

City Funds Will Save Portland Teachers & Summer School

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOLS will be able to save classroom teachers, avoid increases in class sizes and operate summer school next year, thanks to an infusion of \$3 million from the city of Portland approved by the City Council today. "The Mayor and City Council members have once again demonstrated their commitment to the children of this community," Superintendent Ben Canada said. "They recognize the importance of strong schools to a strong community. We are extremely grateful for their assistance and will use the city's resources very prudently. The \$3 million approved by the city includes \$2.6 million for classroom teachers. City council directed the district to set aside the other \$400,000 for the 2000-2001 middle school summer program, which the city funded this year. The City Council, acknowledging that the district faces another budget deficit next year, urged Gov. John Kitzhaber to approve the local option legislation. This legislation, currently awaiting his signature, would allow school districts to ask local voters for a limited increase in property tax revenues to fund schools. If approved by the Governor, Portland Public Schools could hold a local option election next spring to raise funds

for the 2000-2001 school year. "We appreciate the city's leadership in urging the Governor to sign this legislation," Canada said. "We believe the citizens of Portland support their school and want the opportunity to save their schools from further cuts."

Funding Still Needed to Save Math Program

The City Council's \$2.6 million contribution for the current year still leaves the school year district short of the \$7 million needed to balance its 1999-2000 budget. Canada said the district's next highest priority is to fund the new math program and math textbooks, budgeted at \$3.4 million. We believe we'll be able to save the math program through a combination of revenues from Multnomah County, a federally guaranteed bond, and further cuts in other district programs," Canada said. Just last week, the district received an approval for a no-interest, long-term federally guaranteed bond that can be used for purchasing math textbooks. By taking advantage of the bond option, the district can save \$1.2 million, reducing the cost of the \$3.4 million math program to \$2.2 mil-

lion. Portland school officials have been negotiating with Multnomah County for several months to sell space in the school district's administrative office, at 501 N. Dixon Street, to the county. County officials have said they expect to spend about \$3.5 million on the deal. The district's 1999-2000 budget already has factored in \$2 million in revenue from the sale of space to the county. If the county pays the districts 3.5 million, the district will apply the additional \$1.5 million toward the \$2.2 million required for the math program. To fund the entire math program and make up for the remaining budget shortfall, the district will be forced to identify another \$1.7 million in cuts from its budget. "If the county sale nets us \$1.5 million for the math program, I will direct my staff to identify an additional \$1.7 million in cuts to balance the budget," Canada said. "That's a very difficult task, because we already cut \$5 million from last year's programs to get us to the budget we've got," Canada said. "This continues to point to the need for a long term funding solution," Canada said. "We encourage our elected leaders to work on a solution, for the benefit of all children in this state."

Former Clinton Nominee to Head State's Vocational Rehabilitation Division

The Oregon Department of Human Resources has selected nationally recognized rehabilitation services to be the state's Vocational Rehabilitation services administrator. Bobby Simpson, 48, comes to the DHR from Arkansas where he most recently was the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services in the Department of Workforce Education and Career Opportunities. Bobby Mink, deputy director of DHR, said Simpson has more than 20 years of professional experience in the field of vocational rehabilitation services. "Bobby has had the unique experience of being an advocate, administrator and consumer of vocational rehabilitation services," said Mink. "He has the expertise and vision to lead Oregon's

Vocational Rehabilitation Division into the new millennium." In 1999, Simpson was nominated by President Clinton to serve as Commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration in Washington, D.C., but declined the appointment and remained in his position in Arkansas. While in Arkansas, Simpson helped to restructure the state's rehabilitation agency and implemented a team approach for both administration and service delivery. "I am a firm believer in the team approach to providing services to support people with disabilities to be employed an independent," said Simpson. "I see this administrative role in Oregon as an opportunity within one of the best integrated human services

systems." Simpson has a bachelor's degree in psychology from Hardin Simmons University in Abilene, Texas and a master's in counseling from Texas University in Lubbock. At the age of 18, Simpson was injured in an automobile accident and has since used a wheelchair. "I have been a full-time employee since 1974," said Simpson. "With the right assistance, resource and attitude, I believe that a person's dreams of independence and employment can be realized." Simpson succeeds Joil Southwell, who retired in February. Simpson begins his role as administrator of VRD on September 7. His office will be in the Human Resources Building in Salem. His annual salary is \$91,000.

Coast Guard Probes Phony Call

The Coast Guard is on a search of its own today, trying to find out who made a phony distress call Tuesday night. A young boy was heard making three separate calls

about his boat being on fire in Quatermaster Harbor. The Coast Guard responded with a helicopter and a small patrol boat and found nothing. Other boats in the

area reported they saw nothing unusual either. The Coast Guard says it spent thousand of dollars on the fake call.

Cemetery Preservationists Meet


A conference is under way at Reed College in southeast Portland for the Association for Gravestones, a group devoted to the preservation of gravestones and cemeteries. Attendees have already visited

the Lone Fir cemetery, which dates back to the 1850s, for a workshop on how to clean gravestones.

The association deals with the basics of preservation issues —

use of culture, family and history.

The association members and conference attendees will help restore the gravestones as vital historical sources of past individuals and families.



EDUCATION CRISIS TEAM

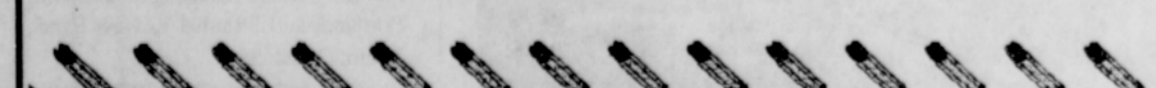
Upcoming meetings:

Thursday, August 12, 1999
and
Thursday, August 26, 1999

7:00 p.m.
Self Enhancement, Inc.
3920 North Kerby Avenue
Portland, Oregon 97227

- ◆ The Urban League, Self Enhancement, Inc., the Albina Ministerial Alliance and the Black United Front are forming Education Crisis Teams to reverse the educational crisis that is crippling our children.
- ◆ Please join us on August 12th and August 26th. We will discuss specific steps our community must take to rapidly improve our children's poor academic performance. The plan's dual focus is on holding Portland Public Schools accountable for providing children a quality education and the development of a community-wide mobilization to address this education emergency.
- ◆ All participating organizations agree this education crisis is causing irreparable harm to children and severely limiting their future. This crisis is impairing the ability of children, families and our community to successfully compete in today's technology-based economy.
- ◆ Our choice is clear, respond to this emergency and take the necessary steps to prevent our children from joining the growing ranks of dropouts and high school graduates that possess few marketable skills.
- ◆ Please plan to attend these meetings. Our children need us, we have promises to keep.

Bishop A.A. Wells ... Tony Hopson ... Lawrence Dark ... Ronnie Herndon





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GRAND OPENING

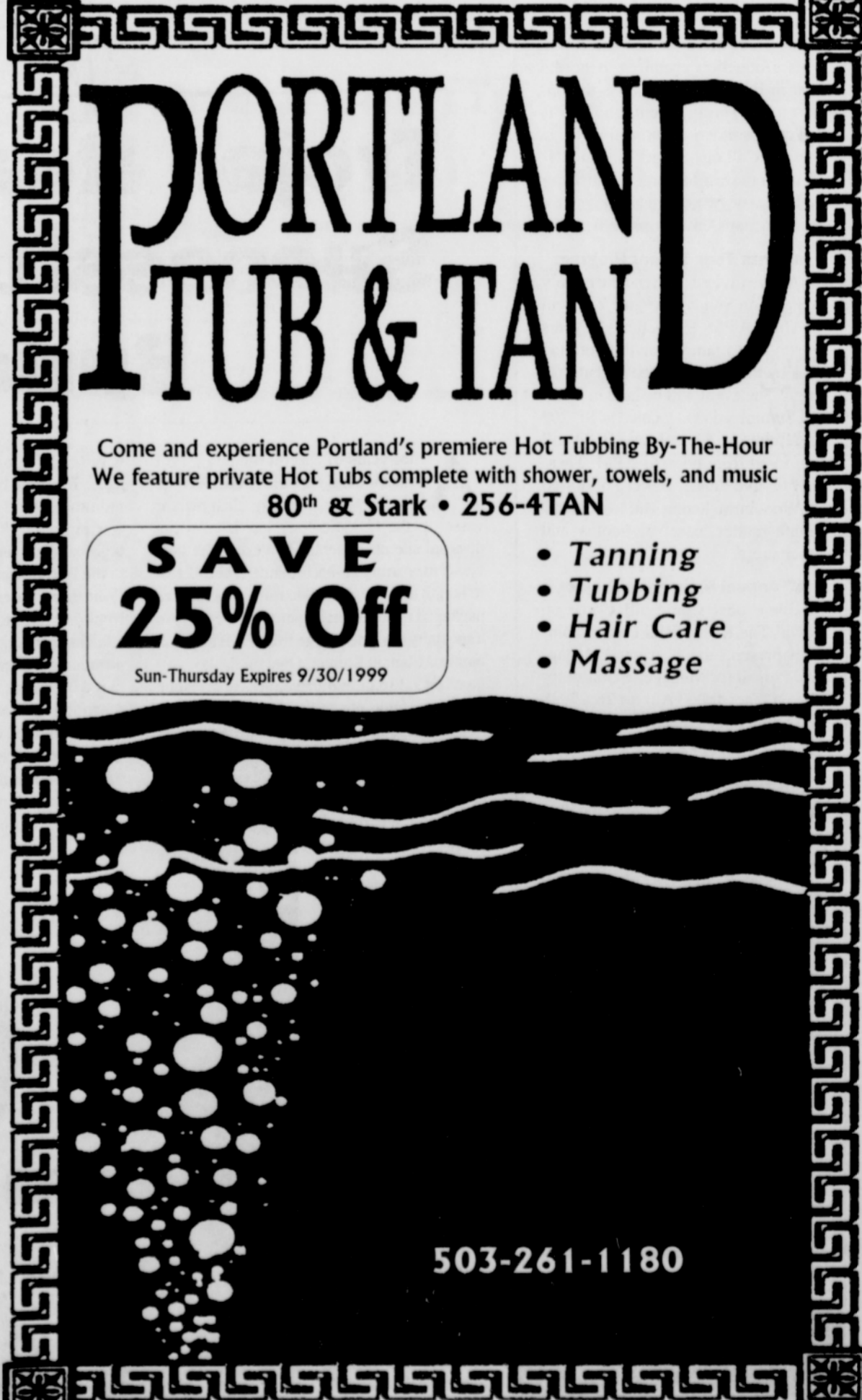
August 26th Through September 2nd



Fast Trip will have the lowest price on gas in town during our Grand Opening Celebration.

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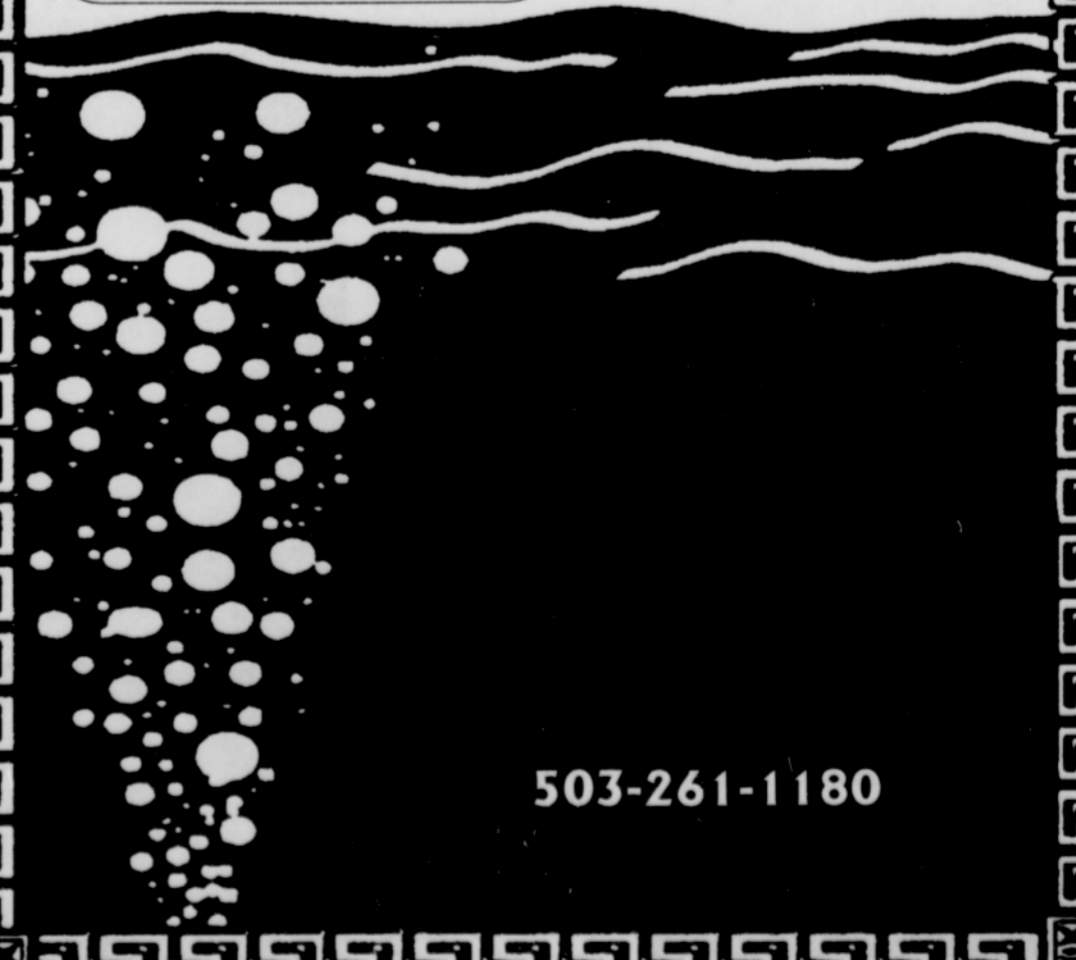
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