

METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

Community Calendar

ABSOLUT Winter Festival

The coolest place to be on Thursday, Feb. 15 and Friday, Feb. 16 is the ABSOLUT Winter Festival at The Rose Quarter between the Rose Garden and Coliseum in Portland. The festival is open to the public with FREE admission for all ages. From 11 a.m. - 7 p.m., world-famous ice sculptors will compete to qualify for the World Championships at the 2001 Winter Games.

Keeping the Spirit Alive

On Feb. 17, an exhibition of over 90 pieces of American Indian Art from the collection of Dr. and Mrs. Robert B. Pamplin, Jr., will open at the Oregon History Center (OHC) in downtown Portland, 1200 SW Park. The largest exhibit to open at the OHC in three years, "Keepin the Spirit Alive" explores the importance of Native cultural traditions and celebrations. As a gift to the public, the museum and exhibit galleries will be open free for the entire opening day, 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. Call 503/222-1741.

Seafood and Wine Festival

This year's 2001 Newport Seafood & Wine Amateur Winemakers Tournament festival will be held Feb. 23, 24 and 25. This wine competition is open to amateur winemakers only and offers an opportunity for these individuals to have their wines independently evaluated by a panel of judges. For more information, call the Greater Newport Chamber of Commerce at 1-800-COAST-44, or checking the web page at www.newportchamber.org/swf.

Dr. Seuss Birthday Party

On Thursday, March 1, McMenamins Kennedy School throws a Birthday Party for Dr. Seuss. Stop by Kennedy School from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. for birthday cake and performances by the Phoenix Theater group, whose actors will invite all family members to join in honoring the author with interactive, descriptive readings of your favorite Seuss tales. A free celebration. Call 503/249-3983.

Hot Spots of the Planet Earth

Dr. Mittermeier will be giving a talk on "Biodiversity: Hot Spots of the Planet Earth" on Tuesday, Feb. 27 at 7:30 p.m. in the Oregon Zoo's Cascade Crest Banquet Center. His latest book, "Hotspots," is the definitive compilation and status report on the Earth's richest and most threatened reservoirs of plant and animal life. To order tickets, call 503/525-4281.

Indoor Gardening for Children

The Oregon Garden presents "Indoor Gardening for Children" on Saturday, Feb. 17 from 9:30 a.m. - 12 p.m. This is a fun event for children ages 3 - 14. Activities include making an ivy topiary, designing a milk carton herb pot and making seed tapes. Janet Smith of The Ladybug Roadshow will be presenting storytime at 10 a.m. and again at 11 a.m. Call 503/874-8249 or 1-877-2733, ext. 8249.

A Friendly Odyssey

Friendly House, a nonprofit social service organization with a 70-year history of serving the Northwest Portland community will be celebrating the future of our community and raising \$100,000 to support Friendly House's programs. Featured speaker will be former Governor Barbara Roberts speaking about the future of neighborhood life. Call 503/228-4391.

A Gathering of Voices

A Gathering of Voices present Portland poet and author Harold Johnson who will read at 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 16 in the Channing Room of the First Unitarian Church, 1011 SW 12th in Portland. Mr. Johnson wrote "Dry Boats," a book of poems, and has been editor of "Fireweed." Call 503/452-4634.

Pop in the Pool on President's Day!

School's out on Monday, February 19, and Portland Parks & Recreation offers a great way to spend the day! Come on in for Open Play Swim at most of our community pools. To find the pool nearest you, call 503/823-5130 or visit the PP&R Aquatics Program web page at www.PortlandParks.org. While you're there, check out special activities being offered that day at PP&R's community centers.

Convention Center Expansion Begins

Future of Coliseum in Doubt

Portland officials are thinking what once seemed unthinkable: demolish the Memorial Coliseum.

The coliseum was once home to Oregon's biggest events: Portland Trail Blazers basketball games, auto and boat shows, and concerts. Now most of the big-name, big-money events have moved to the newer, larger Rose Garden.

The landmark coliseum needs expensive repairs and renovation. And it is in the middle of a four city-block area that planners think could be used to create a more vibrant urban neighborhood. At the request of Portland Mayor Vera Katz, planning consultants began a review of the Rose Quarter last fall. They are to submit their recommendations later this month. Their options will include possible developments with, and without, the Coliseum. The biggest problem with the venue? The 12,000-seat arena is too small for major league sports but too big for many college and high school events.



Mayor Vera Katz takes the controls of a backhoe to mark the groundbreaking of an expanded Oregon Convention Center. (PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/PORTLAND OBSERVER)

Expansion of the Oregon Convention Center began Thursday with an official groundbreaking ceremony.

The \$116 million project, which increases the convention center's tradeshow and convention capacity by 60 percent, will take 25 months to complete. The new facility is scheduled to open in April 2003.

The project was given the green light last year. "Rarely are we able to accomplish so much public good for no cost to property taxpayers. The visitors industry is to be thanked for making this possible," said Mayor Vera Katz.

The expansion financing is part of a comprehensive visitor development initiative that will provide monies for performing arts facilities, renovating PGE Park (formerly Civic Stadium), expanding Tri-Met's fareless square light rail service to the Lloyd District and regional tourism marketing.

"While this innovative partnership generates considerable dollars for several projects, the Oregon Convention Center is the priority," said Mike Burton, Metro executive officer. The hospitality and visitor industry agreed to a 2.5 percent increase in Multnomah County lodging and car rental taxes to fund the expansion and visitor initiatives.

"This collaboration between the public and private sectors is just the way the region needs to respond to its challenges in the future," said Multnomah County Chair Beverly Stein. "This visitor package will enhance the industry's return on investment, generate new jobs and position Portland on a more even playing field with its major competitors," said Harold Pollin, chair of the Tri-County Lodging Association.

Griffin Named to Number 2 Post at Human Services

Donnie Griffin of Portland has been named interim deputy director of the Oregon Department of Human Services.

Griffin, 48, joined the state's health and human services agency as personnel director in August 1999. He started his new job on Feb. 1, taking responsibility for day-to-day operations of the state's largest agency.

The department has about 9,500 employees and a two-year budget of \$7.3 billion. It's now planning its first fundamental reorganization in 30 years, which will be presented to the 2001 Legislature. "Donnie has rich experience in organizational change and development," said Bob Mink, DHS interim director, who



Donnie Griffin

appointed Griffin to the deputy position. "He will ensure that our effective services continue as we reorganize the department." Gov. John Kitzhaber appointed Mink to lead the agency after Director Gary Weeks announced in January that he had accepted a position with the Annie E. Casey Foundation in Baltimore.

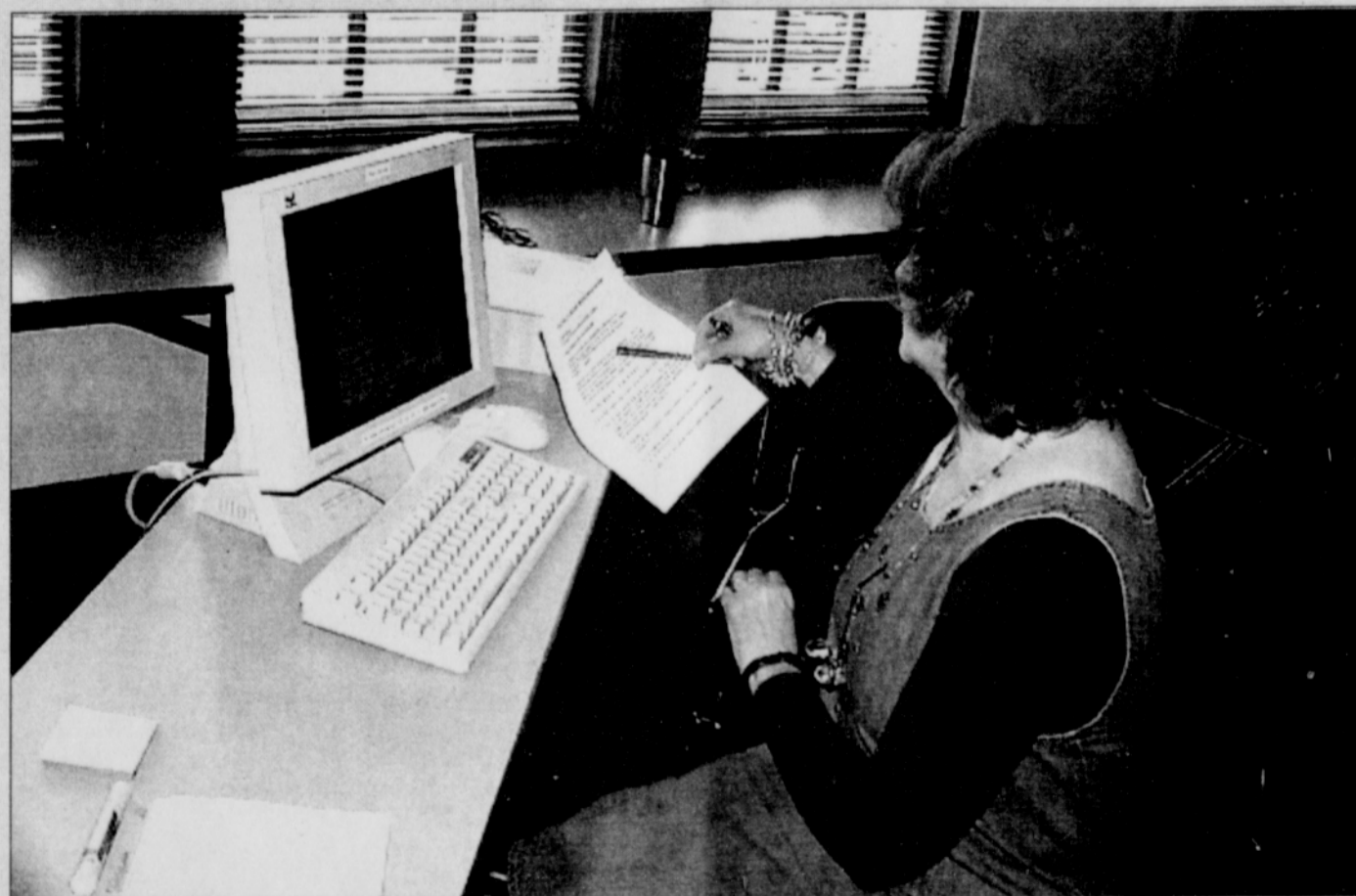
For 20 years, Griffin held various positions with US West Communications in Portland, Seattle and Denver. After leaving the utility in 1996, Griffin started an organizational change consulting business, The Griffin Group, and also taught business leadership courses at Marylhurst University's business management department.

He is currently chair of the State Board of Education, a volunteer position to which Kitzhaber appointed him in 1997.

Griffin is co-founder of the Black Employees Telecommunications Association, and past chair of the northwest chapter of the National Conference of Community and Justice. He is also a Class III senior fellow of the American Leadership Forum of Oregon, where he currently serves as a board member.

He holds a master's degree in management from Antioch University Seattle and bachelor's degree in communication from Washington State University. He lives in northeast Portland with his wife, Ross.

Computer Lab Opens at North Portland Branch



Vicky Ogelsbee oversees the new computer lab at the North Portland Library, 512 N. Killingsworth, a new service of the Multnomah County Library system. The lab offers free computer classes and allows the public to reserve computers for personal projects at no charge. The equipment was purchased with a \$35,000 donation from the Gates Library Foundation.

(PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/PORTLAND OBSERVER.)

Forum to Address PCC Expansion

Portland Community College is inviting the public to join in a discussion of the future growth of the Cascade Campus at 705 N. Killingsworth St. A community forum on the subject is scheduled from 6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 21 in the Student Center dining room. This is opportunity for the community to help shape the look and size of the Cascade campus for improved educational opportunities. In its third attempt on the election ballot, district voters overwhelmingly approved PCC's \$144 million bond by an official "yes" vote count of 64 percent on Nov. 7. Approximately \$57 million of the bond will be dedicated to the Cascade campus, which increased in enrollment by 16.1 percent in total headcount and 13.2 percent in FTE, during fall term 2000.

Light refreshments will be served. Parking is available at the Renaissance Market, located at 909 N. Killingsworth. A shuttle van will bring people to the meeting on campus. The bus will run from 6 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. and 9 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. All members of the community are welcome to attend. If interested people are not able to attend but would like to offer input, PCC invites them to send comments to Mildred Ollee, executive dean of Cascade Campus, at P.O. Box 19000, Portland, OR 97280-0990.