

Family Nursery Opens Doors for At-Risk Families

Opening ceremony and press conference for Volunteers of America Family Nursery, Portland's first program created as an early intervention for at-risk families and an abuse and neglect prevention project.

Speakers at the opening ceremony will be VOA Board Chairman, Tom Kelly; former Governor Neil Goldschmidt; Multnomah County Children's Services Division Regional Director, Kay Toran; and parents from the successful Eugene Relief Nursery Program.

DATE: April 7, 1992
Time: 10:30 a.m.

The Family Nursery is located adjacent to the VOA Day Care Center at S.E. Eighth Street between Ash and Pine.

The Family Nursery is a free program created as an early intervention program for at-risk families which aims to prevent abuse and neglect. The Family Nursery emphasizes parenting skills that strengthen families by offering the opportunity to learn how to better identify and work through problems before they become unmanageable. Developmentally appropriate, respite childcare

and pre-school opportunities will also be available to infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

The program goal is to keep families together and to stop the intergenerational cycle of abuse and neglect. To accomplish this goal the program takes a holistic approach, providing a positive and nurturing atmosphere for parents and their children. The children are given a sense of love and order as part of the preschool programs, while parents learn new parenting skills designed to improve their relationship with their children and prevent child abuse and neglect. The Family Nursery will also provide outreach and education to the community about the nature of abuse and neglect in families.

The Family Nursery receives support from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Crisis Nursery Program, the Oregon State Children's Services Division, the Volunteers of America Endowment Fund, the Collins Foundation, the U.S. West Foundation, the VISTA Program, Oregon Children's Foundations and volunteers.

Portland Housing Center Offers Classes

The Portland Housing Center is pleased to announce the offering of a four-class course entitled "The How-Tos of Home Ownership," on Tuesday nights, 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., in the cafeteria of Binnsmead Middle School, 2225 S.E. 87th. In addition, a Wednesday evening series will be offered in the month of May at Whitaker Middle School.

The course is designed to help people wanting to buy their first house. The four classes will address the topics of: 1) managing family finances so you can buy and maintain a house; 2) how to go about buying a house; 3) tips on picking the right house; and 4) how to take care of that new house.

Classes are open on a first-come

first-serve basis and are free of charge. Preregistration forms and class information flyers are available by calling the Portland Housing Center at 282-7744. Enrollment is limited to 50 people per class. Preregistration is required through the Housing Center due to the popularity of the classes.

The Portland Housing Center works with low and moderate income households to assist them in purchasing a home. The Housing Center classes are required for qualified participants seeking down payment grants of up to 1% of the total purchase price. Qualified participants must also meet income guidelines and be buying a house at \$49,000 or less.

Small Employers Health Insurance Plan Completed

Most of Oregon's small employers will have guaranteed access to a group health insurance plan by the end of the year.

The state's Small Employer Carrier Advisory Committee (SECAC) has completed design of the basic benefit plan. Department of Insurance and Finance Director Gary Weeks expects to grant final approval within a week. Approximately 300,000 Oregonians work for affected employers.

The insurance plan was required by the 1991 Legislature to help end a serious problem for small employers—a lack of access to group medical insurance. The package completed by the committee may be purchased by any company employing three to 25 eligible employees from any health insurance carrier serving that market. The basic plan benefits are "substantially similar" to the priority list of benefits created for Oregon's proposed Medicaid reform. Preventative care received priority.

The law also reforms the marketing of any group health insurance plan sold in the "three to 25" market. No individual may be excluded due to a new health problem, coverage of a pre-existing condition can only be restricted for six months, pregnancy cannot be con-

sidered a pre-existing condition, and the law controls premium rates.

Weeks said, "I'm very pleased that the barriers to small employers purchasing this badly needed benefit are finally falling." He thanked SECAC members "for completing the extremely difficult task of presenting a plan that is both accessible and affordable. It's my hope that the premium will be near \$100 per month for each covered employee." The basic plan should be on the market in the fourth quarter of 1992.

The committee completed most of the plan in February, then met again today to add benefits. The added benefits include outpatient prescription drugs and additional preventative dental and vision care for children. Barney Speight, Vice President, Policy & Development, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Oregon, chaired SECAC.

The small employer package is a key component of the Oregon Health Plan which would extend medical coverage to the vast majority of the state's citizens over the next three years. (Note: Affected employers don't have to purchase the insurance at this time. Mandatory health insurance for all Oregon employers is not scheduled until July of 1995.)



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Running on Empties: Oregon's Bottle Bill Turns 20

It was the perfect law for 1972. Oregon's Bottle Bill "became the state's regional mythology," writes Brent Walth in the Spring 1992 issue of Old Oregon, the University of Oregon's magazine of ideas.

But as the Bottle Bill, the first in the nation, turns 20 this year, have the times passed it by?

"The question today," says state Sen. Ron Cease, D-Portland, a leading environmentalist in the Oregon Legislature, "is does it really help us increase recycling, or does it hurt us?"

On the face of it, the Bottle Bill appears to be a stunning success. By the end of the 1980s, Oregonians were paying nickel deposits on more than 1 billion beverage containers annually.

"States that rely on recycling alone see only about 50 percent of the bottles and cans come back in," says Peter Spendlow, a recycling specialist for the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. "In Oregon, we see a return rate of 93 percent—in some areas, 100 percent."

Not all beverage containers qualify for deposits, however.

Twenty years ago, lawmakers never considered the growing number of bottles and cans used for beverages other than soft drinks: wine coolers, mineral water and juices. Yet those containers now are showing up as the litter Oregon hoped to stamp out.

"If there's any great fault to the Bottle Bill today," says Jerry Powell, publisher of the Portland-based magazine Resource Recycling, "it's that lawmakers haven't had the guts to change it to expand and adjust to the times." Updated bottle bills died before passage by both the 1987 and the 1989 legislative assemblies.

On the other hand, the Bottle Bill remains successful enough that it has the potential to stifle other recycling efforts.

Private recycling companies stay in business by selling their collected materials to package manufacturers. Yet many producers still prefer to use so-called "virgin" materials for their products, creating a recycling glut and depressing prices.

Aluminum commands the highest price on the recycling market, but the Bottle Bill removes lucrative pop and beer cans from recyclers' revenue streams.

To help increase demand for recycled materials, the 1991 Legislature passed a law requiring half of Oregon's garbage to be recycled by the end of the decade. The measure also mandates a higher proportion of recycled materials in packaging.

"It's not just a simple matter of picking up the materials," explains lawmaker Cease. "The question is, What do you do with them all?"

6TH ANNUAL

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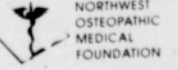
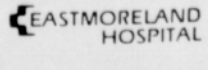
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Top Portland Chefs Add Important Ingredient to Fight Against Hunger

Fifth Annual "Chefs' Night Out" to Benefit Hunger-Relief Agencies

Twenty-five of Portland's premier chefs, 12 local wineries, two micro-breweries and a master espresso maker blended their talents to fight hunger in Oregon on Monday, March 30, at the Portland Center for the Performing Arts (PCPA).

This event came at a particularly important time as Oregon Food Bank and many social service organizations throughout the state focuses on the needs of individuals and families who are struggling with a tightening Oregon economy. Emergency food box agencies throughout the state report that approximately half the people receiving assistance are children, and the numbers are increasing as economic conditions for many families worsen.

Chefs and other participants in Chefs' Night Out hoped to raise money and awareness to combat this problem. Proceeds from this year's event will benefit several hunger-relief agencies in Oregon—Oregon Food Bank and two of its regional food banks (Klamath/Lake Counties Food Bank and CAPECO, serving Gilliam, Morrow and Umatilla counties, and St. Vincent de Paul's Foodtrain program, which collects perishable and prepared food from Portland restaurants, caterers, bakeries and groceries and then distributes that food to agencies assisting hungry individuals and families. Twenty percent of event proceeds will be distributed by the national sponsor, Share our Strength (SOS), to agencies fighting hunger world-wide.

Students Again Enrolling In Record-High Numbers at PCC's Campuses

Spring term 1992 classes began Monday, March 30 at Portland Community College.

Enrollment figures for spring term at PCC again show a strong increase over the same time last year.

As of March 23, a week before classes began and two days prior to open registration March 25, enrollment figures are 21 percent greater than the same time last year.

"Students are registering for classes earlier, ensuring that they will have a seat," said Susan Bach, director of Institutional Research.

"My sense is that current figures will drop somewhat as we get closer to the beginning of the term. However, the growth pattern for spring is very similar to what we experienced winter term and I expect that it will stabilize at about eight to ten percent over the prior spring term.

"Based on these figures, we are estimating a five-year increase of 30-35 percent," Bach added.

As of March 23, students enrolling in lower division transfer courses have pushed up the enrollment 27 percent over the same time last year.

As of March 23, growth on indi-

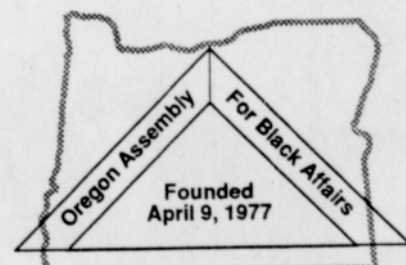
vidual campuses in the PCC district, which covers five counties and 1,500 square miles, ranges from a 9.9 percent increase in enrollment to a 46 percent increase.

Sylvania Campus in southwest Portland has enrolled 8,743 students, a 23 percent increase over the same time last year. Rock Creek Campus in Washington County has also seen a 23 percent jump, from 2,780 students to 3,421 students. Cascade Campus has seen the greatest enrollment surge—46 percent. Student enrollment at the Cascade Campus in north Portland has increased from 1,148 spring term last year to 1,682 this year. Non-traditional offerings through PCC's Open Campus, held in numerous locations throughout the Portland-metro area, has enrolled 9.9 percent more students in 1992 when compared with the same time spring term 1991.

March 25, the first day of open registration, "Students began queuing up about 6:30 a.m.," said Jeanine Lofton-Hendrix, assistant registrar. "This morning there are lines at all three campuses. The Sylvania Campus registration line is taking students out the doors and back into the parking lot."

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