

Sheriffs Makes Narcotics Arrest

On May 9 the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office Special Investigations Unit went to a SE Gresham residence after receiving a tip on a large amount of methamphetamine and marijuana. Officers searched the residence and found more than one pound of methamphetamine, over

one half pound of marijuana and other items involved in the distribution of methamphetamine and marijuana.

There were numerous weapons at the residence and one shotgun was seized. Officers found evidence of a commercial drug distribution ring. Sgt. Brian

Martinek estimates the street value of the methamphetamine at approximately \$50,000 to \$75,000 and the marijuana at approximately \$4000 to \$6000.

Gary Louis Wright was arrested at the scene. Police are looking for Donny Lee Wright who is believed to be incarcerated from an unrelated arrest.

Workers of America Unite!

A higher minimum wage appears more probable every day. Recently, 20 House Republicans offered a proposal that would boost the minimum wage by a dollar in two stages. Whether Congress passes this version or the bill introduced by the Democrats, which would increase the minimum hourly wage by 90 cents over two years, the result will be yet another

band-aid slapped over a gushing wound. And the fact that more lawmakers are learning toward such legislation does not legitimize it.

Since the passage of the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, labor advocates have contended that a minimum wage will prevent the exploitation of unskilled and part-time workers. The minimum wage has risen 17 times since then from 25 cents an hour in 1938 to \$4.25 in 1991. Yet the hue and cry of wage inequity persists. So it is unlikely that another wage adjustment will be any more successful in creating economic stability for those at the bottom end of the pay scale. Why?

For starters, wages are a reflection of relative work skills. You can trust that no one is out there lobbying for a minimum skills floor to coincide with the demand for more money. Until that happens, this segment of the work force will remain unable to compete of higher wages on their own. The argument for raising the minimum wage now would be stronger if it were based on making pay equitable for the work performed. Instead, proponents like Representa-

tive Dick Gephardt (D-MO) point only to the decreased purchasing power of \$4.25. What Gephardt and others clamoring for a higher minimum wage fail to acknowledge is that boosting pay for that reason alone does little more than continue the endless spiral of inflation.

If that trend is to be stopped, workers must be worth what they are paid, not sheltered from difficult economic conditions. In the late 1970s, the emergence of a global market and deregulation spurred a marked increase in the competitive pressures on American workers. Over the last two decades, traditional wage-setting institutions, such as collective bargaining, marketing norms and minimum wages, have been unable to protect low-skilled workers from the full force of labor market competition.

And that's the real problem. But raising the minimum wage does not address it. By giving unskilled hourly workers money without also requiring more from them in terms of productivity, the value of their contribution to the work force is inflated. They are not actually worth any more to their employers.

Ron Brown's Death Prompt's Condolences

Perhaps it's a sign of the times that not even the death of a Cabinet member can prevent a partisan tussle from erupting among Republicans, Democrats and their respective media allies.

Commerce Secretary Ron Brown died in an April 3 airplane crash in Croatia along with a trade delegation of business executives and Commerce Department staff members (including my amiable, talented Georgetown University schoolmate, Deputy Assistant Secretary Bill Morton). Just before Brown's April 10 funeral, NBC's Bryant Gumbel asked Rep. Charles Rangel (D-NY) in an interview: "Although many have praised Ron lavishly, I understood no Republicans have yet expressed condolences to the Brown family. Is this

politics as usual, or is that plain bad manners?"

Republican National Chairman Haley Barbour quickly demanded a retraction and noted that he had paid his respects to Secretary Brown's family shortly after the tragedy. "I don't deserve any credit for expressing my sympathy, but I don't expect people to go out and take political shots for it," Barbour said.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-KS) issued a memorial statement correcting Gumbel's remarks: "Wednesday, we said that the family of Ron Brown had not received condolences from any Republican. That is not the case. In fact, messages of condolences were expressed by some Republicans, and we regret the error." While Curry went out on a limb for

the peacock network, Gumbel refused to apologize. Instead, the "Must See TV" company issued a statement in which Gumbel declared, "Out of respect for the memory of Ron Brown and his grieving family, I am not anxious to prolong this story." The communique continued, "Like most people, I had hoped that decency would have prevailed over politics. Those involved will have to live with the truth."

Gumbel's testy tone aside, Congressional Republican leaders could have diffused this controversy by attending the Secretary's funeral, particularly given his violent, untimely death while on a dangerous, official mission of mercy. Instead, Gingrich was busy fundraising while Dole campaigned for President.

SRS trail '96

On Saturday, May 18, the Portland District, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, will kicked off the 1996 recreation season at the wild-life viewing nature trail leading to the Mount St. Helens Sediment Retention Structure (SRS).


Although the trail is open year-round, Corps rangers have been busy getting ready for spring and summer visitors by laying more gravel, erecting hand rails along the pathway and cutting back vegetation.

The SRS, on the North Fork of the Toutle River, Wash., was built to control the huge sediment flows and continuous erosion caused by the May 18, 1980, eruption of Mount St. Helens. Until last year, the site was not open to the public and could only be seen from a nearby observation area. Now visitors can walk along a gravelled trail that leads to the structure and view a scenic area that is home to herds of elk, deer and other wild-life. Because of the rugged landscape, the mile-long trail is not accessible to visitors with disabilities.

The visitor's trail, constructed in 1995 with the help of the Cowlitz County Corrections Department, begins at the SRS observation point near the North Fork Survivors Gift Shop. The gift shop is located east of Castle Rock, Wash., just off the new Spirit Lake Memorial Highway, state Highway 504, near milepost 21. There are restrooms, picnic tables, and a public parking lot. The trail is open daily from dawn to dusk.

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Float Decorators Needed

The 1996 Southwest Airlines Grand Floral Parade will feature more floats than any Rose Festival Parade in recent years.

This increase has created additional opportunities for groups to raise money and have a great time decorating the elaborate floats for the 1996 Southwest Airlines Grand Floral Parade. Studio Concepts, the Official

Builder for the Grand Floral Parade, is now accepting applications from groups interested in float decoration.

This is an excellent way for non-profit groups of 20 or more people to make from \$400 to \$1000 while participating in the fun and excitement of the second largest all-floral parade in the nation.

Float decorating groups must be

prepared to work assigned hours from June 1- June 7 and decorators must be at least 14 years old.

For more information interested group leaders should call Studio Concepts at 222-0077.

The 1996 Southwest Airlines Grand Floral Parade will take place on Saturday June 8 beginning at 10 a.m. at Portland's Memorial Coliseum.

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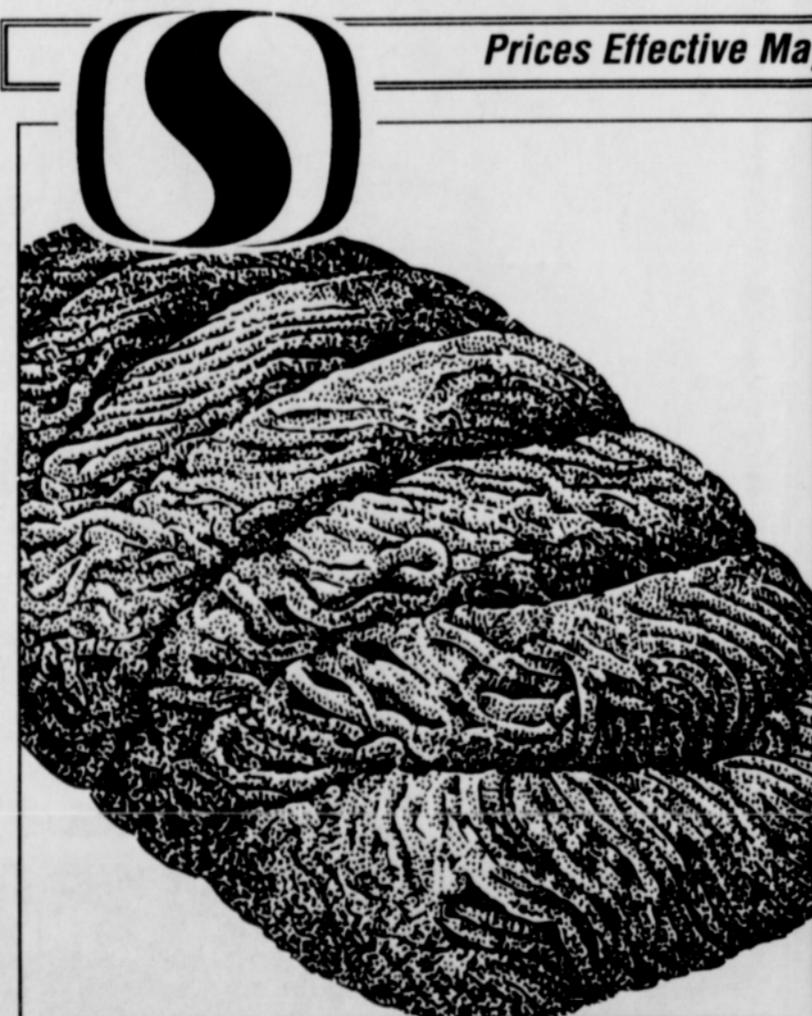
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at The Rose Garden
Rally at 4:15 (Please arrive early)
Take Tri-Met to the Rose Quarter Transit
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2. Give All You Can

All donations are tax deductible and will be used to buy back teacher's positions and innovative programs which are being cut.

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