

Published every Thursday by Exie Publishing Company, 714 1/2 N.E. Alberta, Portland, Oregon, 97211.
 Subscription rates: 60 cents per month by carrier, \$5.00 per year; \$6.00 per year by mail in Tri-County area; \$6.25 per year by mail outside Tri-County area. Phone 282-0929

ALFRED LEE HENDERSON, Publisher and Editor

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Thief Without Faith

On Saturday, Bethel A.M.E. Church and Maranatha Church was ransacked and robbed. The two persons one black and one white were caught robbing Maranatha, but for the third time within a year the parties that robbed Bethel a "servant church to a secular community," still runs free. Along with the damage you caused and expense, you sadly, did not notice the dreams of the community we hoped to build here at 5828 NE 8th Avenue. Bethel was one of the voluntary sights for the "Summertime Program," dedicated to the proposition that if today is bad, tomorrow will be better, and each one of us will help ourselves.

Did you know that a dream, a dedication, a purpose is beyond destruction? You jimmied the doors of Bethel, broke the glass of the office door to steal property. But you left "purpose"....a treasure more valuable than what you walked off with. I invite you back to find purpose.

Bethel has a store house for economically deprived families. Here we have food and clothing for people. Some of them find us very helpful because while they are waiting to qualify for state and county qualification we feed and cloth them. From these persons you took two boxes of clothes left in the pastor's closet, some can goods and number of other things too numerous to mention. These things were in transfer to the store house.

Some of these people went hungry yesterday. But you didn't care. You took their food and clothes. But you left their faith...faith in a community to help where help is needed. You took their food, a few toys for children we were going to make some young children happy Christmas that otherwise would not have had a Christmas. So now we are inviting our friends, including those who read this open letter, to help us.

We are not pleased to ask for help, but where it is necessary, we must. This is where we are not ashamed to forego our pride and substitute "PURPOSE." Had you thought about that before you robbed us? Did you think to ask for what you so desperately needed, to be recognized as a human being instead of scrawling your signature in anonymous destruction through Bethel's building.

Missing also is one hard-earned 16 sound projector, (one wireless tape recorder belonging to the pastor), one huge electric fan, one slide film projector, and adding machine.

It will take more Sundays than I can count to replace the items or the love or the sacrifice that went into their acquisition.

Many days, social workers, from the Multi-Service Center, assembles at Bethel for worship trying to solve some of the problems of our community.

We are trying to "make our neighborhood a brotherhood." We sponsor a youth basketball and softball team, youth camps and retreats, a boyscout troop and many other helpful programs.

The AMA (Albina Ministerial Association) the Masons and their sister organizations, The Eastern Stars, the Negro Council of Colored Women, the NAACP and many other community organizations always find our doors and the doors of Albina Churches opened.

Most of all many who worship Displaced Persons

The Emanuel Displaced Persons Association has requested the Department of Housing and Urban Development to hold up the final authorization of the Emanuel Hospital-Portland Development Commission project until certain requirements are more adequately met.

The Association has also requested that it be designated as the citizens participation organization for the project by the Development Commission.

"Because of additional expense that would be imposed upon the some of the people who could not afford to be in debt for a number of years it looks like source of the Expansion of Emanuel Hospital will be delayed," said Robert E. Nelson, of the Community Relations Committee American Friends Service Committee.

here find the spiritual inspiration they need from day to day. Some marry here while the dead receive their honor which the living cannot embellish.

Bethel AME Church as freely provided and welcome the gathering of all those actively involved who need a place of free Christian democratic assembly.

You too, are invited back. To see me. To walk into the church without having to break in. To ask for what you need without having to take it. To help yourself...yourselves, and please, to help me understand why? Please...why?

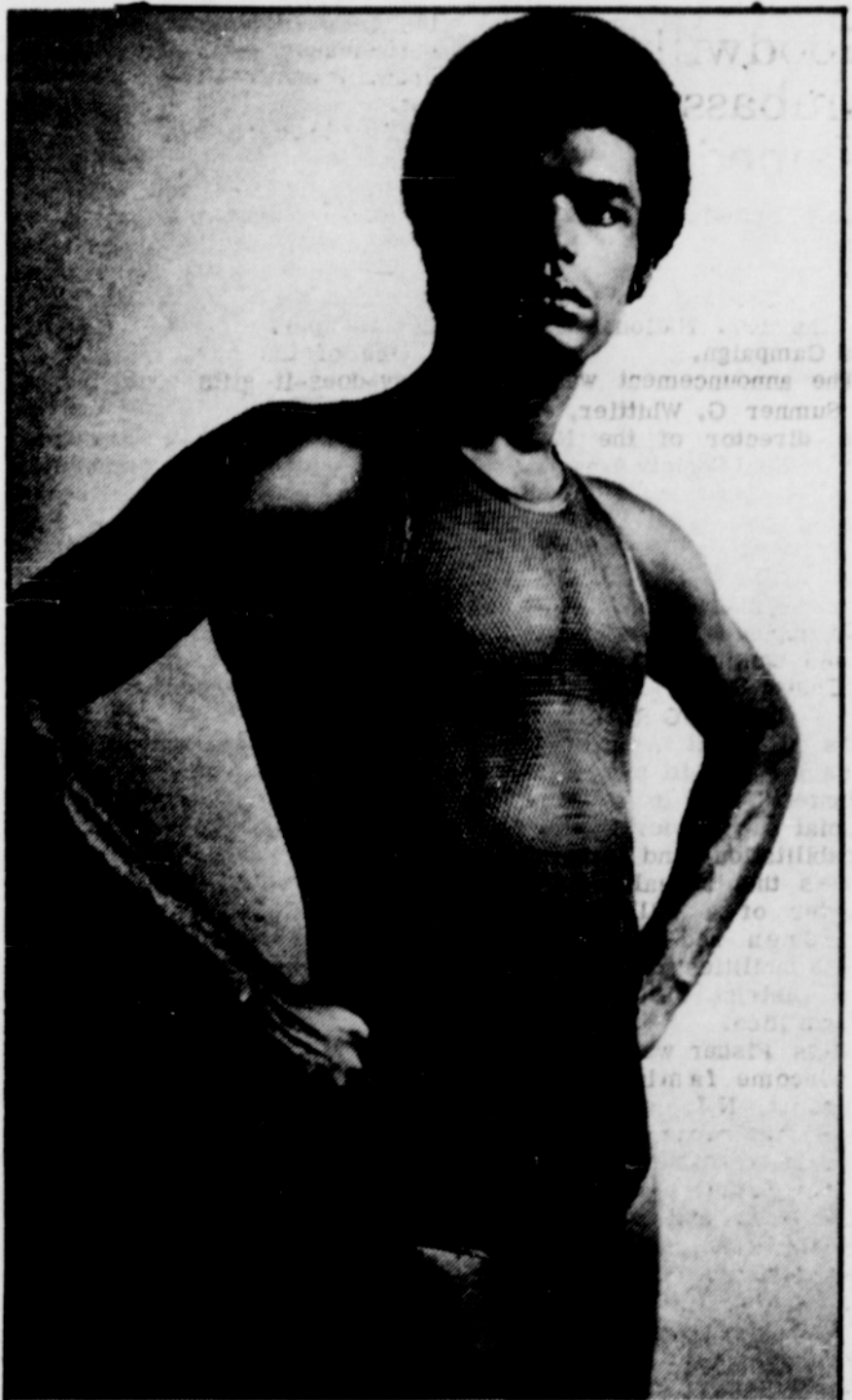
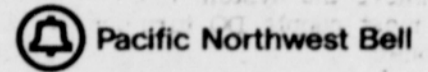
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