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Controversy over nude Black male jailing stirs racial tensions

by Nancy Showalter

Controversy continues among the citizens and city officials of Vancouver, Washington over a 19-year-old black musician who was locked in jail, while still naked, after a scuffle with two police officers.

Trial for Bennie Oscar Davis is set for February 1.

He is charged with resisting arrest and assaulting a police officer on the morning of January 1.

Davis and his wife were apparently walking home from a New Year's Eve party. Two police officers patrolling the area in search of pranksters

stopped them to ask questions. When the policemen began flashing lights, Davis and his wife began running. One of the officers ordered him to stop, which he did. Allegedly, the officer received neck injuries from the struggle which followed.

Davis got away and continued home to prepare for bed. The officers pursued and upon arrival, Davis answered the door in the nude. After a ten minute struggle, Davis was handcuffed and maced. Davis was then taken to jail, still nude, and placed in

a cell. A hoodlum arrived more than 3 hours later with some overalls.

He was accused of indecent exposure in addition to the other charges, but it was later dropped.

The arrest and incidents surrounding it became an issue in a meeting between black citizens and police and city officials, part of a series of sessions attempting to improve police-community relations. The meeting itself turned into a heated debate. A review board was established which included City

Manager Alan Harvey, Police Chief Cal Davis and some black citizens.

The blacks contend that the affair was conducted in a "dehumanizing and degrading" manner and the policemen's actions were unjustified.

Police Chief Davis, when asked about the incident, said:

"No, I wouldn't say it is usual procedure, but it has happened on a few occasions."

City Atty. Jerry King believes that the affair is "a serious sign that a large number of blacks, maybe most of them, do not have confidence in our police department."

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THE ONLY NEWSPAPER IN THE WHOLE WIDE WORLD THAT REALLY CARES ABOUT PEOPLE

Casson named Seattle Pacific "Alumnus of the year"

Ellis H. Casson of Portland, Oregon has just been named Alumnus of the Year by the Seattle Pacific College Alumni Association, in recognition of his many and varied civic activities since his graduation from the school in 1962.

Casson is the 15th SPC graduate to be named Alumnus of the year, the highest honor given by the Alumni Association. According to R. Brooks Baker, president of the Association, Casson was named because "his life represents the very best and highest ideals of servanthood."

The formal presentation will be made during the halftime ceremonies at Saturday's homecoming basketball game in the Seattle Center Arena when the Seattle Pacific Falcons take on Portland State University.

Casson's life style is, and always has been characterized by being busy. At the moment he is regional civil rights officer for the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. He is also a member of the City of Portland Planning Commission, president of the Portland branch of the NAACP, and chairman for the National Association of Inter-Group Relations Officials. And, as if that isn't enough, Casson is also the associate minister of the Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Portland.

Casson was born in a New York slum in 1931, and almost died as an infant. He says his grandmother used to carry



ELLIS CASSON

in the shipyards, but after the war, was laid off, and took on any job she could to support her family. Casson says it's this maternal determination that made a deep impression on him and is still a guiding force in his life.

In 1949 Casson graduated from Jefferson High School in Portland, a school that named him to the Hall of Champions 21 years later. In 1950 he joined the Air Force where he served as a communications specialist. In 1952 he joined a unit of the Fifth Air Force in Seoul, Korea where he served for a year.

Casson left the Air Force in 1954 and moved to Seattle where he went to work at the Boeing Airplane Plant at the same time studying at night to prepare for college. It was during the same period Casson also studied for the ministry in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1956 he was ordained and sent to pastor his first church in Great Falls, Montana.

Reminiscing on that first preaching experience, Casson says, "I was full of youthful enthusiasm. The AME church had a grand total of eight members, and maybe ten or so people who came from time to time." He started recruiting members for his tiny congregation from a nearby Air Force Base, and the attendance began to improve. He also started attending classes at the College of Great Falls where he was the only Protestant minister in a

Catholic institution.

In 1958 he transferred to Ebenezer AME Church in Bremerton, Wn., and began his association with Seattle Pacific College. As in the past, Casson began taking on extra duties... raising a family, and commuting daily to Seattle for classes at SPC, was elected president of the Bremerton Branch of the NAACP, and also served as chairman of the Inter-Faith commission for the Council of Churches.

In 1959 he was elected NAACP field director for nine western states, and transferred to the San Francisco area. While there he managed to pastor a church, work full time for the NAACP, and attend classes at San Francisco State. In 1961 the NAACP agreed to pay Casson part of his salary while he returned to school full time. That along with the G-I Bill, enabled him to return to Seattle Pacific College to complete his college education.

In 1965 Ellis Casson became project co-ordinator for Operation Outreach, a War on Poverty project, while pastoring in St. Paul, San Bernardino, Calif.

Mr. Casson has served as Administrative Assistant to Supt. of Portland Public Schools. At present, he is the regional civil rights officer for the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration.



Mrs. Minnie Holt, left, whose perseverance boosted her up the career ladder in her chosen profession of nursing, has added responsibilities as a registered nurse that she did not have as a licensed practical nurse; among them is discussion of a plan of patient care with physicians like Dr. David E. Shanks, right, a resident in medicine at Emanuel.

Mrs Holt earns R.N.

"You're not going to go back to school any younger," Mrs. Minnie Holt told herself a half-dozen years ago, thinking about the nursing career she had always wanted.

She enrolled in the Portland Community College course in Licensed Practical Nursing and got acquainted with Emanuel Hospital when she went there for clinical experience as part of the program. By May, 1966, she was on the staff as a fulltime LPN employee.

"I like to take care of people," she said at the time; "I like to see the patient get better and go home."

She was working on the orthopedics floor, finding her duties "very rewarding" -- but within two years, she was thinking about taking another step. A registered nurse, with additional educational experi-

ence, is able to accept responsibilities not included in an LPN's job description.

Mrs. Holt saw one problem in connection with going back to school again; she was worried about the math and science requirements she would have to meet. She decided to enroll in some night school math and chemistry classes.

The results encouraged her. She made another trip to the PCC campus, this time to enter the two-year Associate of Arts degree program which prepares graduates for the state board of nursing examinations. These must be passed before a graduate nurse can add an "R.N." to her name.

Last Fall, Mrs. Holt came back to Emanuel, a graduate nurse, worrying about the state board exams before her. When she took the tests, her

fears about one section were realized. It didn't slow her down; "I need to know it better anyway," she said, and took off some time to study.

The next time the examination was given, Minnie Holt was ready for them. Results of the state examinations were announced December 17.

The next time Mrs. Holt reported, there was one big difference. When she signed in, nursing service records carried an added notation: "Minnie Holt," they said: "R.N."

"I want to thank all of the people at the hospital," she said later; "without the help of God and my friends, I couldn't have done it." Now, she's looking forward to a brief vacation and a chance to relax after the intensive studying and the waiting to learn the results of her test.

Williams wins study grant



HAROLD WILLIAMS

Harold Williams, director of Portland State University's Educational Center at 2611

NE Union Ave., has been awarded a spring-term study grant at the University of Zagreb in Yugoslavia.

Williams is among ten persons from Northwest secondary schools and universities to be selected for the overseas training program offered under a "Triple T" grant (training the teachers of teachers) administered by the University of Washington. The University of Oregon and Portland State University are the co-operating institutions.

"The purpose of the grants

him beneath her clothing to keep him warm enough to live. He managed to survive, and he credits the prayers of his grandmother's church group for much of this. His early childhood was spent in

the dirt and misery of Harlem. In 1943 his mother moved to Portland with her family, and Casson says things took a turn for the better, although the family remained poor. His mother worked for a while



Louis Brown receives appreciation certificate from Lewis and Clarke District of the Boy Scouts of America. The award is presented by Mike Rebagliati.

Brown receives Scout's appreciation

Mr. Louis Brown of the Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church was one who received an appreciation certificate from Mike Rebagliati, for the Dis-

trict Committee. Mr. Brown is a holder of the Silver Beaver and is very active as a committeeman in scouting.

Boy Scouts of America held its Appreciation Dinner, January 17, at the Augustana Lutheran Church. With Mr. Norman F. Lewis and Clarke District. (Please turn to page 8)

Model Cities resident makes good

Mrs. Vinie Bethune, formerly of 4420 N. Albina, has been promoted to Financial Supervisor for the Lane County Public Welfare Department in Eugene.

Mrs. Bethune takes the position after 5 years with the Multnomah County Public Welfare Department, where she held various positions. She started as a typist in Staff Development. Mrs. Bethune assisted Mr. Lewis Winchester in setting up the Model Cities, Department of Welfare when it was established. Through diligent work and a keen under-

standing of the problems of welfare recipients, she was promoted to Assistance Worker.

Mrs. Bethune is the only supervisor in the State Welfare Department to gain such a position without a college degree. She attended Eliot Elementary School and Girls Polytechnic High School in Portland and spent two years at the University of Oregon. She has two children, Troy and Tammy.

She is the daughter of Mrs. Marian Scott, 4828 N.E. Mal-lory.



VINIE BETHUNE

Freedom Bank of Finance receives substantial lending power through Aetna Life & Casualty

Portland, Oregon, January 18, Freedom Bank of Finance today announced it would be able to expand its lending power by approximately \$100,000 because of a long-term deposit made by Aetna Life & Casualty.

Freedom Bank of Finance President V. F. Booker said that Aetna had just made a \$20,000 deposit, which is considered by banking standards capable of supporting roughly \$100,000 in loans.

The Freedom Bank of Finance deposit is part of a nationwide Aetna program to deposit a half a million dollars in minority banks during 1972, according to Aetna General Agent George C. Fraser.

Fraser said Aetna plans to deposit \$20,000 in each of 25 minority banks, thus enabling a total expansion in loan funds of approximately \$2.5 million. Nearly three-quarters of the country's 36 minority banks will be reached by the program, he said.

Booker said the Aetna deposit will be used as backing for a variety of business, education, mortgage, home improvement and other con-



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