

The Miracle Theater

The Miracle Theater performs "Regreso a Mis Suenos" in bilingual format.



See The Observador.

Grand Reopening of New E & M

Local community and business leaders on hand for the E & M Community Market Ribbon Cutting



See Metro, page B5.

debut

Check out the Captain's top whatever on KMHD



See Entertainment, page B7.

The Portland Observer 25¢

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Ex-Texaco executive charged

A former Texaco executive was charged by federal authorities this week with obstructing justice in connection with a racial discrimination lawsuit against the oil company. The criminal action against Richard Lundwall is the latest blow against the embattled oil company, which faces a nationwide boycott due to allegations it discriminated against black and other minority employees. The charge arose from a lawsuit brought against Texaco by a group of black employees accusing the oil company of systematically discriminating against blacks and denying them promotions. Lundwall allegedly shredded or purged documents critical to the lawsuit.

ValuJet families see fire video

Relatives of ValuJet Flight 592 crash victims recently viewed dramatic videotape of a roaring fire staged to help investigators learn how a blaze started in the cargo compartment of the doomed DC-9 jet. The video of the test fire was played in the darkened Miami hall where the National Transportation Safety Board is holding public hearings on the May 11 crash.

Clinton backs Asia-Pacific

President Clinton, on his first overseas trip since his reelection, met Australian leaders and reaffirmed Washington's commitment to the Asia-Pacific region. He is later to address a joint session of both houses of parliament and tell them the United States has to look East "no less than it looks to the West."

Kato offers new Testimony

Brian "Kato" Kaelin, O.J. Simpson's one-time house guest, offered new evidence in the former football star's civil trial today. Kaelin described the thumps he heard on the night of June 12, 1994, when Simpson's ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and her friend Ronald Goldman, were murdered, as being "like someone falling back behind my bedroom wall."

US to focus on aid for refugees

The United States will not be sending combat troops to Zaire after all. Instead, fewer than 1,000 logistical personnel will be going to Rwanda to help returning refugees. Defense Secretary William Perry made the announcement, adding that the United States still was ready to send security troops if the situation deteriorates. Perry said the change in plans was brought on by the recent return of 500,000 refugees from Zaire to Rwanda.

Castro invites Pope to Cuba

Pope John Paul and Cuban President Fidel Castro met for the first time Tuesday at the Vatican. Castro invited the pontiff to visit the communist-ruled island next year and the pope accepted. A papal spokesman said most of the 35-minute meeting dealt with the role of the Roman Catholic Church in Cuba, where relations with the state have been sometimes frosty.

Shuttle begins 16-day mission

The space shuttle Columbia roared off from its Cape Canaveral launch pad Tuesday, taking a 61-year-old astronaut on a record-setting trip.

Avis accused of discrimination

The owner of six Avis Rent-A-Car franchises told employees to make it difficult for black customers to rent cars, a former franchise manager said last week.

Five of those Avis franchises in the Carolinas have repeatedly denied rentals to blacks over the past few years, a class-action lawsuit filed in federal court charges.

"If you were black, you weren't getting a car if there was any way out of it," former manager Kenneth Jessup, who is white, said at a news conference today. He used to manage the Avis office at the airport in Wilmington, N.C.

The lawsuit names Avis and franchise owner John Dalton of Wilmington.

Dalton has denied allegations of discrim-

ination. Avis spokesmen and lawyers have declined to comment.

"No one will ever know how it feels unless you have to go through this experience," said would-be car renter Vietta Ratliff of Cheraw, S.C., who says she was turned down at an Avis office in Florence, S.C.

The Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs which filed the lawsuit, is trying to force Avis to release records of similar race-based complaints to customer service telephone operators.

John Relman, a committee attorney, said the lawsuit also blames Avis corporate executives for not disciplining Dalton.

"As we know from the Texaco case, it is not enough for a corporation to say there was a loose cannon out there," Relman said at the

news conference. "They are responsible."

A race discrimination lawsuit filed against Texaco alleges a pattern of discrimination in hiring and promotions.

Relman said his organization believes "these complaints have been received for years" and that Avis should take responsibility. "Are we dealing with a corporate structure that allows indifference to racism? That just allows racism to flourish."

Dalton earlier ridiculed the charges.

"We rent to every nationality, every color, every creed under the sun," he said. "If I was a bad guy, don't you think something would have surfaced before now?"

Montgomery Carter, a former manager at Dalton's Greenville and New Bern franchises, said Dalton told his workers to deny

rentals to black customers who want to drive long distances in short times.

"Dalton has told me that, 'If a nigger is driving that distance in a short amount of time, he must be dealing drugs,'" Carter told USA Today in today's editions.

The suit was filed on behalf of three named plaintiffs plus an undetermined number of black customers at the five franchises. It seeks unspecified damages.

Dalton owns North Carolina franchises in Wilmington, Greenville, New Bern, Kinston and Jacksonville and another in Florence, S.C.

Linda Pugh said she had arranged by telephone to rent four minivans at the Wilmington Avis franchise in July 1995, according to court documents. When she went to pick up the cars, she was told she could not rent them.



Portland immigrant students Leng Bouasykeo (left) and Cecilia Giron (second from left) marched in Washington D.C. for Coordinadora '96. See Observador inside for their reports.

Boycott!

Ecumenical Ministries Votes for farm workers

The Board of Directors of the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon has voted to endorse the economic boycott of Kraemer Farms and NORPAC Foods, calling upon "all people of faith" to stand with the farm workers.

Brands subject to the boycott include Flavr-Pac frozen vegetables and fruits and Santiam canned vegetables.

The EMO resolution was brought about by the growers' refusal to allow farm workers to negotiate for better living and working conditions, and for the reprisals inflicted upon workers who complained or organized.

EMO studied the issue for three years, witnessing "living and working conditions of many Oregon farm workers which are substandard and an affront to basic human dignity." The resolution calls upon "all people of faith" to join in the effort on behalf of workers' right to organize and join in collective bargaining for improved benefits and working conditions. More on this story in next week's Portland Observer.

Oregon's Population Growth Trend continues

NEW POPULATION ESTIMATES FOR THE STATE OF OREGON & ITS COUNTIES

The Center for Population Research and Census (CPRC) at Portland State University has released its July 1, 1996 preliminary population estimates for the State of Oregon and its counties.

During the period July 1, 1995 to July 1, 1996, the statewide population increased from 3,132,000 to 3,181,000. This increase of 49,000 people represents the 34,000 more people who moved to Oregon than moved from Oregon (net migration), and the approximately 15,000 more births than deaths.

"The population change in Oregon appears

to have stabilized at about 48,000 per year," says Howard Wineberg, estimates program manager and assistant director of CPRC, citing increases are substantially less than the first three years of the 1990s when Oregon's population increased by about 60,000 per year.

Oregon's rate of growth in 1995-96 (1.6%) is still greater than the U.S. average (1.1%), making this the tenth consecutive year that Oregon's population has grown at a rate faster than the national average. In the six year period between 1990 and 1996 Oregon gained about 338,700 people (an increase of 11.9 percent). This represents 130,000 more people than the state gained during the 1980s.

Approximately 45 percent of Oregon's net migration this past year is due to Californians moving to Oregon. This is down from last year's figure of 55 percent and is the lowest percentage in the 1990s. Approximately 15,500 more people moved from California to Oregon than vice versa this year.

"Oregon continues to benefit from an extremely strong economy and a high 'livability' rating," says Wineberg. "However, California's economy continues to improve while the net migration from California declines. For Oregon's population to continue to increase by about 48,000 per year it may need to gain more migrants from states other than

California.

"It should be noted that Oregon's net migration may drop precipitously if its economy turns sour or if California's economy out-performs it," says Wineberg.

"The stable growth rate (and the smaller increase in population) in the Portland area since 1993 suggests that the Portland (tricity) area may increase its population by about 20,000 per year for the next 5 to 15 years," says Wineberg. "A substantially smaller increase will occur if there is a recession. In any case, the number of new residents will probably be lower than metro's projects would suggest."

Minimum wage jumps to \$5.50 on January 1

Starting January 1, Oregon workers who now earn the minimum wage will get a \$.75 an hour raise—the first of three increases approved by voters in the recent election.

Ballot Measure 36 increase the minimum wage to \$5.50 an hour January 1, 1997. In 1998, the rate jumps to \$6.00 an hour and then climbs to \$6.50 an hour beginning January 1, 1999.

Most Oregon employers are subject to both state and federal minimum wage laws. When covered by both laws, employers must comply with the regulations most advanta-

geous to employees. As long as the state requires a higher minimum wage, all Oregon employers must comply and pay the new rate.

New minimum wage compliance posters will be available to employers at no cost beginning December 16.

Employers can order the new poster by calling the bureau's Technical Assistance for Employers Program (TA), 503-731-4073, ext. 3 in Portland, or employers can pick up a poster in the Nature of Oregon Store in the Portland State Office Building, 800 NE Oregon Street.

Wyden announces 1-stop Career Center funds

U.S. Senator Ron Wyden has stated that Oregon will receive funding in 1997 to help develop a "One-Stop Career Center" approach to provide useful and convenient career services to the state's workers and businesses.

The funding, which will come from the U.S. Department of Labor, is based on a competitive procurement process. Oregon is expected to receive a total of between \$2.5 and \$5 million on July 1, 1997.

Wyden said, "As a long-time advocate for the 'One-Stop' approach to moving able

adults from welfare into workforce, I believe these funds will be a strong boost to the Oregon Option and our Jobs Plus programs. By making it more convenient for our citizens to get support as they seek employment, we can move more quickly toward our goal of eliminating welfare as a way of life."

In the past two years, the Labor Department has awarded One-Stop grants to 16 states, funding 125 One-Stop Career Centers. At the centers, employment, education and training services are gathered into a single delivery system for workers and businesses.