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The Southwest Portland Post

Southwest Portland's Independent Neighborhood Newspaper

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bike rodeo teaches
children to ride safe
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Volume No. 17, Issue No. 8

www.multnomahpost.com

Portland, Oregon

Complimentary

June 2009

Bicycles and streetcars subjects of Wilson open house

By Polina Olsen
The Southwest Portland Post

The Bicycle Master Plan Update Project and the Streetcar System Plan held their sixth and final open house on May 18 at Wilson High School. Using wall posters as props, city staff and volunteers presented draft recommendations, answered questions, and encouraged participation and suggestions.

They divided the large room into three sections, the bicycle master plan, the streetcar system plan, and the integration station where they showed how bikes and streetcars complement each other. The city emphasized how bicycles and streetcars reduce climate change and dependence on cars and how they increase Portland's general livability.

Southwest residents seemed most interested in the bicycle plan since it directly affects this area. Although Portland recently received a \$70 million government transportation grant, it will finance a streetcar running from the Pearl District across the Broadway Bridge to the Oregon Museum of Sci-

ence and Industry. Metro, however, does plan to run a streetcar from Portland to Lake Oswego.

Since the City Council adopted Portland's original Bicycle Master Plan in 1996, the city has doubled the network of bike lanes, built 30 miles of bicycle boulevards (see box) and added thousands of bike racks. Bicycling has increased four-fold, and 70% of Portland residents own or have regular access to a bike.

A poster that divided Portlanders into four types helped explain the city's goals. The *Strong and Fearless*, about 1 percent of the population already rides bikes everywhere. *Enthusiased and Confident* cyclists are comfortable in traffic if good bikeways are installed. About one third of Portlanders are not ready to abandon their cars. But, the vast majority, the *Interested but Concerned*, do not feel safe.

The Bicycle Master Plan update specifically targets the *Interested but Concerned* group by proposing innovative solutions. They hope bike facilities on quiet streets will increase safety, encourage use, and cost less than facilities on main roads.

Keith Liden serves on the Bike Advisory Committee and is active in Southwest Trails. "Bike lanes in Southwest Portland include Barbur Boulevard, Terwilliger Boulevard, parts of Capitol Highway, Multnomah Boulevard and Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway," he said. "If I had to guess, I'd say that's

half the mileage of the official facilities. People ride on a lot of roads like Dosch, but there's no bike facility at this point."

While Liden admires Southeast Portland's more complete bicycle solution, he finds the Southwest's winding
(Continued on Page 2)



Shoshanah Oppenheim, Mayor Sam Adams, Joanne Kahn, and Don Baack, discuss options at the Bicycle and Streetcar Open House on May 18 at Wilson High School. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Capitol Hill Road traffic calming project delayed

A failed quorum call last month delayed the advance of the Capitol Hill Road traffic calming project.

The Multnomah Neighborhood Association was unable to muster a quorum for its May board meeting, and was thus unable to vote on the issue.

Proponents had obtained signatures on petitions of support from more than 74 percent of residents and occupants on the street, and a 14 to 1 vote of support from the Hillsdale Neighborhood Association board. However, both of these outcomes were expected, while the Multnomah position was somewhat more in doubt.

An affirmative vote, together with the two previous actions, would allow volunteers to raise funds through voluntary assessments on property

owners and other fundraising to pay for 11 speed "tables" (an elongated speed bump) to be placed along the street between Southwest Barbur and Bertha boulevards. The tables cost \$2,200 each.

The Portland Bureau of Transportation has determined that such traffic calming activities are appropriate on this street, but the City has no funds to pay for them.

Editor's Note: According to Chairman Randy Bonella, the Multnomah Neighborhood Association board is rescheduled to vote on the Capitol Hill Road traffic calming project at the Tuesday, June 9 general meeting at 7:00 p.m. at the Multnomah Center, 7688 SW Capitol Highway. Time has been set aside on the agenda for discussion of the project as well.

Funds needed for summer concerts at Willamette Park

Portland Parks and Recreation and the South Portland Neighborhood Association are moving forward with plans for a third year of free concerts in Willamette Park but, according to South Portland chair Ken Love, they are still

short of funds for the venture.

Current plans call for free concerts, each by a different musical group, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. in the park on July 8, 15, 22 and 29, plus a picnic and concert on National Night Out, this year August 4. Neighborhood associations are expected to raise the \$6,000 cost of the concerts through individual and corporate contributions and fund raising.

This year in South Portland, as in the rest of the city, such contributions have been harder to come by for obvious reasons. Those willing to contribute to the cause can contact Love at TLC11@mindspring.com.

South Waterfront park to be named for Elizabeth Caruthers

The Portland Development Commission last month officially "conveyed" land to the Portland Bureau of Parks and Recreation that is in the process of becoming a South Waterfront park.

The two-acre parcel bounded by Southwest Moody and Bond avenues and Curry and Gibbs streets is now under construction. The south end will have relatively quiet neighborhood-related facilities—a children's play area, bocce court and urban gardens.

The north end will be given over to a natural area and public art. The center will be a "multi-use" lawn with a natural amphitheater for performances. It will be called Caruthers Park for early developer Elizabeth Caruthers. It was paid for by \$2.7 million in tax increment funds.

PDC staffer James Mast noted that the park will eventually be surrounded by high-rise buildings containing a total of 1,800 housing units: The Atwater and John Ross (occupied), Ardea, formerly the Alexan (complete and leasing),

and the Matisse and Mirabella (under construction).

TriMet approves service cuts to Southwest bus lines

Despite pleas from southwest and other neighborhoods, the TriMet board last month approved a series of service cuts intended to offset reduced revenue from fares and the payroll tax.

Service will be reduced on, among others, the Line 1 Vermont, 8 Jackson Park, 12 Barbur, 39 Lewis and Clark, 43 Taylors Ferry, 55 Hamilton, 58 Canyon Road, and 63 Washington Park. In addition, Line 35 Macadam will henceforth run on Southwest River Parkway and Moody Avenue between Harrison and Bancroft streets, giving more direct service to South Waterfront.

Line 39 will cease to run at all on weekends despite a plea from Lewis and Clark College to continue this service, and an offer to subsidize it. The changes will go into effect on September 13.

Mayor Adams approves "right" budget for Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc.

As part of his official budget, Mayor Sam Adams approved the so-called "right" budget proposed for Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc., and its parent agency the Office of Neighborhood Involvement. The Right budget, devised by executive director Amalia Alarcon and Commissioner Amanda Fritz, calls for a 10 percent cut in the bureau's overall level of spending for this fiscal year, most of it absorbed by the central office, as opposed to a 16 to 18 percent cut proposed by the Portland Office of Finance and Administration.
(Continued on Page 2)

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Bikes and Streetcars

(Continued from Page 1)

topography creates unique problems. For example, Southeast Portland's grid street pattern and naming conventions make navigating relatively easy. Street names in the Southwest often don't follow rhyme or reason. "If it's not your neighborhood, you have no idea where anything is going. So, if the only street you know is Beaverton-Hillsdale Highway, for example, and that's scary to you, then you don't ride your bike," he said. "We need markings on the pavement and signs."

Robin Vesey, who lives on Southwest Corbett Avenue in the Johns Landing area, hopes new bicycle facilities avoid hills. She specifically questioned current bike route signs that point to Corbett

Avenue's steep southern section.

"I came to advocate for bicycle safe streets and lanes," she said. "We need one car lane and two bike lanes rather than two car lanes." While Vesey understands the attraction of bike facilities on quiet streets, she questions their usefulness in getting people out of their cars. "I want to get there the quickest way possible," she said. "You want the fastest way, especially if you're commuting."

Don Baack, chairman of the Southwest Trails Committee, commended the open house and the city's efforts. "They did a tremendous amount of work incorporating suggestions from Southwest Trails," he said. "They're listening carefully to everyone's comments."

City prepares for impact of pressure sewer line construction

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

The Portland Bureau of Environmental Services is preparing a work plan, including ways to minimize impacts, for the planned replacement of the Garden Home and Multnomah pressure sewer lines.

According to bureau spokesperson Stephen Sykes, the work could begin as early as October, although it is more likely to be early next year. The line will extend from Southwest 86th Avenue and Scholls Ferry Road through Garden Home to 69th Avenue and Multnomah Boulevard, and from there along Multnomah to 31st Avenue.

The Bureau's recommended construction plan calls for contractors to work on segments 300 feet long before proceeding to the next segment, Sykes told *The Post*. From 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. they will always keep one travel lane open. They may also work at night, he said, and if so might close the roads to all but local traffic; the bureau has planned four detour routes, he said.

At the suggestion of neighborhood volunteers, he said, the bureau will post signs warning of the work and detours well outside the construction area, as much as two miles away, to give motorists a chance to avoid the area. The contractor chosen may not adhere to the recommended plan in every detail, Sykes said, although he will have to keep the road open during the day.

BES representatives visited the Hillsdale and Ash Creek neighborhood associations last month. They will speak and hear comments at the Maplewood

Neighborhood Association June 8 at West Hills Friends Church, 7425 S.W. 52nd Ave., and the Multnomah Neighborhood Association June 9 at the Multnomah Arts Center, 7688 S.W. Capitol Highway. Both meetings are at 7 p.m.

Neighborhood News

(Continued from Page 1)

The Right budget retains the popular Neighborhood Grants program, with some cuts, as the OFA draft did not. The Right budget's deepest cuts are to the Graffiti Abatement Program, whose funds will be slashed by 50 percent and whose ability to remove graffiti independently of volunteer help will be eliminated. Council is expected to approve and pass the budget at month's end.

Stricker Remembered

(Continued from Page 7)

and she devoted herself to this increasingly after her retirement in 1989. She also took pleasure in crossword puzzles, scrabble, an occasional brew, and especially her extended family of children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

She was a strong and consistent advocate for the disadvantaged. Her last requests were that donations in her name be made to Sisters of the Road, and that a keg of beer be served at her Celebration of Life, which was held May 21, 2009 at the Multnomah Arts Center.



Proposed Southwest bicycle facilities attracted a lot of attention at the Open House. (Post photo by Polina Olsen)



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Reporters/Writers: Kate Bennett, Polina Olsen, Lee Perlman, Allison Rupp
Retail Advertising Manager: Harry Blythe
Graphic Design: Leslie Baird Design
Printing: Oregon Lithoprint

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Deadline for news and advertising is generally the 15th of the month prior to publication. Please call for current deadline information. Advertising rates are available upon request.

The Post has a circulation of 10,000 in Multnomah Village and the surrounding neighborhood business districts including Burlingame, Capitol Hill, Garden Home, Glen Cullen, Hillsdale, South Portland, Raleigh Hills, West Portland and Vermont Hills. The Post is published on or about the 1st of every month. Subscriptions are \$14 per year. Back issues are \$2.50 each when available. All major credit cards accepted.





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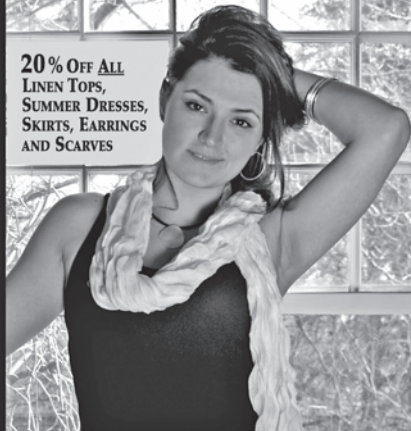
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Bicycle rodeo teaches children to ride safe on Southwest streets

By Allison Rupp
The Southwest Portland Post

Over 30 children from Southwest Portland gathered at Bridlemile Elementary School with their parents May 16 to participate in a Bicycle Rodeo and Safety Fair.

The event, sponsored by Southwest Neighbors Crime Prevention and Public Safety Committee, was free to the public and featured safety training and inspections, a bike and accessory swap, and bike obstacle courses.

The committee had sponsored a smaller version of the event last fall at Capitol Hill Elementary School that drew only a handful of kids and parents.



Kids practiced obeying traffic signals outside Bridlemile Elementary School during the bike rodeo. (Post photo by Allison Rupp)

This spring, says Committee Chair Nancy Hand, they committed greater resources to advertising to ensure the rodeo would be a success, especially since the approach of summer puts more kids on the road.

Indeed the playground outside Bridlemile Elementary was teeming with kids and bikes of all sizes on the hot afternoon, each rushing to complete the series of bike safety stations and fill a completion card with stickers. At one station, participants practiced yielding to one another while biking in circles. At another, they obeyed traffic signs directing them to "slow" or "stop" when riding.

One of the most popular areas of the bike fair was the helmet fitting. Trauma nurses from Legacy Emanuel Hospital partnered with Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) to donate 30 helmets for the rodeo. OHSU nursing student Kevin Shores was on hand to ensure each child received the right size helmet for his head and demonstrate a proper fit. Photos of bike crash victims in the trauma unit were on display as very real reminders of the danger of a collision.

When fitted correctly, a helmet should even prevent a delicate object like a watermelon from breaking, Shores explained while dropping a helmeted melon onto the concrete. Many of the



Participants in the Bicycle Rodeo and Safety Fair practiced yielding to other bikers with the instruction of bicycle officers from the Portland Police Bureau. (Post photo by Allison Rupp)

kids arriving at the station were wearing helmets that were not tightened enough, and some even had cracks forming—a sure sign that it is time to get a new helmet.

Shores volunteered at the bike rodeo as part of his Community Health curriculum, which also includes ride-alongs with Loaves and Fishes (Meals-On-Wheels) drivers. Loaves and Fishes is a charity that delivers meals to homebound seniors and the disabled. Shores said he is lucky to get to interact with the community in areas that interest him and have fun while doing it.

Volunteers inspected the bikes that

kids brought with them, addressing 19 different questions like "Is the bike the right size for the rider?" and "Does the rider wear glasses?"

Two bicycle officers from the Portland Police Department also came to the fair to teach safe biking practices and the rules of the road. Officer A. Caspar from Central Precinct, who lives in Southwest Portland with his own kids, has conducted a number of community meetings in the area to teach bike safety.

"Now that the weather's getting better, kids are going to be on bikes. They need to be knowledgeable about the hazards in the area and know they're not immune," he said.

The good news is that high-impact crashes between kids and cars are few; Sergeant Robert Voepel can't remember the last time he saw one. But even though kids ride at slower speeds than adults, their smaller size means that drivers don't always see them. Luckily, 75 percent of fatalities can be avoided with a helmet.

Southwest parent Jackie Waller attended the rodeo with her 7-year old daughter, who recently started to ride without training wheels, after reading about it in the Bridlemile Elementary bulletin.

"We discovered that the chin strap was too loose on her helmet," Waller said. "And she learned the different hand signals. I'm glad we came."



Trauma nurses from Legacy Emanuel Hospital donated 30 helmets for the bike rodeo in partnership with OHSU and ensured proper fit for the recipients. (Post photo by Allison Rupp)



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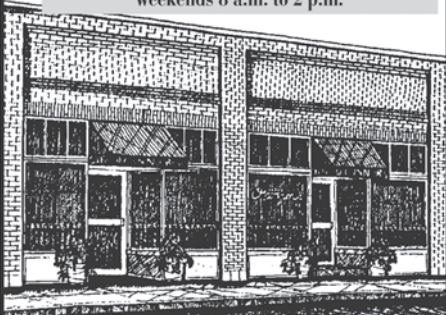
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Planners prepare street plan for north end of South Waterfront; Open house June 11

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Representatives of the City of Portland bureaus of Planning and Sustainability, and Transportation, and the Portland Development Commission, presented a proposed street plan for the north segment of the South Waterfront, between Southwest Gibbs Street and Marquam Bridge, to the Portland Design Commission last month.

There will be an open house to answer questions and take public input about the plan from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. June 11 at David Evans and Associates, 2100 S.W. River Parkway.

Such a plan was completed in 2007,

Portland Bureau of Transportation's Art Pearce told the Commission, but it didn't take into account the proposed new Oregon Health and Sciences University campus north of the Ross Island Bridge, or current plans to bring the MAX Light Rail Milwaukie Line to Southwest Porter Street.

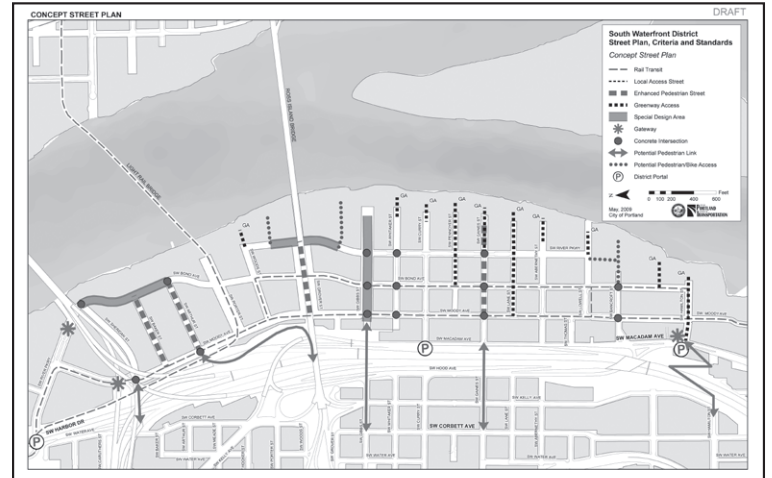
A key feature of the plan is the continuation of Southwest Bond Avenue one-way northbound through the district, and shifting the northbound Portland Streetcar tracks to this street. There would be a bike path separated from the tracks.

Pearce and planner Troy Doss conceded that there was "not consensus" among the "stakeholders" about all aspects of the plan. Specifically, the Zidell

Corporation, which owns a large part of the area, does not concur with plans for a Ross Island Bridge Park under that structure or with how the new facilities will be paid for.

Design Commission member Gwen Millius also questioned the bridge park, particularly since it will contain athletic fields. "It may be okay for practice, but I can't imagine wanting

to play a game down there," she said. Doss replied that the bridge was quite high at this point and that there was relatively little noise below.



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EARTH TALK

Questions & Answers
About Our Environment

Dear Earth-Talk: I run a sorting machine at the post office, and am worried about all the paper dust swirling around the building. I asked both management and our union if this was a health or safety problem and both said no, but I'm not sure they really know. Can you set the record straight?

— J.G. Eddins, Phoenix, AZ

One of the drawbacks to the increasing mechanization of postal facilities is the increase in paper dust. The machines doing the grunt work loosen the dust and send it airborne where workers can breathe it in copiously.

Contrary to what management and the union may say, paper dust can be a hazard to postal workers, causing and exacerbating respiratory problems. Sorting machines could also theoretically disperse contaminants (such as anthrax) intentionally sent through the mail into postal facilities, further adding to the risk of the job.

"There's no federal safety standard on it, so it's a real problem," reports Bob Williamson, president of the San Francisco chapter of the American Postal Workers Union (APWU). "We've had people who have developed occupational asthma from breathing the fine dust." Other reported problems include

bronchitis, allergic reactions, migraines, bacterial infections, conjunctivitis and sore throats.

In the fall of 2008, more than 450 current and former postal employees, many in the Chicago area, signed a petition to occupational health officials and postal unions blaming health problems on paper dust fibers inside post offices. Some are seeking health benefits to pay for related medical treatment.

"I do believe that my life is going to be shortened," Delphine Howard, a former manager at two local post offices, told Chicago's ABC7 News. "I started having severe bronchitis attacks, severe asthma attacks, and severe chest pains."

Howard worked for the postal service from 1987 until 2005 when her doctor diagnosed her with "a medical condition that is affected by unclean air, dust particles and residue in volumes in her present employment areas." Several other Chicago area postal workers complained of similar symptoms as a result of ongoing exposure to postal dust.

The U.S. Postal Service (USPS) studied the issue in 1998 and found no direct link between health and postal dust, but did discover that sorting machines could send potentially carcinogenic volatile organic compounds (such as ink) and other irritants like dust mites, into the air. The USPS told ABC7 News it had "only received two direct complaints of respiratory problems in the last several years."

Diligent cleaning of the machines can help keep the problem in check. "Vacuum and wipe down the machines every day rather than resorting to the quicker method of blowing the dust off the machines and into the air," says the APWU's Williamson, adding that workers can also wear masks to minimize breathing in of postal dust and any contaminants in the air with it.

Williamson also recommends that post offices rotate their workers around to different duties to avoid perpetual exposure to potentially harmful or ag-

gravating activities. Besides dealing with paper dust, mail sorters frequently suffer from muscular-skeletal problems associated with repetitive motion strain.

CONTACTS: American Postal Workers Union (APWU), apwu.org. U.S. Postal Service, usps.com.

SEND YOUR ENVIRONMENTAL QUESTIONS TO: EarthTalk, P.O. Box 5098, Westport, CT 06881; earthtalk@emagazine.com. Read past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php.

Former Southwest neighborhood coalition director Joy Stricker remembered

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

Surrounded by loved ones, Joy Stricker, the first executive director of Southwest Neighborhoods, Inc. (SWNI), died on May 16, 2009 at age 86.

A native Portlander, she graduated from Washington High School. During World War II Stricker worked on an assembly line at Marine Electric, where she met and married Andy Stricker. She later went back to school, and graduated from Portland State at age 43. She taught English at Sandy Union High School for 10 years before leaving to take the job at SWNI.

As the first director, Stricker had

to deal with a group of community groups that did not always see eye to eye, or universally accept her agency. Her low-key manner and dedication to service helped gain acceptance for the coalition. She also had a keen sense of humor, most often revealed in poetry or writing.

Sylvia Bogert, SWNI's current director, served under Stricker as Office Manager. "Joy was a mentor," she told *The Post*. "She was extremely fun to work with, and brought lots of energy to the office. She was also a brilliant problem solver. She was a good listener. She was extremely fair and honest with people, and they appreciated that."

Stricker was also a talented artist, (Continued on Page 2)

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Naturopathic college looks to expand in South Portland rather than relocate

By Lee Perlman
The Southwest Portland Post

David Schleich, president of National College of Naturopathic Medicine, likes to quote this line from poet Robert Browning: "A man's reach should exceed his grasp, or what's a heaven for?"

Schleich is reaching to create a campus that will encompass the six square blocks bounded by Southwest Arthur and Woods streets, Kelly Avenue and Naito Parkway. He already has much of it in his grasp.

Since 1998, the college has operated out of a former Portland Community College campus at 049 S.W. Porter St. In 2007 they acquired the old Oregon Public Broadcasting facility at 2828 S.W. Naito Parkway and moved their administrative offices, and Helfgott Research Institute, there.

The college is currently turning a property on Southwest Woods Street into a large herb garden that will allow instructors to show their students what their medicines look like in nature. Last year the college acquired the Seemans Building on Southwest Porter Street from Andrew Davis; the college has begun converting it into a clinic that will replace an existing facility in Northwest Portland, and the college will have a "soft opening" in late summer.

Additionally, the college owns a building on Southwest Porter Street and Naito Parkway that will some day have school uses; possibilities include a student center and cafeteria, library, research center and bookstore, or some

combination of these.

The college owns several other properties and intends to acquire more as they become available. These will be used for student and faculty housing, and perhaps some retail services.

The aim is to create "a more integrated campus," Schleich told *The Post*. Marilyn Considine, public relations director, added that another aim is to allow "one stop shopping" for patients.

Until two years ago, it was by no means certain that all this would take place here in Portland. The college considered 19 possible locations for a campus, one as far away as Ashland. "We loved it, but it was too expensive and too small," Schleich said.

One of the criteria for a site was creating a campus that would be "minimally disruptive to our existing operations," and this clearly favored the existing neighborhood. "There were a few things that finally, totally convinced me to stay here and grow," Schleich said.

One of these was the reaction of the surrounding neighborhood to their plans; NCNM wanted to be a college "well-grounded in its community." "Our first meeting with the neighborhood [South Portland Neighborhood Association] was excellent," Schleich said. "They were so welcoming."

Asked how the association felt about the school acquiring private housing, often a sore point between neighborhoods and institutions, the response was, "Keep it people-oriented, and we're with you," Schleich recalled. The school hopes to make its facilities available to its neighbors, and would like to involve students of the nearby

Cedarwood School in some way.

"The neighborhood association is behind them 100 percent," Love said of the college's current efforts. He cautioned that the association has not yet fully reviewed long-term plans, but said, "So far, they've been extremely great to work with."

The college could use the housing, Considine said, for its students tend to be older than the average undergraduate; they are independent, some are married, and a few have children. The college recently held a "Take Your Munchkin To School" day, she recalled.

The college's current enrollment is about 500 students, Considine said, and they hope to increase this to 800. The college also hopes to increase its course offerings in the area of nutrition, public health and herbal arts.

National College of Naturopathic Medicine has already had collaborative ventures with other institutions such as Western States Chiropractic College, Oregon College of Oriental Medicine and Oregon Health and Sciences University.

Work with this last, the state's principal medical school, is an indicator of the degree to which traditional medical providers are accepting arts they once dismissed as akin to witchcraft. "The relationship has changed a lot as the



David Schleich and Marilyn Considine at the construction site of a new herb garden at the National College of Naturopathic Medicine. (Post photo by Lee Perlman)

benefits of natural medicine have become more widely accepted," Schleich said.

Considine noted that according to a recent study, many patients use alternative medical treatment without telling their mainstream doctors they are doing it. In a way, the college has always been on the cutting edge of this trend.

Founded in 1956, it is one of the oldest such institutions in North America, and its graduates have gone on to create similar institutions elsewhere. "Portland is probably the richest city in the country for natural medicine, and yet much of its citizenry is not aware of it," Schleich mused. That will change as he literally puts the school on the map.

Of course, to do so will involve money the school does not currently have. "Creation of the vision will take sizeable donations," Considine admitted. "We're reaching out to everyone we know. We definitely see this happening in the next five to ten years."

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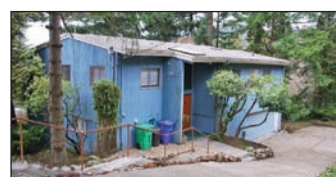
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