

Mississippi Neighborhood Attracts Proprietors

Equinox offers a 'celestial' experience

BY ERIKA-LEIGH GOODWIN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

With the recent flurry of businesses opening on and around North Mississippi Avenue one can overlook the differences between this place and that; but the proprietors of Equinox have ensured their restaurant stands out.

Equinox is located at 830 N. Shaver St., about three doors east of Mississippi.

A crew made up of its two original owners and friends, Michele Stulz and Tara George, put the first time business venture together in 30 days.

"I live in this neighborhood and I love this neighborhood and when Tara and I were looking for a location for the restaurant

we wanted to be in north or northeast Portland," Stulz said.

"We built everything ourselves, we hired a plumber and an electrician, that's it," she said Stulz. "From the walls to the tables to the bar with a lot of recycled and green materials; we had a lot of work parties with friends."

Though it has only been open for two years the fledgling venture has received rave reviews for its celestial take on cuisine and its cozy setting.

A former Spanish teacher, Stulz was introduced to George through a mutual friend who appreciated the pair's common vision.

George had originally developed a business plan for a res-



Well-treated employees like Jon Swearingen and high quality food are the signature for Equinox in the Mississippi neighborhood.

Part of our mission is not just business, but to be a place where our staff feels at home, feels invested and a sense of ownership-sweat equity.

— Equinox co-owner Michele Stulz

taurant and club and was looking for a business partner at the time.

"After several discussions we realized that it'd be a good idea

to go forward as business partners and develop Equinox restaurant and bar, but we dropped the club aspect," Stulz said.

"We're both in our 30s and

realized if we did the whole club scenario then we'd be up until 4 or 5 every night and we did not want to do that," she laughed.

George's fascination with

planetary alignment and geography is the inspiration for the Equinox theme. Just as the

continued ▼ on page B7

State Opens Advocacy Office for Minority and Women in Business

Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski signed legislation this month to create the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office and expand state contracting opportunities for minority businesses.

Senate bills 359, 316 and 173 enhance the link between the

state and small business-owners.

"Small businesses are the backbone of Oregon — they inspire innovation and create economic opportunities for our citizens and our communities," Kulongoski said. "The state



Gov. Ted Kulongoski

needs to do a better job at reaching out to minority and small businesses so they have equal bidding opportunities for public contracts — and the bills I signed today will help us move forward in expanding access and opening more doors for

such opportunities."

Senate Bill 359 creates the Oregon Advocacy Commissions Office to provide administrative support to the Commission on Hispanic Affairs, Commission on Black Affairs, Commission for Women and Com-

mission on Asian Affairs.

The funding for all of the state advocacy commissions was eliminated during the 2001-03 legislative session. Establishing this new office will help

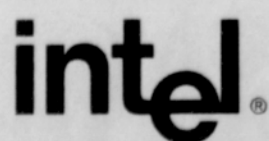
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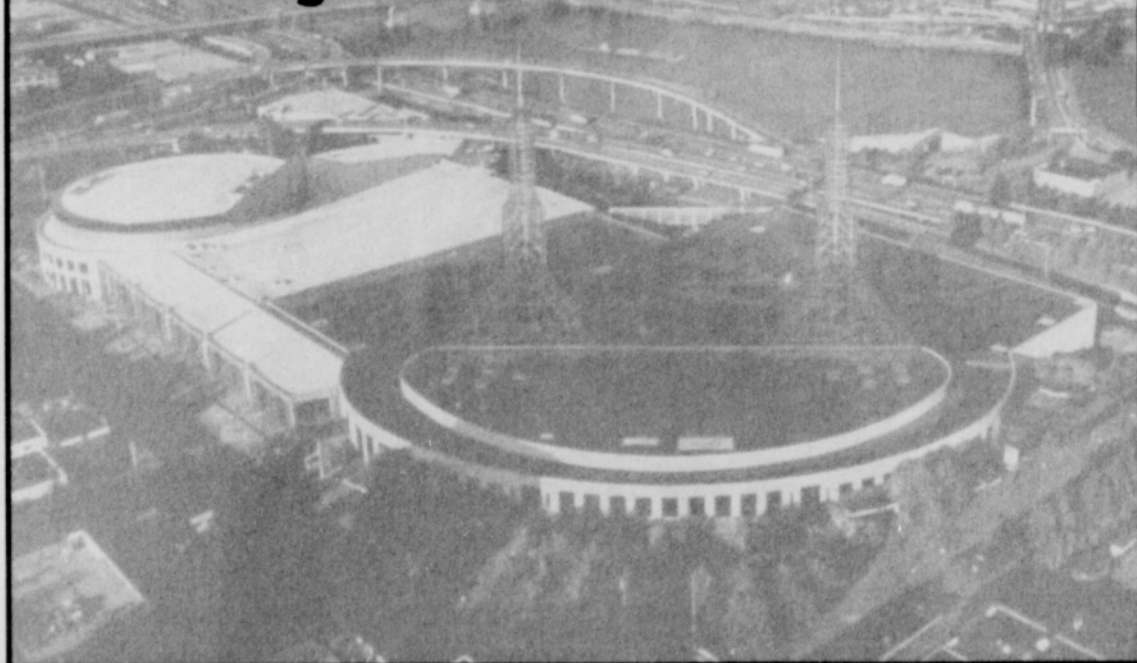
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