

Laverne

continued from page 2

colleagues, she says. Then he stepped back, threw the money in the air, and told the tellers to call the police.

“I think he wanted a place to stay,” she says.

Teletha Benjamin says she will miss Hampton taking her to open her safe deposit

branch, Benjamin moved all her accounts there too.

“I appreciate walking into a branch where people know my name. I feel I get excellent service there, and a lot of that is because of Laverne,” Benjamin said. She’s a role model for all the staff at the branch.”

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box. Benjamin knew Hampton a little, even before she first opened her bank account in 1958. Later she moved to the Broadway branch of First Interstate, which merged with Wells Fargo in 1996. And when Hampton moved to the Walnut Park

Benjamin plans to arrange a celebration lunch with Hampton, after her last day, Oct. 15. “I’m happy for her that she’s about to retire,” she says. “She deserves a break.”

Hampton says Wells Fargo is a good company that cares about its customers, and has



The Walnut Park Wells Fargo team celebrated Laverne Hampton's retirement in style. At rear from left, Quincy Robinson, Julie Louchbaum, Chanell Mayes, James Tang, Haidee Montejo-Degoma; sitting from left, Imelda Manalo, Ronika Sundar, Laverne Hampton, Robin Wisner Sr.; in front from left, Mariam Gultei and Luana Slacka.

given her a good career. But she’s excited to be making plans to visit her son and two grandchildren in Arizona, and to see a little more of her other son in Beaverton. With landscaping her garden and organizing her home, and checking off her list of places to visit, she thinks she’ll be quite busy enough.

“I’d love to spend some time near the water at Seaside and Sandy,” she says. “And I’m going to see some of what Portland has to offer. The Pittock Mansion, the Columbia River Gorge, the Japanese Garden: there are so many sights I’ve never seen. “

Creatives

continued from page 3

everything from business cards with Black superheroes, to plates featuring smiling Black children of all shades, to “Brobots.”

“One of my taglines is ‘Bold. Creative. You,’ says Kayin. “A lot of people ask me what Soapbox Theory means. Everyone, given the forum, has something to express.

“There aren’t a lot of products out there that represent Black, African American people with any kind of positivity behind it or even just, sometimes even neutral is negative. There’s no positivity. There’s no just, ‘This is who I am. This is me,’ without having to align with something else. Without having to align with sports, with a team, with music, with some other form of other identity.”

ture program.

From there, he started carving out a few hours every day to lock himself in his room, put on slacks, a dress shirt and tie, and work on designs. By senior year, he only went to school on Fridays to turn in homework and spent the rest of his time downtown, hanging around Portland State University and going to art museums.

He graduated and went to University of Oregon for architecture. After two years he went down to California where he went

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“It was very hard to be on any kind of team,” she says. “One team I was on, they would schedule all the team meetings when I was in class. You would go to the professor and he would say, ‘Go work it out with your team.’ I had to prove myself a lot more than a lot of people had to.”

Feeling the need to express her creativity, she started Soapbox Theory in 2001. It started as a hobby, where she made greeting cards for friends and family.

Her work showcased positive images of

steel mill or a foundry. Some place just gray,” says Kayin.

She decided to go back to school for industrial design and began attending the Art Institute of Portland.

As her business got more serious, she got restless.

“By second term, I said forget it. I know all of this,” says Kayin. “I wasn’t going to pay to learn what I’m already doing in business.”

Meanwhile, Cleo was working in warehouses and as an electrician to build seed money for a printing business. He had moved back to Portland in 2003 and was using his free time to print in his basement and peddle shirts on the street, a craft he honed at 16.

When Cleo opened the shop in 2006, the couple had yet to meet. Fittingly, they registered their businesses only a month apart.

They were on different paths to the same destination, but the common thread was a larger vision and resistance to conventional ways of getting there.

Cleo grew up wanting to be an inventor. The closest thing he knew was his uncle, an architectural engineer at Arizona State University, who introduced him to t-shirt printing at a young age.

Despite being selected for the Talented and Gifted program in kindergarten, he was well behind his peers in math and reading.

When he got to Cleveland High School, he was placed in a math class for kids with learning disabilities. He forced himself to do a chapter’s worth of homework every night to get on track for a college architect-

back and forth between school and jobs in his field, studying product design along the way.

Around the time Cleo began college, Kayin discovered her love for engineering in middle school.

She took part in the Math Science Engineering Achievement program, graduated from Benson and went to the University of Pittsburgh for mechanical engineering.

There were only three Black students, out of 180 total, admitted into the engineering program at Pitt as freshmen. Kayin was one of two women and the only Black student in her 20 person class.

Black children.

“I wanted people of color to relate to what I was drawing,” says Kayin. “It’s something you can identify with. ‘I remember when we used to play like that or my cousin wears his hair like that.’

“It’s not aggressive. It’s empowering without specifically being Black power.”

After two years, she came back to Portland and transferred to PSU, where she developed an interest in product design.

She graduated in 2005 but no available jobs fed her creative urges.

“There was one that I could’ve gotten but I didn’t want to work as an engineer in a

“When you start printing, you’re selling t-shirts to friends and family,” he says. “You’re looking for churches and festivals. Looking for civic and community groups. From there, whenever big events come into town, then you can sell on the streets. Anything hits the news, you take your message, put it on a t-shirt. Put it on the street.”

By 2006, he had the seed money, found a location on Williams Ave., and opened Screw Loose Studio.

Little did he know, he was about to meet his future wife and add a new dimension to his business.

The couple met that year and within six months, began working together.

Read the rest of this story online at www.theskanner.com

Changes

continued from page 1

the seat left by Siegel, who took a job at Metro.

“I am delighted that Senator Dingfelder is joining my team,” said Mayor Charlie Hales in a statement. “She brings a diverse portfolio of academic and professional expertise to us on sustainability, planning, social justice, and environmental issues. Her political and policy background will be a huge asset for us and for the city. Soon all of Portland will know what District 23 already knows about her effectiveness!”

Dingfelder, who has served in the legislature for 12 years representing parts of Northeast and Southeast Portland as well as Maywood Park, is by trade an environmental consultant although she is also known as a civil rights ally at the state level.

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A sponsor of the successful Natural Hair Care Act promoted by local hair stylist Amber Starks, Dingfelder also co-sponsored the Racial Profiling Bill alongside Sen. Chip Shields and Rep. Michael Dembrow.

“I have been privileged to serve Northeast and Southeast Portland for many years. However, now, I look forward to bringing my skills to all the people of Portland,” she said.

Dingfelder has served in the legislature since 2001, when she was appointed to the state House of Representatives to fill JoAnn Hardesty’s seat vacated when Hardesty ran unsuccessfully for Multnomah County chair; Dingfelder was elected to the Senate five years ago.

There, Dingfelder has chaired the Senate Committee on the Environment and Natural Resources. She also served on the Senate Judiciary Committee and the Ways and Means Subcommittee on the Environment and Natural Resources.

She is currently a PhD candidate at Portland State University, Hatfield School of Government.