

# Observing Vancouver

## Seniors Swing to Summer Music

The Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department will host a variety of special dances for seniors age 50 and over at Luepke Center, 1009 E. McLoughlin Blvd. Dances include:

\* "In the Heat of the Afternoon," the first, third and sometimes fifth Sunday of the month from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. with the band, Ristokats. On the second and fourth Sunday music will be by MusicAires. Refreshments are available. Cost is \$2 at the door.

\* Swingin' summer fun

## City nabs grant for tree inventory

Vancouver trees and bushes will soon be "logged" into a computer program to assist the city in planning future developments. The City of Vancouver received a \$3,000 grant from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to buy CITYgreen, a software program which evaluates a community's ecosystem. The grant will pay for an intern to prepare an inventory of city trees and vegetation. The data will be used to create visual models for planning purposes in future developments.

CITYgreen software can analyze tree canopy, vegetation cover and impervious surfaces and how these relate to issues such as stormwater, erosion control, energy conservation and urban wildlife.

## Committee to Explore Options for Elected Representation

The Citizens Advisory Committee on Representation held its second of four public meetings at Riverview Elementary School, 12601 SE River Ridge Dr. Tuesday, June 11. Appointed by Vancouver City Council, the committee will evaluate the city's current election process and determine whether to recommend amending the City Charter and change Vancouver's current at-large system to a district system for electing representatives.

The current City Charter mandates an at-large election system. Every two years all Vancouver voters nominate candidates in the September primary and in November elect three members for city council and a mayor. The council members are elected to four-year terms and the mayor to a two-year term. Under a district system, the city would set boundaries and candidates would represent districts within those boundaries.

At the first public meeting on May 22, an overview of possible options for representation and systems in other Washington cities was presented. The committee will explore these options in more detail at the June 11 meeting.

The public meetings are run as working sessions for the committee, with time set aside for public comment. Other meetings will take place Tuesday, June 25, at Ben Franklin Elementary School, 5206 Franklin and Tuesday, July 2, in City Hall council chambers. Meetings begin at 7 p.m. Citizen participation is encouraged. The Committee on Representation functions as an advisory body only. Recommended changes will be decided by Vancouver voters.

## City hosts great outdoor adventurers

For those who love outdoor sports, the Vancouver Parks and Recreation Department offers these outdoor recreation courses.

A canoe class will meet Saturday, June 15, from 9 a.m. to noon at Ridgfield Marina, 5 N. Mill St., Ridgfield.

Fans of fishing can advance their flycasting skills and strategies in a class June 8, from 10 a.m. to noon at the flycasting pond in Westmoreland

Park, west of McLoughlin Boulevard in Portland.

Experienced motorcycle riders will find two motorcycle safety classes Thursday, June 13, from 6 to 9 p.m. and Saturday, June 15, from 8 a.m. to noon at Bagley Center, 4100 Plomondon. This class is designed for riders who want to enhance their skills. Must provide own motorcycle and a certificate of insurance.

## International Oriented People Sought

The City's International Affairs Commission is seeking a person interested in international relations.

This nine-member board serves in an advisory capacity to City Council on matters relating to international activities and events. The IAC acts as a clearinghouse for information to raise citizen awareness about international activities in the community and to expand educational benefits by encouraging citizen participation. Members are appointed to serve

three-year terms. Maximum number of terms allowed is two. Appointments will be made by the Mayor and City Council. City residency is not a requirement.

Interested applicants should contact Marie Day, in the Mayor's Office, at 696-8211 or (FAX) 696-8049, for an application. Completed applications must be submitted to Vancouver City Hall, P.O. Box 1995, Vancouver, WA 98668-1995, by Monday, July 15, 1996.

# An Education: Of The People, By The People And For The People

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

While you are enjoying all that "good summer reading" I prescribed, please keep in mind that there are several generations of readers (and doers) poised to succeed us. Surely, by this time, there are none of us naive enough to believe that some benevolent system exterior to ourselves will adequately prepare them for that future.

If you believe that I have deliberately excluded tax-payer-supported public school systems, you are quite right. And if you believe that my experience-based position is that stand-alone social agencies operating without our constant vigilance and input will also fail in that mission, then, again, you are quite right.

And if, further, you believe that it will be individuals, not

bureaucracies, who will provide the necessary energies and initiatives to take us successfully into the next millennium, then you have surely hit my hole card. Last month I described here a computer-mathematics demonstration I performed for the "Saturday Academy" class conducted by Mr. Michael Grice for the

Portland Public Schools. The presentation was well-received by class and staff, but there is a particular relevance to my foregoing commentary.

This "forward-looking" learning model was almost an exact reprise of the national-award winning program I performed for The Dalles, Oregon junior high in 1966 -- Thirty years ago this November. Many of us would like to believe that, finally, the school system is permitting inventive and aggressive instructors to seek out the innovators and resources needed to deliver a quality education product for the 21st century of technology at hand.

Be that as it may, there apparently are a number of folks (and industries) who are not going to stand around in hopeful anticipation. Not while the media are competing to see who can deliver the worst news about the educational future of the city and state; from funding and teaching positions to dropout rates. Shortly after my "Saturday Academy" presentation, I addressed a Beaverton group from the cyberspace industry (many fellow members of the Association of

Oregon Industry).

While many of the personnel and engineering types that made up my audience were equally divided over which political party was responsible for the 'hits' taken by a major college education program under the new budget (Perkins Loan Program was cut 35 percent, while Pell Grants, College Work Study and the Stafford Loan Program remained virtually untouched). It was interesting that several hard-core, "boot strap" conservatives had to be reminded that the founders of their companies were educated by the federal government under the G.I. Bill.

There were several other heated, 'red-faced' exchanges (I use the term advisedly); there were serious inquiries as to whether some media reports on academic excellence were real or simply hype to gain funding. These people were admonished by their associates that a more hands-on relationship with the schools would answer their questions. But I remember in particular the distress of several people over a news article quoting a teacher's union that no students were to be touched or hugged

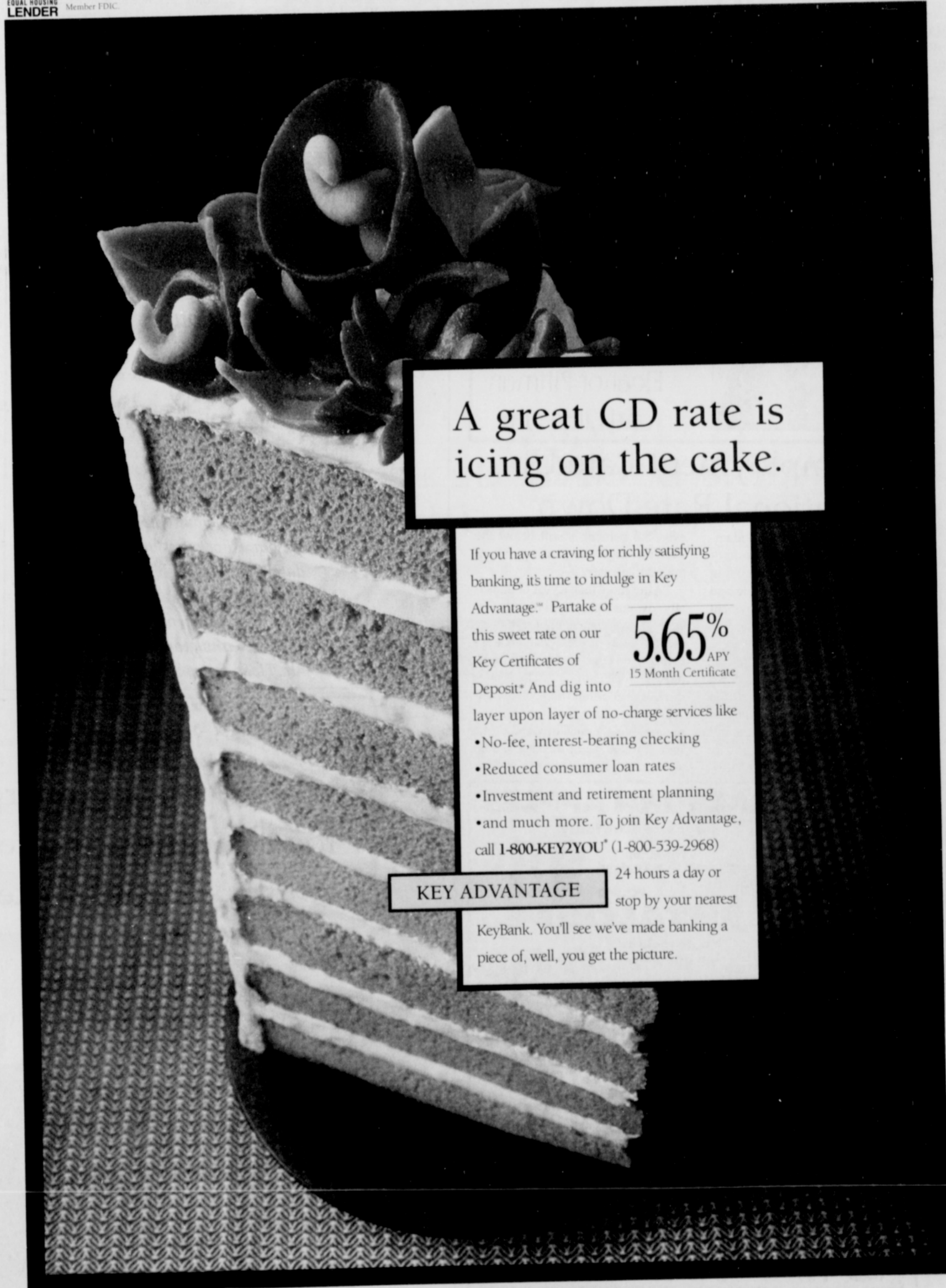
at any age.

Apropos to the 'participation' comments leading off this article, one CEO at this human resources conference brought photocopies of the May, 24 article by William Raspberry, black, syndicated columnist for the Washington Post, "Public Schools Need To Regain Their Public" ("...what, is wrong is the disengagement between the schools and the people"). Raspberry indicts blacks as much as whites.

Some very good things developed out of this meeting. My description of the "Saturday Academy" presentation has brought firm engagements for fall and winter demonstrations at outlying schools. My mention of an Australian educator who will be visiting me this summer led to an offer of a host home, now confirmed. I met this administrator in 1976 when he was in America looking at American Indian programs -- he was developing educational curriculum for Australia's so-called "aborigines" (blacks). We are going to discuss some of my new techniques for the teaching of math and computers. Cont. next week.



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