



# Health/Education

## Free eye exams offered

Screenings are part of Glaucoma Awareness Week

CONTRIBUTED STORY FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The National Eye Institute, in coordination with the American Academies of Optometry and Ophthalmology, has proclaimed January as Glaucoma Awareness Month. In celebration of this proclamation, the Pacific University College of Optometry Vision Centers is providing a program of free glaucoma screening for adults of all ages during the months of January and February.

According to eye doctors, glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness and vision loss. In many cases, the efforts of glaucoma can be controlled if the disease is identified and treated in its early stages. Glaucoma screenings are essential in

detecting the presence of this disease before serious and permanent vision loss occurs. Screening for glaucoma is particularly beneficial for older adults and for members of Hispanic and African American community, which have a higher incidence of glaucoma.

Free glaucoma screenings are provided by Pacific University's Vision Center during January and February via appointment. Pacific's Vision Centers offer weekday, evening and weekend hours, with locations throughout the greater Portland including downtown, Southeast and Northeast Portland; and in Forest Grove and Cornelius. For more information and to schedule a screening at the Pacific University Vision Center near you, please call 357-5800.

## PCC enrollment reaches all-time high

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Portland Community College, the largest post-secondary school in the state, crunched enrollment numbers for the final week of fall term and has determined that college enrollment reached record levels. The report from the Institutional Research office shows that at the end of the 12th week, 42,748 students were enrolled fall term at Portland Community College, a jump of 8.9 percent from last year at the same time. There has also been a 5.2 percent hike in full-time equivalent (FTE) enrollments. FTE is calculated by adding full- and part-time enrollments together to make a full-time equivalent student which is determined at 12 credit hours.

Portland Community College has been on a steady growth curve for the last several years after a flattening of enrollments in the mid-90s. The only other time in PCC history that fall term reached the 40,000 student mark was fall term 1989 when 40,189 students registered for classes.

College officials speculate that a number of factors are at work. First, the demographics point to a boomlet of younger age students entering college. A report, "A Back to School Special Report on the Baby Boom Echo - No End in Sight," unveiled by President Clinton and Education Secretary Richard Riley in August, predicts that college and university enrollment will jump 10 percent to 1.5 million students nationwide in the next decade.

The Portland metro area has received a significant increase in population, particularly in the silicon forest of Washington County - the western edge of PCC's district - where residents have seen a 31 percent jump in population in

the last decade.

Other factors that could attribute to the jump in enrollment include the rising cost of college. At \$38 per credit hour, Portland Community College and other community colleges across the country are an affordable post-secondary choice for an increasing number of students.

The ease of registration and taking courses has also been augmented with online registration and online classes. Portland Community College is the first community college in the state to implement online registration, which began this fall.

In addition to registering online, students can now take courses via the computer. These offerings have increased from a handful of courses in the mid-90s, to approximately 90 classes in a wide variety of subjects, including associate-degree options.

The December 13 issue of Community College Week ranks Portland Community College at the 14th largest community college in the nation, using 1997-98 U.S. Dept. of Education data, which is the latest academic year for which numbers are available. Miami-Dade is ranked number one. West of the Mississippi, PCC ranks eighth largest. Total enrollment, or FTE enrollment for PCC, is reported at 23,782.

PCC maintains three comprehensive campuses, Cascade, Rock Creek and Sylvania, four multi-service training centers, and offers classes at 150 locations throughout its 1,500-square-mile district. The Cascade Campus is located at 705 N. Killingsworth in Portland. Rock Creek Campus can be found between Beaverton and Hillsboro at 17705 NW Springville Road. The Sylvania Campus is located at 12000 SW 49th Ave. in Portland.

## Adoption from 1

marveling that in a few weeks she finally might know the name of the woman who left her under a tree when she was just 4 days old. Hester carried a black binder, filled with letters to people long since dead, documenting her 50-year search.

"I hope this fills this void, to know that my birth mother was OK and had a good life," said Hester, who was 6 when she learned she was adopted. Her blue eyes welled with tears, and her voice trembled as she added, "I can't imagine in 1927 what hell she went through."

A news article from that year, tucked into Hester's binder, reported that Hester was found sleeping under a tree and that she was clean and well cared for. The story also reported that a woman called the sheriff's department to notify officers of the infant's whereabouts. "I'm leaving town," the woman said in a broken voice, "and want my baby to have the best of care. Goodbye."

Unlike Hester, David Proby didn't have a "stitch of information" about his parents.

The 39-year-old Portland resident said he was torn about coming to the vital statistics office on Thursday. "It's probably best to let dead dogs lie," said Proby, adding that he did not tell his wife about his decision to get his birth certificate. "But I've been curious ever since they told me I was adopted."

Michael Hawley Jenkins, a 63-year-old adoptee who lives in central California, might have had an inkling of how the day would end. "I thought I should come in quick before the law changes," he said.

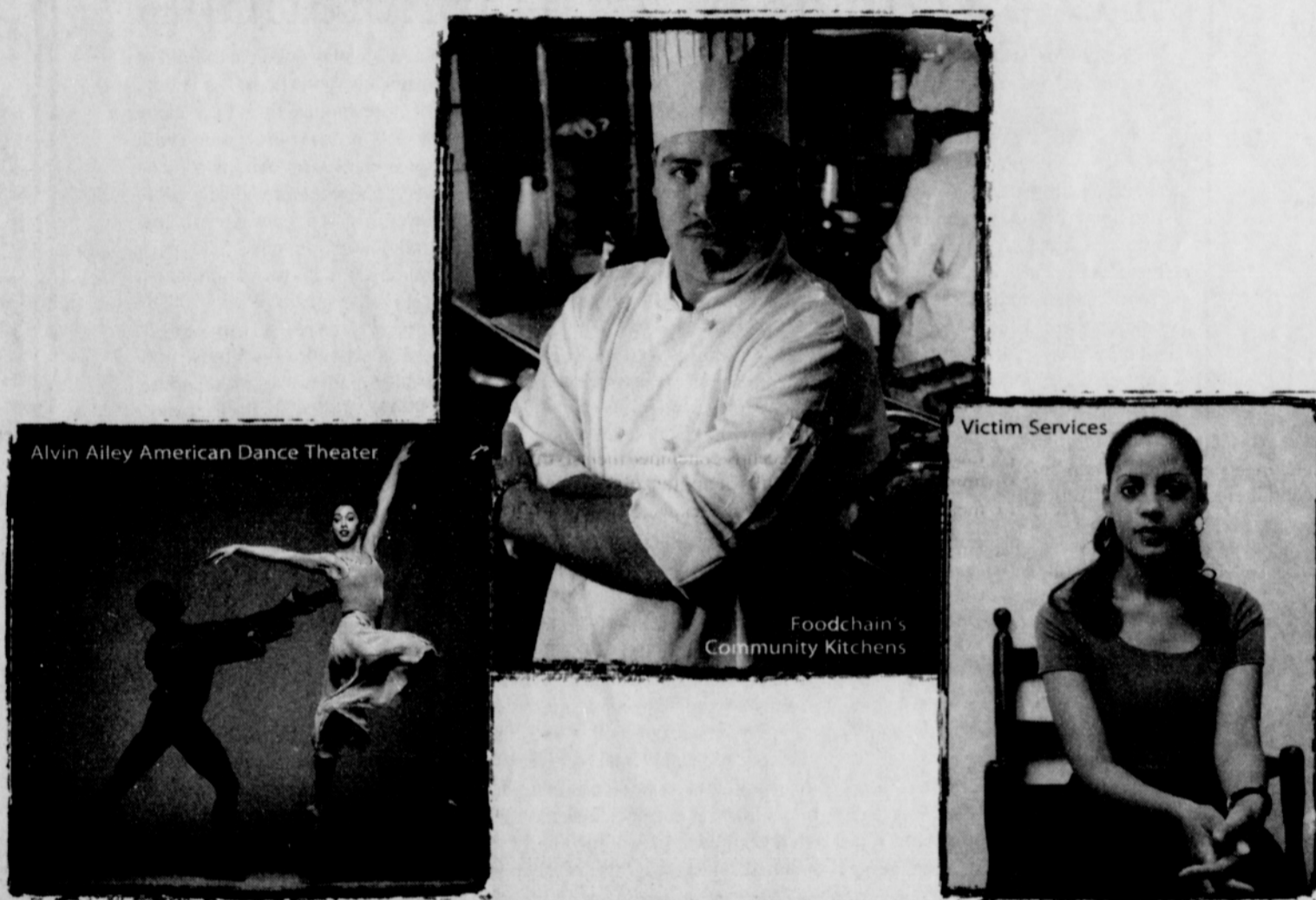
The Oregon vital records office received unofficial notice Thursday afternoon to stop shipping requests to the state archives in Salem, said Edward Johnson, state registrar of the Center for Health Statistics.

He said his office already had sent 75 orders Thursday morning. If not for the temporary stay issued during the afternoon, the requests in this first batch would have been mailed to adoptees by the end of next week.

"We will hold off on processing the orders again until the stay is either lifted, or some other action occurs," said Johnson, who added that he was not surprised by Thursday's decision. "Until all legal avenues are exhausted, this is potentially going to continue."

The vital records office will continue accepting requests, Johnson said. If the stay is lifted, applications will be processed in the order received.

Charles Hinkle, an appellate law specialist, said the Supreme Court probably will decide within two months whether to hear the case once the birth mothers submit a petition for review. Although the court has a list of factors to consider, Hinkle said the high visibility of the subject might lead the court to rule on the measure. "The Oregon Supreme Court might want to weigh in on this area that is an emerging issue around the country," he said.



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