

Business

Nike co-founder Bill Bowerman dies at 88

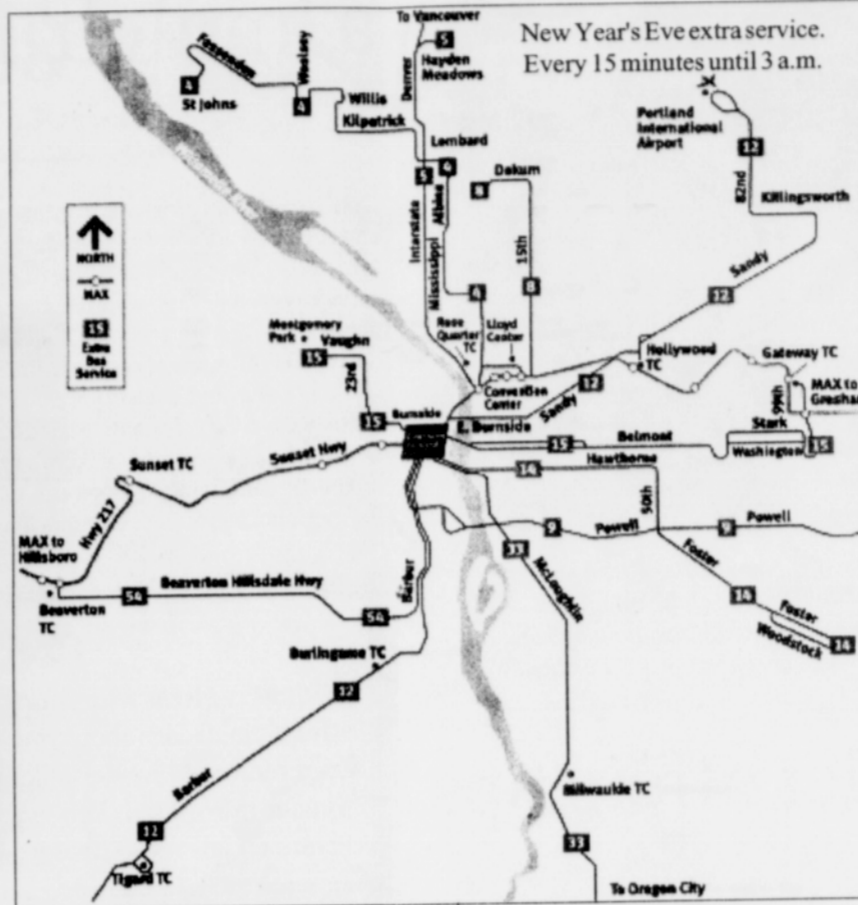


Former Oregon track coach and Nike co-founder Bill Bowerman, left, is shown with Nike CEO Phil Knight during the Prefontaine Classic Track and Field Meet in May 1999 in Eugene, Ore. Bowerman, credited with inventing the modern running shoe with the help of his wife's waffle iron.

Bill Bowerman, the Oregon track coach who invented the modern running shoe with the help of his wife's waffle iron, co-founded Nike and coached running legend Steve Prefontaine, has died. He was 88. Bowerman died in his sleep late Friday or early Saturday in a retirement home in Fossil. Nike Chairman Phil Knight expressed grief. "In 1998, Fortune magazine, asked me, who had been around so many heroes, to name my personal hero. And without hesitation, I named Bill Bowerman. He was for so many of us a hero, leader and most of all teacher. "My sadness at his passing is beyond words." In an interview with The Oregonian last week, Bowerman fumbled his speech and furrowed his brow when searching for words. "A lot of people are afraid of dying," he said. "Well, they might as well recognize it's going to happen. Me? I'm well beyond the average age, so every day is a bonus, and I'm grateful for it. "People go around weeping and wailing because they got old. Why? If you can't do anything about it, I don't see any reason to get excited about it." Bowerman officially retired from the Nike board of directors earlier this year. Bowerman, who coached at Oregon from 1949-72, began experimenting with different cushions and layers of material to give his runners an edge. In the late 1960s, he pressed foam rubber into the waffle iron, and the modern distance-running sole was born. Knight was one of Bowerman's pupils. Together they formed Nike, the multibillion-dollar shoe and apparel company. During the interview with The Oregonian, Bowerman wasn't wearing Nikes. The brand was Totes — with Velcro straps. When the co-founder of Nike was pressed about why he was not wearing the product Bowerman reached down and did a quick rip-on, rip-off motion with the velcro straps. "This is a design I submitted to Nike," he said. "Hell, it's quick. This isn't a very good shoe, but if I get in a hurry, it doesn't fall off." "Bill doesn't like tying his shoes now," his wife, Barbara, said. "He tried to get Nike to make shoes with velcro, and they did for a while..." Bill shot back—"And some hot-dog designer, I have forgotten who it was,

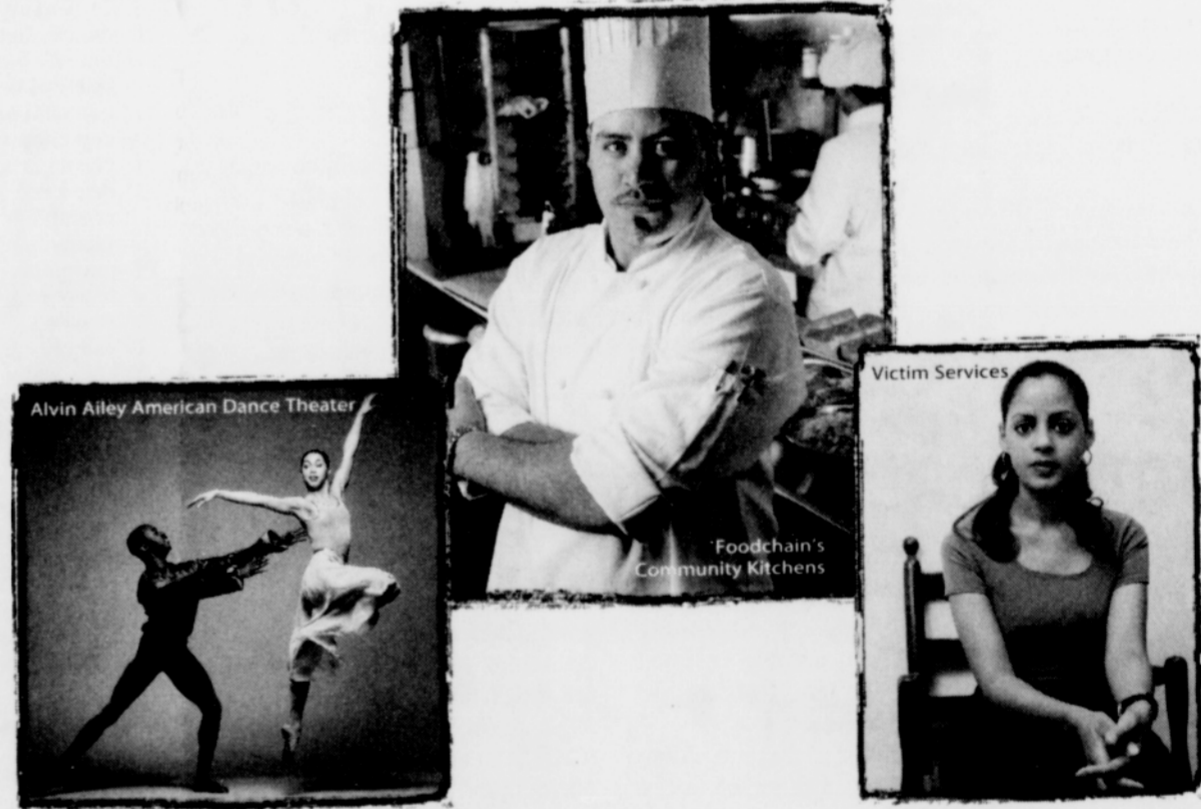
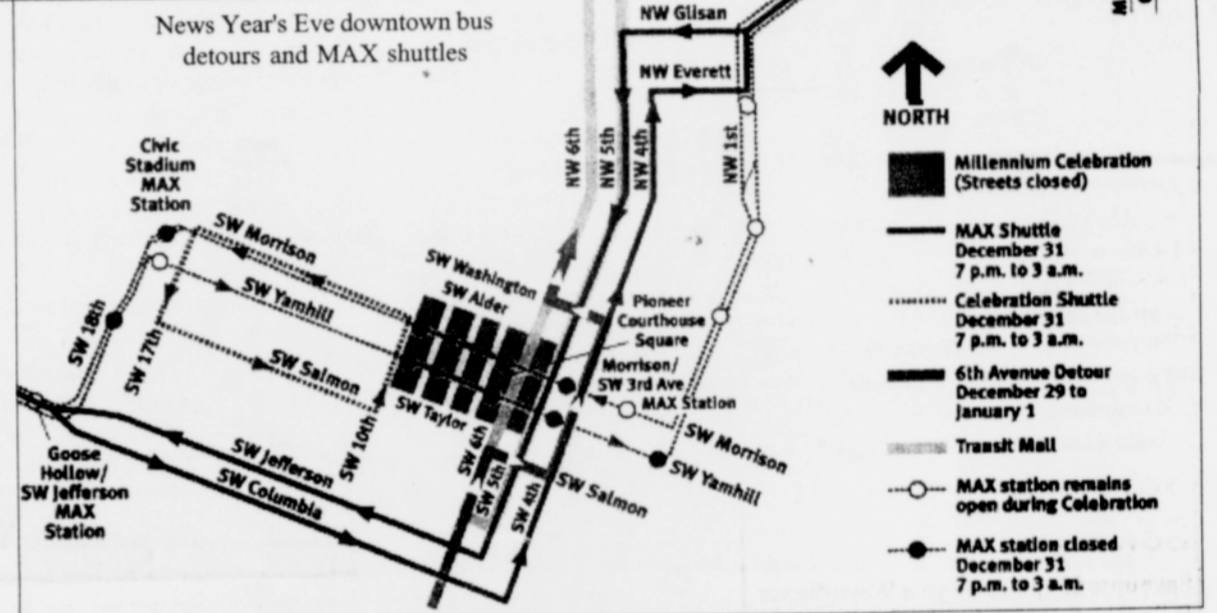
didn't like it." In Beaverton, at Nike World Headquarters, Knight chuckled at the story. "To this day, the product has never been good enough for him," Knight said. "He was very conscious of quality, and those are things that echo here to this day." Bowerman's most famous athlete was Prefontaine, the brash, mustachioed prodigy who inspired a generation of distance runners. Prefontaine died in a car crash in 1975. Bowerman refused to take much credit for building Oregon into a national track power, and Eugene into a Mecca for the sport. He said his predecessor, Bill Hayward, took charge at the rain-drenched school, separating the "swimmers from the sunbathers." Nike announced in October that a silhouette of Bowerman in his old Tyrolean hat would appear on Nike running shoes, along with a smaller "swoosh," the company's trademark symbol. Bowerman coached 24 NCAA individual champions and four NCAA Team Champions in 1962, 1964, 1965 and 1970. In 16 of 24 years, his Oregon track team finished in the top 10 in NCAA championships. He developed statewide programs for high school athletes and instituted jogging programs throughout Oregon that helped fuel the nationwide interest in jogging. In the early '60s he became very interested in making a lighter running shoe for his athletes, one not bound by heavy leather and stiff soles. By his calculation, for every ounce that was removed from the shoe's weight, 200 cumulative pounds would be lifted from the runner over the course of a one-mile race. With some latex, leather, glue and his wife's waffle iron, Bowerman developed the first lightweight running shoes. Knight, who trained under Bowerman in the late '50s and who was later a business student at Stanford, teamed up with his old coach. Each chipped in \$500 and manufactured 330 pairs of the new Waffle-designed shoe that they sold for \$3.30 a pair. Bowerman's team wore the shoes. Athletes around the world began wearing them, followed by public. Bowerman, who was born in Portland on Feb. 19, 1911, is survived by his wife, Barbara, and sons, Jon H. Bowerman, Jay W. + Bowerman and Tom Bowerman, and four grandchildren.

Tri-met offers free rides for New Year's revelers



Tri-Met's free on Year's Eve Tri-Met is providing extra bus and MAX services on New Year's Eve to help people celebrate safely. The service will be free after 6p.m. MAX will run every 10 minutes, but will be interrupted downtown around the Millennium Event at Pioneer Courthouse Square. Eastside MAX will travel as far as SW 3rd and Morrison. Westside MAX riders traveling through downtown, there's a shuttle bus that can take people around the event. The shuttle can be picked up at the Rose Quarter Transit Center, along the Transit Mall or SW 18th & Jefferson MAX station. There will be extra bus service on 11 major bus routes, which will run every 15 minutes from 8p.m. until 3a.m. Those routes are: 4-Fessenden, 5-Interstate (to Hayden Meadows), 8-NE 15th Avenue (to Hayden Meadows), 9-Powell Blvd. (to 98 & Powell), 12-Sandy Blvd., 12-Barbur Blvd. (to Tigard TC), 14-Hawthorne, 15-Belmont, 15-23rd Avenue, 33-McLoughlin Blvd. (to Oregon City), 54-Beaverton-Hillsdale Hwy. "Tri-Met has added more service to get people safely to their New Year's Eve events," said Tri-Met General Manager Fred Hansen, "it's free frequent and a great way to void parking hassles and traffic congestion in the downtown area."

New Year's Eve service information sources: Pick up a copy of "A Holiday service Guide" on buses and Max, at Tri-Met information racks and in the Tri-Met Office located at Pioneer Square. Check Tri-Met's website at tri-met.org/millops.htm. Call (503) 238-RIDE now to plan your New Year's Eve Trip. On New Year's Eve, Tri-Met customer service representatives will assist passengers at major transit centers and throughout downtown Portland. And the (503) 238-RIDE trip-planning phones will be staffed until 1:30 AM



New ideas and possibilities have been an inspiration to us for more than 40 years.

Courage in leadership and commitment to innovation are the hallmarks of the community-based programs sponsored by the Philip Morris family of companies. While our sponsorship of the arts is well known, we are also the largest corporate supporter of hunger-relief programs in America, are dedicated to providing assistance to victims of domestic violence, and support education and environmental initiatives.

The people of Philip Morris are committed to helping those in need, and to supporting the visionary individuals and organizations that enhance the quality of our world.

Working to make a difference. The people of Philip Morris.

KRAFT FOODS, INC. MILLER BREWING COMPANY PHILIP MORRIS U.S.A. www.philipmorris.com

Have a safe and happy New Year