are marginally dangerous aren't receiving care will end up becoming dangerous," she added.

Also, mentally ill patients have the right to refuse medication. "Sometimes they are in a no-win situation," Slattery said.

She predicts more cases such as Graves', because there is no preventive treatment being offered to children or those not considered dangerous.

"Mental Health workers are ashamed of what they did to the mentally ill and these private care agencies are not spending their money wisely. They are not working as a team."

There were good intentions when the issue of deinstitutionalization became popular. But it failed and the latest casualties are Tommy Graves and Mrs. Alberta Tate.

Other plan ideas call for landscaping, better street lighting, bus shelters and more telephone booths along the corridor. Many suggestions for improvement are related to reducing crime. As a creative solution, Johnson called for a security system, the cost of which could be shared by many merchants, reducing its price. "That way we can eliminate the bars and the boarded up windows and still have that sense of security."

Taverns are another problem, he said — 10 altogether between Union and 33rd. Two were closed by the OLCC, one after complaints from the community about drugs and crime related to the tavern trade. The Pub, at 16th and Alberta, was the scene of a racial argument that provided the impetus for the recent police shoot-out.

"Why not talk the tavern owners into creating more of a bistro atmosphere attractive to a wider spectrum of neighborhood residents?" asks Johnson. "If it has to be beer and wine, we don't need hangouts," he said. "We need something with atmosphere."

Johnson had to hurry to another round of meetings to talk up his favorite subject. "I'm optimistic," he said on leaving. "We're going to see some real quality changes in this neighborhood. It's going to change the mind-set, the quality and character of N.E. Portland."

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