

# The INSIDE

# LOCAL NEWS

## Kenton Gets its Own Library

OPINION

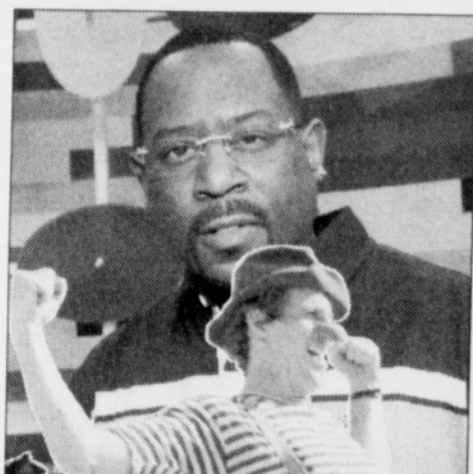


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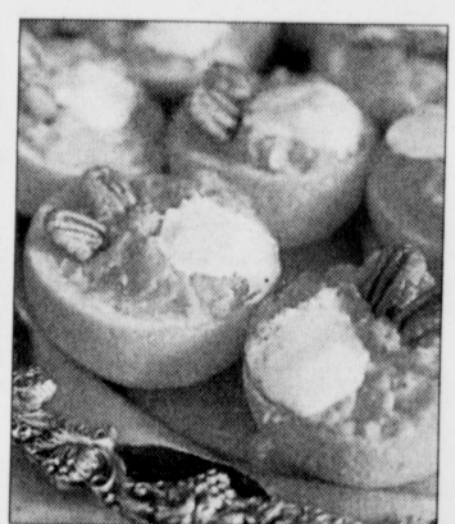
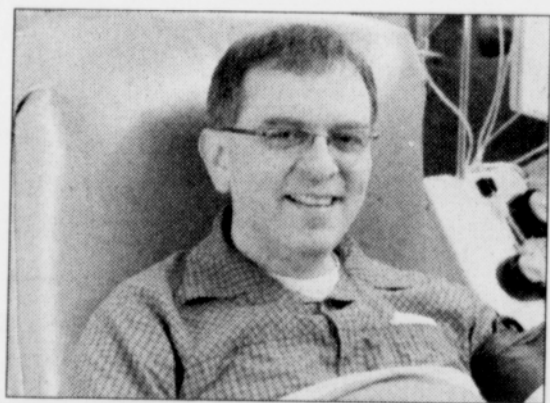
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### Branch designed as community hub

BY JAKE THOMAS  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

After countless conversations, a petition circulated by neighbors, and a bond levy, north Portland residents are being served by a new Multnomah County Library branch in the Kenton Neighborhood.

This part of town hasn't had a nearby library since 1975, when budget cuts caused branch closures at nearby University Park and Vernon in northeast Portland. In recent years, north Portland residents began lobbying the Library Advisory Board to reopen a local branch.

In 2006, voters passed a five-year operating levy that included specific language for new libraries in North Portland and East County.

Multnomah County Commissioner Jeff Cogen, who represents north and northeast Portland, said getting the new library up and running was a priority. But when he met with residents, who've become accustomed to nearly every government service being slashed, he admits they were skeptical.

Cogen said that the library, located in retail space at 8226 N. Denver Ave., was intentionally sited in the heart of Kenton's burgeoning business district, with the intent that library patrons will stop by local businesses.

"It's so wonderful to think that this wonderful resource will be at our fingertips," said Angela Moos, the chair of the Kenton Neighborhood Association.

In true Portland style, the nearly \$1.8 million and 20,000 book facility is environmentally-friendly. The walls are composed of wood from back when it was Cyril S. Kenyon Hardware store. The carpets are made from recycled materials, and a deliberate effort was made to prevent using any volatile chemicals during construction.

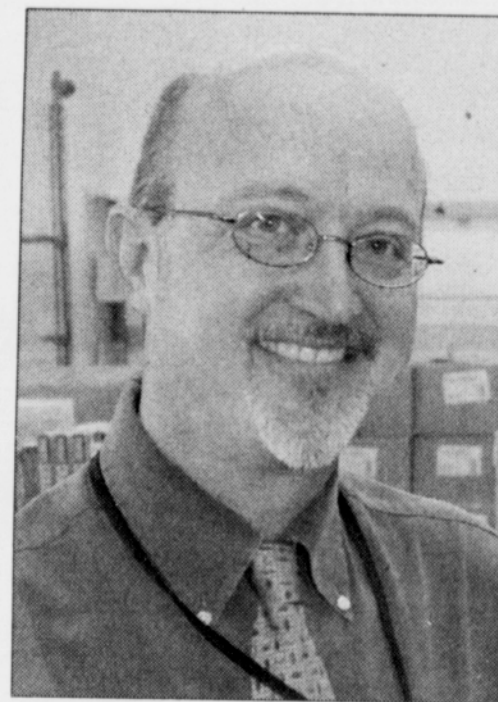
David Miles, the administrator at the Kenton branch, said that the library will include many of the same features at other libraries and a couple new ones as well.

An entire wall will be dedi-



PHOTO BY JAKE THOMAS/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Visitors check out the Kenton library, the newest branch of the Multnomah County Library system.



Kenton Library Administrator David Miles

popular new title that they won't have to wait weeks for.

Miles also said that he aims to have a pro-active staff that actively helps patrons.

"Libraries are more than books," added Cogen. "They're 21 century community hubs."

The new branch also has a community meeting space that features the art of local artist Marlene Bauer on the glass panels that has depictions of Portland's landscape.

It also includes more than 20 computer terminals for public use.

An official grand opening will take place on Saturday, March 13 beginning at 10 a.m. with live jazz music, a dedication ceremony, free treats, a Dr. Seuss celebration, and other events.

cated to movies and music, and will have a focus on popular titles. It'll also have a "lucky day" shelf that will feature best-sellers that can't be put on reserve, so patrons might find a