

# Saadat cont'd from pg 1

and under-represented groups including communities of color, women, and LGBTQ people. Saadat was appointed Oregon's affirmative action director under Gov. Neil Goldschmidt in 1987. Later, she worked within Multnomah County's Department of Community and Family Services and helped draft the Portland

their love of music. After meeting in 1991, when they both worked for City Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury, the two struck up a unique friendship and would often get together to sing. "When she speaks in public, what makes her speeches so impactful is that she's direct and every word means some-

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Civil Rights Ordinance. She was also the diversity director at Cascade AIDS Project, and in 2012 she accepted the Lifetime Achievement from the Portland Human Rights Commission. But when she wasn't on the frontlines of the cause, Saadat was singing. "I cannot remember not singing," she told *The Skanner*. "During World War II, I lived with my grandmother who sang every day, so my brother and I sang with her." While Saadat said her entire family had a gift for song, she never gave much thought to a career in music. "The closest to any professional training I've had was one year in my high school's glee club, about a year in the children's chorus at the AME Zion church, and with voice coach Susan Dorn while I worked with Thomas to do this album," Saadat said. "I would guess there are about 66 years between the church and this experience." It's no surprise that Saadat and Lauderdale's almost 30-year long friendship grew out of

thing," said Lauderdale, who formed Pink Martini in 1994 after stepping away from a profession in politics. "And that's how she sings, which very few people do." Eventually, Saadat approached Lauderdale with the idea of recording a few songs to share with family and friends. That was the seedling which, six years later, would become "Love for Sale." "Each of these songs on the album has a narrative and her voice is so rewarding to listen to," Lauderdale told *The Skanner*. "In the same way that she's spellbinding when she speaks, I'm spellbound when she sings." The album marks the first time the activist has recorded professionally. "I never recorded anything because I've never regarded myself as a singer. I've never seen myself as someone who had a singer's voice," said Saadat. "I don't read music nor do I play an instrument, so I just considered my singing as something I did mostly for me."

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# Broadband cont'd from pg 1

to form a 501(c)(4) corporation and political action committee. According to the Institute for Local Self-Reliance's Community Networks page, more than 750 American communities have built publicly owned broadband networks. "When a community is served by a municipal network, the infrastructure

institute's Community Broadband Networks Initiative. Hanna sees the notion as a revival of a Progressive Era notion of making certain utilities part of the public good. "A hundred years ago there was an effort to municipalize utilities, which is responsible for the city life we know today. There's been a gradual chipping

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is a publicly-owned asset, similar to a road or an electric utility. There are a variety of models from full retail, in which the city takes on the role of an Internet Service Provider like Comcast or AT&T, delivering services directly to residents and businesses, to institutional networks in which only municipal facilities receive services," said Lisa Gonzalez, a senior researcher for the

away at that effort," Hanna said. Senior likened the potential creation of a municipal utility to the creation of the Portland Water Bureau in 1885, prior to which there were a number of private water companies in Portland that failed to consistently provide clean water as the city grew. Last year the City of Portland released a Digital Equity Action Plan that

reported 15 percent of Portland households do not have Internet access at home, citing cost as a barrier. "It starts when young people have homework they cannot complete," Phillip-Robbins said. That inequity perpetuates itself when low-income people do not have the necessary tools to search for jobs or housing. "If we want to close the gap, this is a major opportunity." The plan recommends making sure wi-fi is available at all public buildings throughout the county, and outreach to ensure private programs that provide Internet access to low-income people, such as Comcast's Internet Essentials program and CenturyLink's Internet Basics. Senior said while those programs can

be helpful, they can also be complex and difficult to apply for, and that may be why they are so under-utilized. "The other part of this that's really compelling is money stays in the community," Phillip-Robbins said. The next step is to procure \$300,000 for a feasibility study. Advocates said they've had interest from both the city and the county.

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PHOTO COURTESY OF PCRI

## PCRI Breaks Ground

Portland Community Reinvestment Initiatives, along with Albina Construction, Brett Schulz Architect and other partners broke ground Feb. 27 on the first homes for purchase by first-time homebuyers as part of its Pathway 1000 Initiative. Four new townhomes will be built in North Portland. These new homes, for sale to low- and moderate-income first-time buyers will be prioritized for families displaced from North and Northeast Portland and families at risk of displacement. Pictured here are Travis Phillips, Housing Development Director (PCRI) -Maxine Fitzpatrick Executive Director (PCRI), Dennis Harris (Owner of Albina Construction, LLC.) and Brett Schulz, Bret Schulz Architect.

## Law cont'd from pg 1

(D-West Eugene and Junction City), drafted the bill after buying a house in Eugene and discovering the property deed said the house could only be sold to "members of the Caucasian race." "I went back and forth with the realtor and the title company to see if it could get that language taken out," she said. She discovered the process was "time consuming and expensive" and not very accessible to someone who could not afford a lawyer, partly because the process requires that all owners of record be notified. "For me, part of the reason of bringing the bill is to continue the conversation in the legislature and the public and continue the conversation about our history of racist discrimination. People know about redlining, people know about discrimination by the financial system, but they may not know about this," Fahey said. Richard Rothstein, a research associate of the Economic Policy

Institute and a fellow at the Thurgood Marshall Institute of the NAACP Legal Defense Fund and of the Haas Institute at the University of California (Berkeley), writes in the 2017 book, "The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of "White homeowners formed neighborhood associations which enforced the deeds How Our Government Segregated America," that restrictive covenants were common in housing deeds through the mid-20th century and were part of a system of legal tools that kept neighborhoods segregated and prevented African American families from owning homes and accruing wealth. White homeowners formed neighborhood associations to enforce the deeds..

"Between 1935 and 1955 W.E. Boeing, the founder of Boeing Aircraft, developed suburbs north of Seattle. During this period and after World War II, the South Seattle Land Company, the Puget Sound Mill Company, and others constructed more suburbs. The builders all wrote racially restrictive language into their deeds. The result was a city whose African American population was encircled by all-white suburbs," Rothstein wrote. The book also notes that local governments aggressively promoted restrictive covenants and that the Federal Housing Administration gave higher ratings to mortgage applications if there were no African Americans living in the neighborhood. *The Skanner* invites readers to share their stories with restrictive covenants in Portland. Please write to [news@theskanner.com](mailto:news@theskanner.com) or call (503) 285-5555, ext. 503.

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Advocates are pushing for a publicly-owned broadband network in Portland.