

PORTLAND OBSERVER

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Christian leads Urban League

Mrs. Geraldine Christian, a six year member of the Urban League Board of Directors, has become the first woman to serve as its president. She succeeds Fred Flowers, who resigned.

Mrs. Christian became a member of the Board in 1970. She was elected secretary in 1971 and first vice president in January, 1975, a post she held until Flowers' resignation.

She is past president of the Links, Incorporated and Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority. She is a member of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of Oregon and the Oregon Black History Project and is past member of the Reed College Women's Committee, Young Audiences and School Board Advisory Committee. She is a life member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

The president is a graduate of the University of Colorado and holds a B.S. degree in Pharmacy. She has been a practicing pharmacist for 23 years and is presently employed by the Veterans Administration.

Her term as president is due to expire in December.



GERALDINE CHRISTIAN

Hospital strife continues

Ms. Naomi Wrighten, spokesperson for the Emanuel Black Employees Organization told the *Observer* that the fight against discrimination will continue against the hospital.

The EBEEO had earlier gone to Roger Larson, complaining that the hospital discriminates against Blacks in hiring and patient care. Larson appointed a community fact finding committee to investigate the charges.

Ms. Wrighten and Mrs. Wilma Graham were suspended with pay, in order to work with the committee, but also were banned from the hospital grounds.

The fact finding committee, chaired by Reverend John H. Jackson, informed Larson that documentation of charges was not provided by EBEEO, and the committee was dismissed. The committee recommended that Vern Summers, director of the Metropolitan Human Resource Commission, oversee a review of the hospital's Affirmative Action policies.

Mrs. Wrighten said the fact finding

committee had agreed to a second meeting with them, but failed to call the meeting. They were asked by letter to submit their evidence of discrimination to the committee and did not respond.

More than twenty employees and patients of the hospital have filed charges of discrimination at the Civil Rights Division of the Labor Bureau.

"It is appalling to believe how much abuse there has been," Mrs. Wrighten said. "The same people and the same problems are named in many of the complaints."

"Many of those are people we don't know, but they are coming up with the same facts over and over. There must be some truth to their allegations."

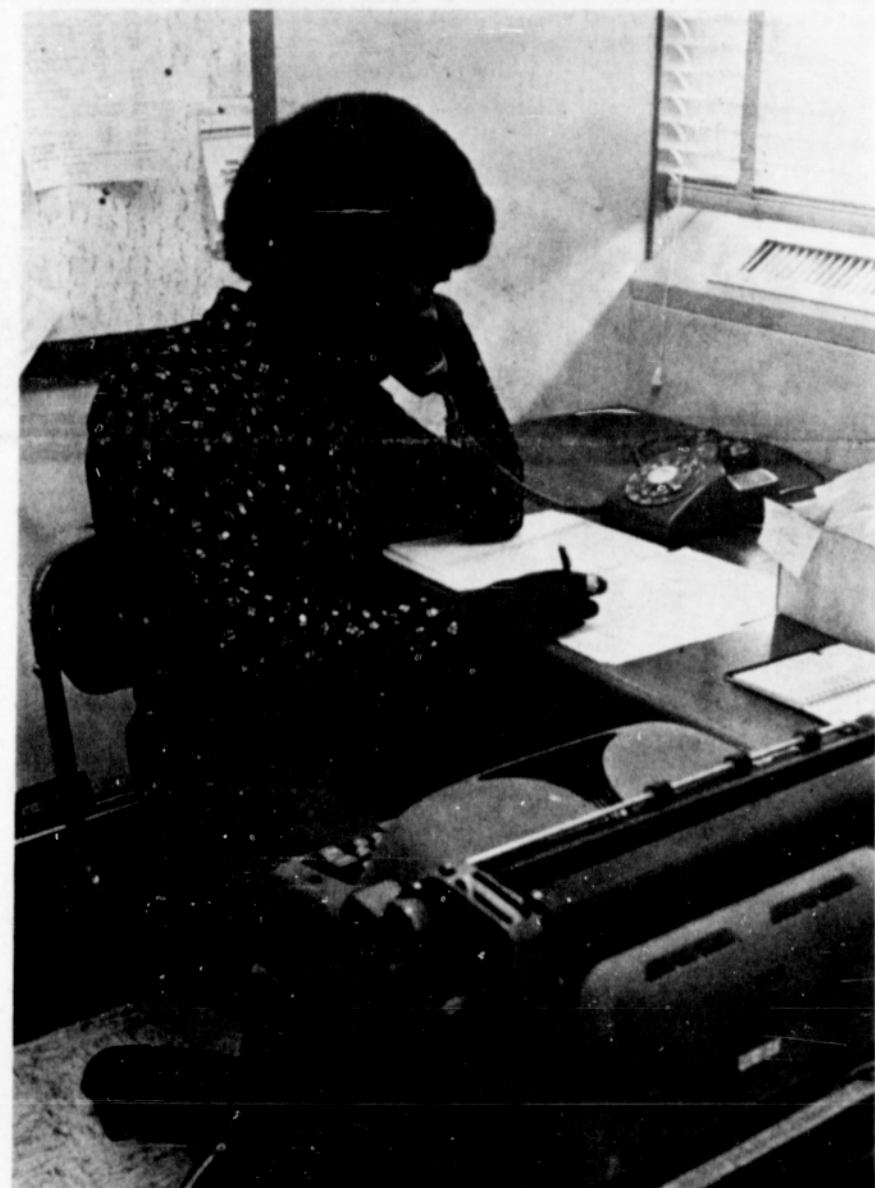
Although the investigation has been officially ended by the hospital, the two nurses have not been returned to work.

Mrs. Wrighten urges those who would like to discuss the problem or would like help filing charges to call 287-7527 or 288-3312 during the day, or 287-3342 after midnight.



La Candra Teal, daughter of Yvonne Teal and Camela Jenkins, daughter of Alfred Jenkins, have a visit with the Easter Bunny at party sponsored by the Northeast YWCA. The party was held for participants of the School-Age Parents Project, coordinated by Kristin Swanson, a "University Year of Action" student from Lewis and Clark College.

OMSI offers education, fun for all ages



CARMON CUNNINGHAM

Carmon Cunningham, a Pacific University senior, is presently working as a student intern at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry (OMSI). His responsibilities fall under the category of marketing research and public relations, which involve the utilization of market survey techniques and public speaking.

While at OMSI, he has initiated a program geared toward the senior adult population, and has been instrumental in increasing their participation in OMSI activities.

His next undertaking has been one of even greater personal concern. Carmon is presently involved in the task of stimulating interest in the Black community about the various classes and opportunities available through OMSI. "More Black people must be made aware of the fact that in today's fast-paced technological society, our young people must become more scientifically knowledgeable about the things that surround them. OMSI is an excellent educational resource for the acquisition of this knowledge," states Cunningham.

In an effort to facilitate his goals, Carmon is working with several high school counselors in an attempt to stimulate interest in high school students and to locate a few talented students to become involved in OMSI activities through incentive motivated scholarships. He is also co-ordinating a special summer program in Sciences that will be located in the Model Cities area. This program is for early high schoolers, "...we zeroed in on this age segment because they are at the point in their lives where their interest can be substantially enhanced, and there is still time left in their high school careers to better prepare for colleges' scientific academia."

Cunningham is very serious in his (Please turn to p. 2 col. 4)

Oregon Black History Project underway

In August of 1788, Marcus Lopez, a Cape Verde Island Black from Captain Robert Gray's ship the "Lady Washington" came ashore near Tillamook and was killed by Indians. As far as is known he was the first Black man to enter what became Oregon.

liest expeditions -- with Lewis and Clark, James Fremont, Erving Young. They crossed the plains in wagons and came around the horn in ships. Some came as free men, some as servants, and some as slaves.

Little is known about how Blacks lived in the Oregon Country, but much is known about the racism of their white counterparts. The earliest governments in Oregon wrote laws forbidding Blacks -- free or slave -- from coming to Oregon. In spite of the laws, by 1850 about fifty Black people were scattered throughout the Oregon Territory, mostly living on farms.

Although the exclusion laws were not rigidly enforced, Blacks were not welcome. They were excluded from the political, economic and social life of the Territory. In spite of their exclusion the fear of Blacks played an important role in early Oregon politics.

The role of Blacks in Oregon's early history is well documented in government records and the white press, but the period from 1870 to 1940 is one where little documentation exists.

It is this period that the Oregon Black History Project will concentrate in its effort to write history of Black people in Oregon. "We know that Blacks have had a distinguished history in Oregon,"

A.L. Henderson, Chairman of the OBHP Board said, "It was around the turn of the century that the institutions that are important to any community began to develop -- the churches, lodges, economic and political clubs, social organizations and businesses. In the United States the history of Black people has been a constant struggle to be free. We want to trace this struggle so that our children can learn about and be proud of their heritage."

The OBHP has received a matching grant of approximately \$3,500 from the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of Oregon to publish a book and tape the memories of older Black residents.

Of special use in compiling the history are pictures, scrapbooks, documents, newspapers, programs and other items from the past. Since for many years the white press did not print the news of Black people, these items are only available from those persons who have saved them over the years.

The "oral history" portion of the project will consist of tape recordings of Oregon residents who will relate their memories of earlier days. These will be available for future research, long after those who witnessed history are gone.

All those who would like to loan their historical items (which will be photographed and returned unharmed) or would like to contribute their knowledge of the past are urged to call 283-2487.

Also needed are volunteers to interview, take photographs, transcribe, type, provide transportation, and do library

research.

Members of the board or directors are: Mr. A. Lee Henderson, Chairman; Mrs. Geri Christian, Oregon Bicentennial Commission; Mrs. Elizabeth Buehler, Oregon Historical Society; Dr. Verne Duncan, Superintendent of Public Instruction; Dr. Robert Blanchard, Mr. Cleveland Gilcrease, Mr. Gary Gomez, Mr. William Greaby, Dr. William Harris, Dr. Ernest Hartzog, Mrs. Hazel G. Hays, Ms. Erma Hepburn, Mr. Leland Johnson, Mrs. Bobbie Nunn, Mr. Warne Nunn, Mr. Henry Scott, Mr. Herb Simpson, Mr. Tom Sloan, Mrs. Marie Smith, and Mr. Steve Smith, Jr., Youth Member.

Honorary Members are: Mr. Keith Burns, Executive Assistant to the Governor; Ms. Ruth Haefner, Mr. Otto Rutherford, and Ms. Lizzie Weeks.

Office space is provided by the *Portland Observer* at 2201 N. Killingsworth. Sponsor for the project is Bethel AME Church.

Henderson emphasized that the project is not interested in digging into the private lives of individuals. "We want to learn how Black people lived in Oregon -- where they worked and went to school, what forms of recreation they had, where they shopped, how they travelled, where they worshipped -- all of the little things that go to make up a way of life."

"We know something about the racism that was and is prevalent in Oregon. We want to learn how Black families lived, brought up their children, and survived. This is a story our children must learn from us. The only way this story can be recreated is through the help and assistance of our older residents."

A rabbits tale of Easter Eggs

by Tom Martens

Easter Sunday is the only day when rabbits lay eggs -- colored eggs at that.

But don't try to catch a glimpse of rabbits laying eggs, because they're so sneaky about finding hiding places that no one has seen them. And the average person will only be able to find the eggs Easter morning.

This egg laying tale is what the rabbit community would like people to believe. Actually, the rabbit eggs are a hoax, a big joke.

Around the hutch, the rabbit egg jokes have become as popular as the "which came first, the chick or the egg" puzzle. The great "Easter Egg Joke" began many years ago in Germany, so the story goes. It all started during a famine.

A poor old woman dyed some eggs as an Easter gift for her children and hid them near a nest in the backyard. Just as the children discovered the nest, a big rabbit jumped away.

The surprised children concluded the rabbit had laid those eggs in the nest.

When the tale hit the rabbit community, local German rabbits couldn't control themselves at the humor of it all.

So they spread the story around the world, as the legend goes. And like a good rumor, the story got a little stretched as it was passed along.

Pretty soon not only the eggs were colored but there were colored rabbits, too. And the eggs -- even chocolate eggs -- mysteriously appeared not only in the backyard, but everywhere. The whole story got pretty much out of hand.

RABBITS AND THE MOON

When the story got to Egypt the elders were puzzled by the strange turn of Easter morning events, but they found an answer.

The rabbit is considered a symbol of the moon in Egypt and since the moon determines the date that Easter falls on, the elders thought it must be causing the rabbit-egg phenomenon. So the rabbit became their Easter symbol.

In the Ukraine in southern Russia, eggs with elaborate designs strangely began appearing on Easter Sunday morning. All to the joy of the rabbits, who lay snickering in the bushes.

Since those earlier times, children have wised up to the ways of the rabbits. In Belgium, children hide nests made of hay in hopes of luring rabbits to lay eggs in them. And it works.

But the French weren't taken in by the rapidly spreading Easter egg stories. French mothers often told their children that Easter chimes brought the eggs.

In France and some other European countries, the church bells don't ring from Good Friday until Easter. So mothers tell their children the bells fly to Rome until Easter and on their way back drop eggs for boys and girls to find.

In Sweden, rabbits had a field day. They convinced the Swedes the egg is a symbol of renewed vigor and life. So Swedish people customarily eat as many eggs as possible on Easter Sunday.

Scottish people bury eggs in their fields at Easter. According to legend, the farmer will have good luck growing grain

if the plow passes over an egg at the first spring plowing.

But European Gypsy traditions were too powerful to be influenced by mere rabbits.

On Easter eve the Gypsies of southern Europe place herbs in a simple wooden box. They then pass around a dead lizard or snake for everyone to touch before placing the animal on the herb pile.

The box is carried from tent to tent, then thrown into a brook. Gypsies believe the ceremony wards off ill health and misfortune for the coming year.

If anyone finds and opens the box, he or she will get all the maladies the Gypsies have escaped. So watch it.

Of course, the craziest custom on Easter morning belongs to the Americans. They swallowed the story hook, line and Easter tale.

Even the President gets into the act with an egg-rolling contest on the White House lawn. Rutherford B. Hayes began the custom of rolling colored eggs around the lawn in 1878. Parents must accompany the children for the annual egg roll.

The tradition has been celebrated every year, except between the years 1942-53 when some sense prevailed. But the rabbit lobby is powerful in Washington and has revitalized the egg tradition.

So while walking to church or enjoying the spring day, if you happen to see a rabbit on Easter morning, don't disturb here. Sneak up and see what's going on. You might be surprised.



A birthday party for Thomas Jefferson was held at Jefferson High School in conjunction with the opening of the new library/media center. Refreshments were arranged by the Links, Incorporated. Lighting the candles are: Ms. Carmen Walker, President of the Links, Incorporated; Thomas Vaughn,

director of the Oregon Historical Society; Eugene Douthit, Principal at Jefferson High School; Ms. Mary Chambers Jones, librarian; Ms. Olga Talley, a member of Links, Incorporated; and Ms. Kathryn Bogle, chairman of the Links, Incorporated contribution to the event. (Dan Long photo.)