



Columns with Culture

Workers install colorful, multicultural columns and artwork at the North Killingsworth Max station on the new light rail line on Interstate Avenue. The artwork, inspired by traditional symbols of Africa, South American and India, were designed by local artists Adriene Cruz and Valerie Otani to bring vibrancy to the station and reflect on the cultural diversity of the surrounding community.

Soaring Rents Put People into Poverty

Costs increase by more than a third since 1999

(AP) — The cost of rent and utilities for a typical two-bedroom apartment has increased more than a third since 1999, making such housing unaffordable for anyone earning minimum wage, according to a study by an advocacy group for low-income housing.

A worker must earn at least \$15.21 an hour to afford the average cost of \$791 per month and have enough left for food and other necessities, the Washington-based National Low Income Housing Coalition said Monday. Five years ago the average cost for housing and utilities was \$576.

The federal minimum wage of \$5.15 an hour, which has not increased since 1997, barely covers one-third of the housing cost, the study said. States have the discretion of setting higher minimum wages, and 11 states have done so, including Oregon.

With the nation's economy still struggling, coalition president Sheila Crowley said she expects more people will be forced to live in substandard housing or to move in with others.

"I can't say there's any real good news here," Crowley said. Crowley criticized the Bush administration and Congress for not spending more on affordable housing.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development had no immediate comment on the report.

In its latest budget request, HUD asked for an increase of \$113 million to \$2.2 billion for a program that would give communities freedom to decide how best to solve affordable housing problems, such as rehabilitation of old buildings or buying land to erect new housing. Also, HUD has proposed initiatives it says would reduce regulatory barriers for communities to develop affordable housing.

There are about 36 million renters in the United States, comprising about one-third of all households.

New Seasons Doubles

continued ▲ from Front

available for free consultations and store tours by appointment. In addition, New Seasons Market offers a program of health classes, tours and lectures.

New Seasons Market supports the communities in which it operates. In the last year, the company has hosted events and made donations to over 160 nonprofits and community groups, and sold about \$1 million in scrip to support Portland schools.

In addition, 50 cents from the sale of each loaf of New Seasons Market's signature sourdough bread is donated to the Loaves & Fishes Meals on Wheels program.

Rohrer says the north Portland store will make similar contributions to local organizations.

A Leap of Faith, Health



Cynthia Alyce Neely

Nationally recognized speaker Cynthia Alyce Neely will breathe life into a touring exhibit on the life of Mary Baker Eddy, a 19th century reformer, on Friday, Sept. 12 at 6:30 p.m. at the Northeast Multicultural Senior Center, 5325 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Neely will lead a spirituality and healing workshop based on Eddy's contributions as a pioneer in the relationship between spirituality and health, as well as her accomplishments as a prominent author, publisher and healer.

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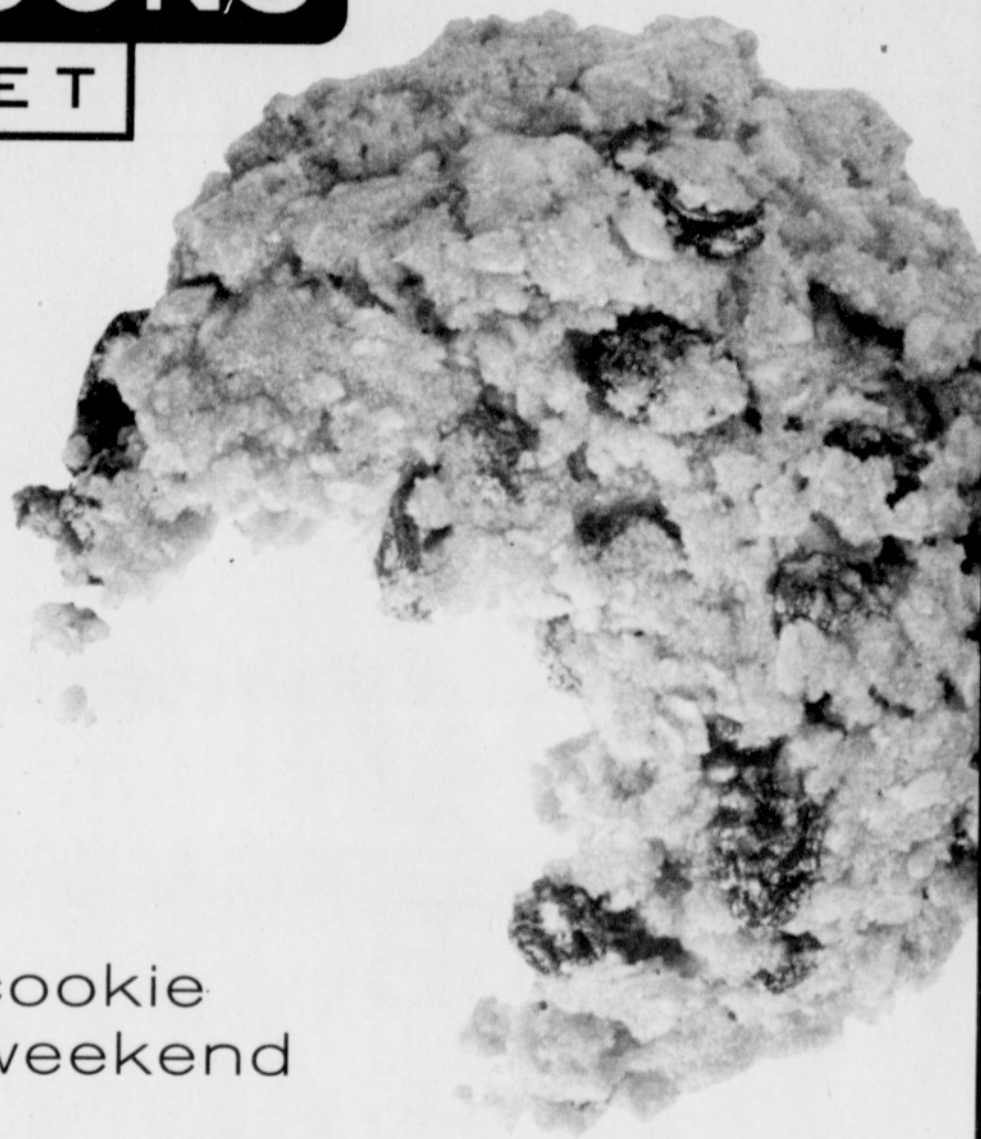
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