

Jefferson Dancers

Jefferson dancers set spring performance season.



Metro, page B1.

A Thin Line Between Love And Hate

Martin Lawrence comic-thriller, *A Thin Line*, premieres.



Entertainment, page B3.

Drama Spotlights Alternative To Youth Violence

PBS features drama focusing on alternatives to youth violence.



Family, page B4.

The Portland OREGONIAN

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THE WEEK IN REVIEW

US West Sanctions

The Public Utility Commission tightened regulatory control over US West because of complaints about its telephone service. The phone utility had pricing flexibility to deal with increased competition in exchange for meeting more stringent service delivery standards. But customer complaints rose in Oregon 460 percent in three years, and starting May 1, the company will have to rebate 100 percent of profits, above the approved rate of return, to its customers instead of splitting the profits 50-50. The company will have to lend cellular phones to customers whose requests for first telephone lines are not met within five business days. It will also have to credit customers whose telephone service doesn't work.

Dole Claims Republican Nomination

Senator Bob Dole won the California, Washington and Nevada primaries to clinch the Republican nomination for president. Holding 1198 delegates, 202 more than he needs, Dole said in celebration, "A new America is in our reach." Pat Buchanan, the last of Dole's Republican opponents conceded the nomination in and headed home to plan his next step. Dole, losing patience with Buchanan's demands to shape the party platform, said, "The longer he just hangs in there the more he helps Bill Clinton."

Cigarette Recall Not Needed

Federal health investigators said last week that the 8 billion cigarettes recalled by Phillip Morris USA last year were no worse than any others and that the recall distracted attention from the real dangers of smoking. The \$100 million recall was prompted after smokers reported coughing and laryngitis. Government officials said the complaints were caused by prolonged smoking.

Collins to leave Genesis

Phil Collins is leaving Genesis after 25 years with the band. The drummer and vocalist announced that he will do music for movies, "some jazz projects and of course my solo career." This means Genesis will be looking for a new member for the first time since Peter Gabriel's departure in 1975. The group has sold more than 80 million albums since then.

Bombing Survivors File Suit

Lawyers representing survivors of the Oklahoma City bombing filed a motion saying they have a right to watch the trial on closed circuit television under the federal victims act. The motion said federal laws barring cameras in the courtroom should not apply to this case, because under the 1990 law, the government must consider victims rights and give them access to all proceedings. The trial of Timothy McViegh and Terry Nichols may begin later this year in Denver.

Zulus Protest In South Africa

Zulu nationalist in traditional garb marched in Johannesburg to commemorate the bloody protest just before the historic all-race elections. Fifty people were killed March 28, 1994, at a protest against the election of Nelson Mandela. Zulus led by Mongosuthu Buthelezi and his Inkatha Freedom Party still want Mandela and the African National Congress to grant them a certain amount of autonomy. The ANC accuses Buthelezi of seeking "despotic powers." The rivalry between the two parties has been deadly and jeopardized the effort to end apartheid.

First Interstate And Wells Fargo Merge

Officials Promise Customer Friendly Changeover

The nation's eighth largest bank opened for business Monday when Wells Fargo & Co. combined with First Interstate Bank.

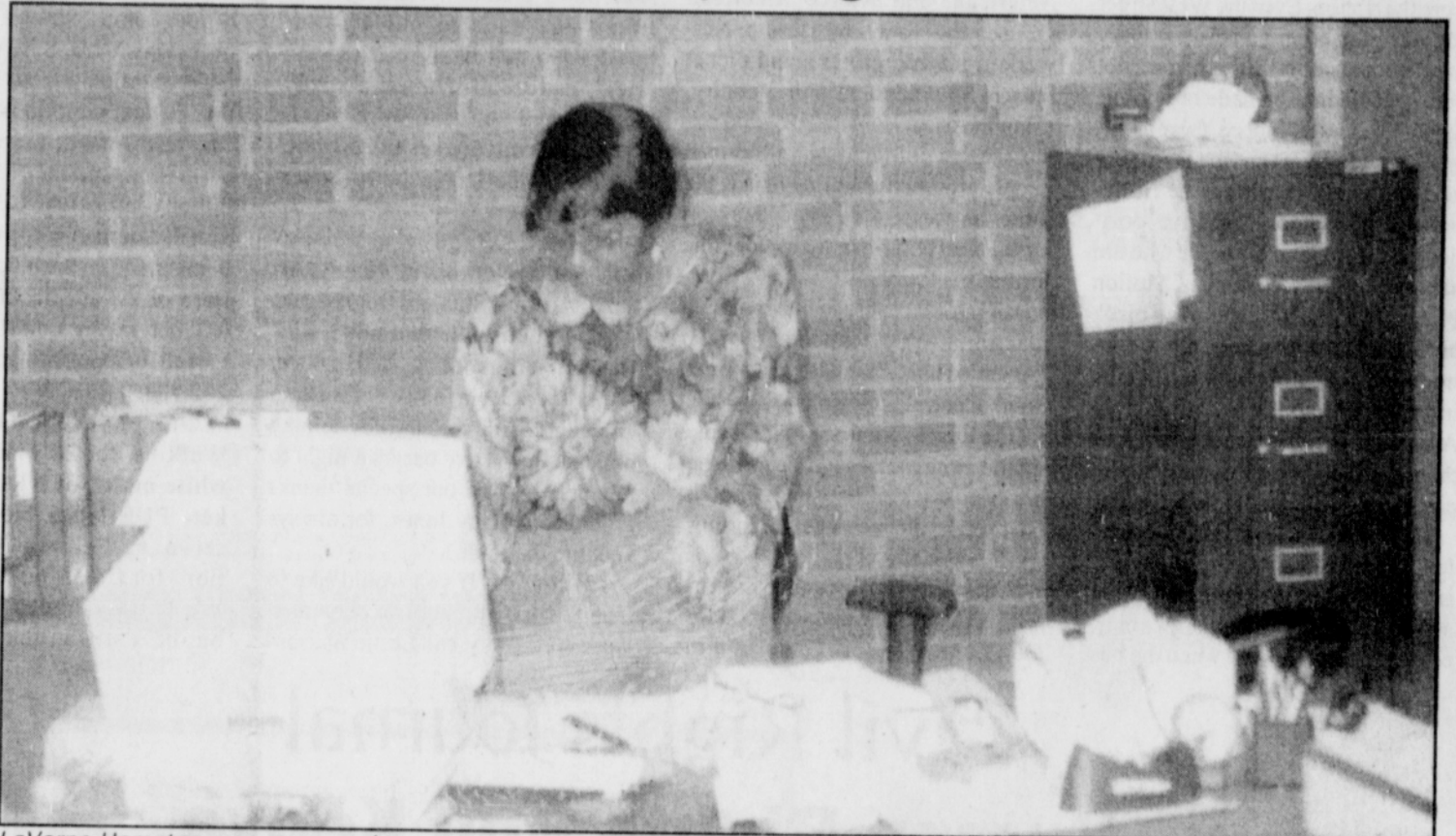
Wells Officials stressed the \$12.1 billion merger, the largest in history, will cause no disruption in service for the 600,000 Oregonians doing business with First Interstate.

No Oregon branches will close; customer accounts will be automatically converted; checks, credit cards and ATM cards will be honored; and customer service phone numbers will remain the same.

New Checks may not be available for several months, but First Interstate ATM cards can be used at 2,400 Wells Fargo ATM machines.

There are no changes planned for certificates of deposit, retirement accounts, loans or business accounts. Loan customers should continue to make payments as usual. Any additional information to holders of business accounts will be mailed.

First National Bank of Oregon began operating in Oregon in 1856. The name was changed to First Interstate in the 1970s and its headquarters moved to Los Angeles. It was then the biggest bank in the state. Wells Fargo, a familiar name in the history of the old west,



LaVerne Hampton, customer service manager, conducts business as usual Monday at First Interstate Bank on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Photo by Mark Washington

operated express offices in Oregon until just after the turn of the century.

The 40-story First Interstate Tower will apparently undergo a name change.

"It belongs to Wells. I would think it would be the Wells Fargo & Co. Tower," said a bank official. There is no decision yet on whether the tower will

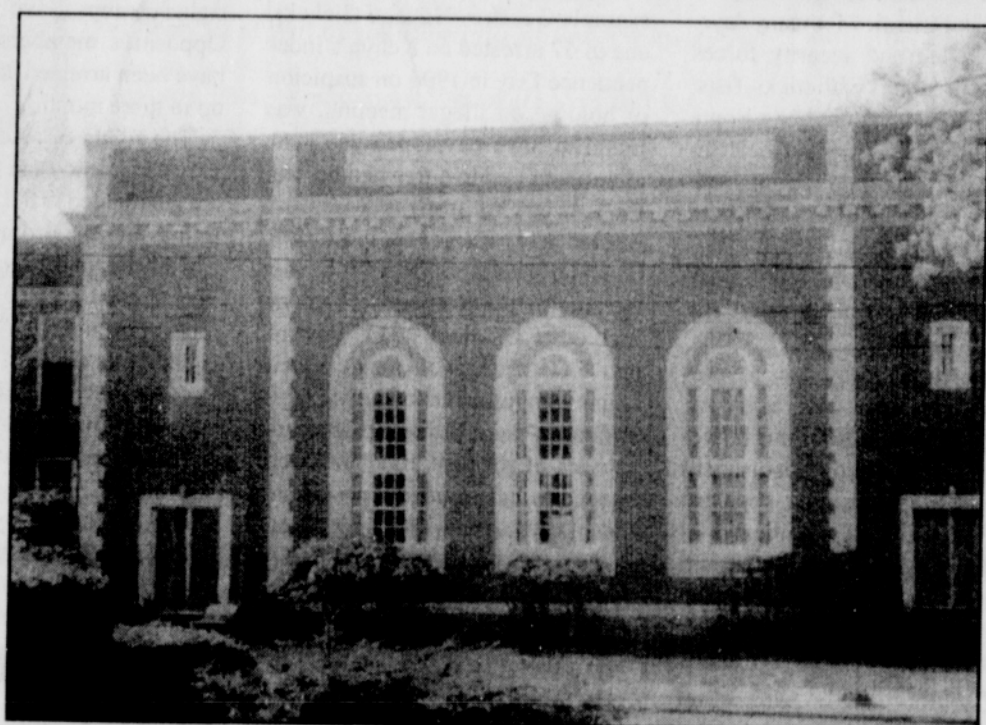
be sold.

Banners with the new name will be hung at branches this week and brochures about the merger are available.

Portland Averts Teacher's Strike



Dominique Glover (above), second grader at James John School in St. Johns (right). Portland schools still face budget problems.



Portlanders woke up Monday last week preparing for a teachers strike. Instead, the early morning news announced a tentative settlement.

Teachers had been working without a contract since July.

Earlier, the school board had voted to cut \$15 million from their budget. It meant cutting 500 jobs and eliminating special programs. There was no money to meet the teacher's demands.

Mayor Vera Katz got invoked, announced \$9 million in emergency help. She allocated \$2 million for athletics and school police, but put no strings on the other \$7 million.

The teachers had rejected the school board's last offer -- 0.5 percent this year and 3.66 percent next year. It meant giving up some sabbaticals and leaves along some steps, awards for education and experience.

Tuesday afternoon there was a contract on the agenda for the teacher's meeting at Memorial Coliseum instead of a strike. Ninety-six percent of 3610 teachers agreed to the terms of a three year contract that gave them most of what they wanted: a 2 percent retroactive raise this year, another 1.5 percent plus an increase for further education the next, and, the third year, no less than a 2 percent or more that a 3 percent increase.

A first year teacher with a basic bachelor's

degree will earn \$25,020, up from \$24,650, and a teacher with a master's degree and five year's experience will go from \$33,408 to \$34,107.

In addition, they keep the rules of seniority, an important issue for the teachers. Tuition reimbursements, professional improvement funds, access to students behavior records and increased planning time are also included. They gave up sabbaticals through 1997-98.

"This is a good contract," one teacher yelled as she left the closed meeting.

However, not everyone was happy. "It's a

Continued to page

Congressional Democrats Fight for Minimum Wage Hike

Eight Republican Senators, including Oregon's Mark Hatfield, joined Democrats last week in backing a proposal that would force a vote on raising the minimum wage from \$4.25 an hour to \$5.15 an hour in two 45-cent increments over the next two years. The tally was five short of the 60 votes needed.

Bill Clinton blamed the Republican leadership for barring efforts "to give 10 million Americans an immediate pay increase."

Senate Majority leader Bob Dole has given no indication that he would schedule a vote on the measure, so the only choice the Democrats have is to tack it on to other legislation. Holding a vote on the issue was such an uncomfortable prospect, that Dole brought the Senate to a halt for three hours while he tried to figure out a procedural way to avoid one.

Democrats in the House were thwarted 228-192 in their attempt to bring the measure to a vote. Opposition in the

Republican controlled House is probably unsurmountable.

Nevertheless, the concurrent actions in both chambers reflected the Democrat's determination to use the issue to differentiate their agenda from the Republicans. Many traditionally Democratic working-class voters have switched over to the Republican Party. The minimum wage may be a key issue in winning back their allegiance.

We're very please with the vote," said

Sen. Tom Daschle, D-S.D., Senate minority leader. Sooner or later this will pass... We hope it happens sometime in the next few weeks. Our Republican colleagues cannot have it both ways."

More than 12 million people earn the minimum wage. Polls show that three-quarters of Americans support an increase in the minimum wage. Critics say it will cut back on jobs, while supporters of the increase say without it, buying power will drop to a 40-year low.

Food Stamp Benefits Decreased

Annual readjustment of food stamp allotments will begin April 1.

The adjustments will result in some recipients seeing a slight drop in their benefits.

Benefit computations are refigured each April because of lower utility bills during the warmer months. Additional food stamps are provided during winter because of higher heating bills.

The exact amount of the decrease will vary from family to family. Food stamp grants are determined based on income, expenses, and family size.

The change will not affect Senior and Disabled Services Division clients whose benefits are determined using an average, year-round utility figure. The change also will not affect recipients who use actual utility costs in computations, or who have no utility costs.

More than 136,000 households, many of them low-income working families, receive food stamps in Oregon. The average amount of food stamps per family is \$165 per month. The program is administered by Adult and Family Services, a division of the Oregon Department of Human Resources.