



See Technology Issue
Special Career and technology



Tiger Woods does it again
See Sports



See Metro
Ebony fashion show hits Portland

Bulk Rate U.S. Postage PAID Portland, OR Permit No. 1610

The Portland Observer

University of Oregon Knight Library Newspaper Section Eugene OR 97403

Multnomah County launches "Reach Out and Read" program

Blazers Center Arvydas Sabonis read books in Spanish and English as a part of Multnomah County's new program - Reach Out And Read: A project coordinated by Multnomah county's Health Department and the Library, based on the national pediatric literacy program that encourages parents to read to their children beginning at birth.

When: Tuesday, March 21, 2000 - 2:00 p.m.



PDC fiscal chief quits, says he hit 'home run'

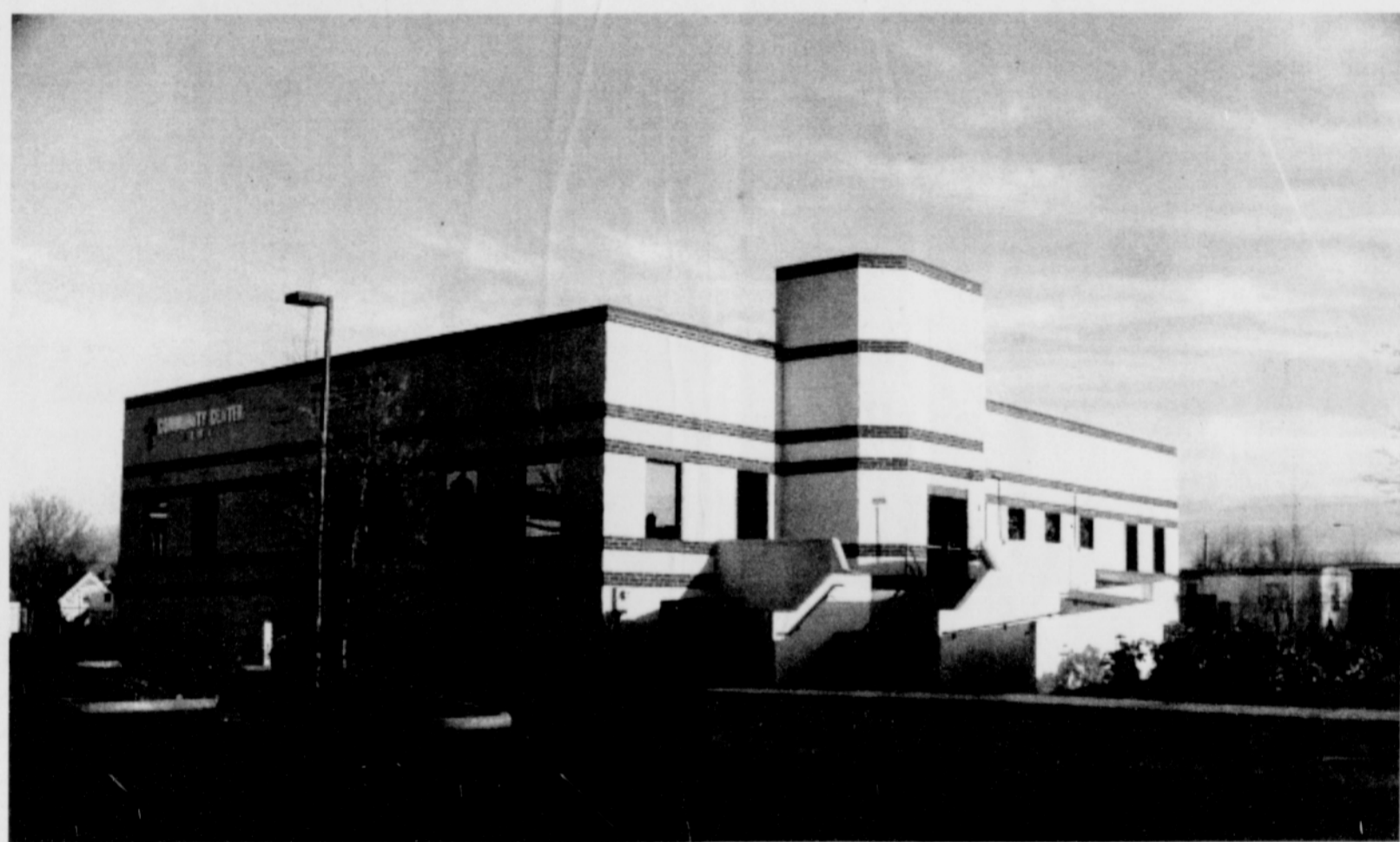
CONTRIBUTED STORY FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Scherer says system not failure as reported The Portland Development Commission's finance director resigned Monday, five days after the public agency's board called for greater scrutiny on outside contracts... Chris Scherer, who had run the PDC's finance and information services department since 1996, stepped down from his \$92,000 +a-year job to pursue a career in the private sector. His resignation is effective April 1. "My own career goals include a move into the private sector with more of a focus on technology projects," Scherer wrote in an e-mail to Felicia Trader, the PDC's executive director, and the rest of the staff. "During my five years with the agency, we have accomplished a great deal together," he wrote. "I was brought in to help build PDC's resource base and, at the risk of sounding immodest, I am going to have to call that effort a home run." Scherer was placed on administrative leave last week. That's when Trader discovered that for 14 months, Creative Data of Beaverton had been paid more than a half-million dollars of taxpayer money without a contract for a system that didn't function properly. One of Scherer's PDC officials have since hired another consultant to install a different financial management system. In his e-mail, Scherer wrote that one of his biggest accomplishments at the PDC was helping to redefine the finance department's mission. "Despite what you might read in the newspaper, PDC's information technology efforts have not failed," but have, in fact, provided leading edge solutions to our complex and demanding work environment," he wrote. The development commission is one of the city of Portland's most powerful agencies, responsible for dozens of signature projects such as Pioneer Courthouse Square, the Lloyd District and development along Tom McCall Waterfront Park. Through its use of tax-increment financing, the agency links with developers and offers low-interest loans to spur development. In some projects, the PDC will offer to pay for infrastructure - roads, utilities and other improvements - in order to lure developers to build housing and retail space. Under Trader, the agency has a proposed budget for next fiscal year of more than \$220 million.

(Please see 'PDC', page 6)

Event kicks off African-American Census 2000 campaign

Lutheran Inner-City Ministries 4219 NE Martin Luther King Blvd. The importance of the census to people of color is the theme of an event to encourage African Americans to participate in Census 2000. Multnomah County Chair Beverly Stein, Commissioner Serena Cruz, State Representative JoAnn Bowman, and members of the faith community will preside at the event. This free community fair will feature food, entertainment, and children's activities. Census 2000, the largest peacetime mobilization in U.S. history, will reach an estimated 275 million people across the United States. Government and community leaders use Census data for everything from planning schools and building roads to providing social service dollars and managing health care services. Over \$180 billion in federal funds are awarded to localities based on Census numbers. The State of Oregon lost an estimated \$162,000,000 in federal funds since 1990 because of the undercount in the 1990 Census. Multnomah County lost \$30 million dollars in federal funding because of the undercount. Children were undercounted by 52%



nationally and by 38% in the Portland area. It is estimated that 8.5% of Multnomah County African Americans were not counted.

Weather

Through the weekend	
Today	58°F/14°C
Rain	42°F/5°C
Thursday	54°F/12°C
Showers	38°F/3°C

Friday	56°F/13°C
Showers late	42°F/5°C
Saturday	54°F/12°C
Showers	40°F/4°C
Sunday	54°F/12°C
Showers	42°F/5°C

Inside-A

Week in Review.....2
Vancouver extends money for safe walkways.....2
\$7.5 million set aside for treatment of women..... 3
New Orleans chef hosts culinary show.....5

Metro-B

Ebony Fashion show draws in the finest dressed.....1
Spike and Mike return with their twisted cartoons..... 3
EMO's new board members reflect diversity.....4
El Observador.....5

This Week in History

On March 22, 1972, Congress sent the proposed Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution to the states for ratification. It fell short of the three-fourths approval needed. On March 24, 1989, the nation's worst oil spill occurred as the supertanker Exxon Valdez ran aground on a reef in Alaska's Prince William Sound and began leaking 11 million gallons of crude. On March 25, 1965, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. led 25,000 marchers to the state capitol in Montgomery, Ala., to protest the denial of voting rights to blacks.