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Beaumont middle school approved

The Area III Citizens' Advisory Committee has approved the Beaumont middle school proposal submitted to it in spite of a seventy percent opposition vote by the Beaumont community.

The proposal, if adopted by the School Board, will make Beaumont Elementary School, located on 42nd and Fremont, a middle school for sixth, seventh, and eighth graders from the Beaumont, Sabin and Alameda attendance areas.

Two years ago the Sabin and Alameda citizen advisory committees voted to make their schools lower grade schools (K-5) but the Beaumont community rejected the idea. The project was brought up again this year and approved by the school's Citizen Advisory Committee.

At the insistence of the Committee to Retain Beaumont as a K-8 School, a community vote was held, with one adult from each household allowed to vote. This vote was approximately seventy percent opposed to the change.

Parents living in the Beaumont attendance area, with children attending Beaumont school, voted 179-171 for the middle school plan.

Testimony at the Tuesday night Area III CAC meeting was sharply divided, with the deep animosities the issue has brought to the community often displayed.

Those speaking in favor of the middle school proposal emphasized the

declining enrollment at the school which will necessitate double-grade classrooms, loss of special subjects, and deteriorating academic achievement, etc. Beaumont now has an enrollment of 520 students, 497 in grades one through eight. Children in middle schools are provided a higher ratio of teachers by the school district than are upper grade students in K-8 schools, so middle schools can provide more comprehensive programs.

Opponents of the change cite Beaumont's past excellence -- it is in the upper fourth of the district's schools academically -- and believe dedicated teachers and district cooperation can retain that excellence.

They consider threats of deterioration and loss of program as a threat by the district to persuade parents to go along with the middle school reorganization, which the School Board favors.

The Area III CAC vote was 5-2, with the two opposition votes based on the fact that there is no evidence of community acceptance. School Board policy is that middle schools will be adopted only with community acceptance. Those voting for reorganization expressed their opinion that the middle school offers the best academic opportunities.

The proposal will now go to the School Board.

Jefferson gets music magnet

Jefferson High School will offer music education for serious students of instrumental music next year, with the beginning of a new magnet program in music.

Although Jefferson has had a magnet program in Performing Arts, this has been limited to drama and dance, with music only as support for the other two programs.

This program will provide an opportunity for students who have a serious interest in instrumental music. Currently most Portland high schools offer only limited courses in music and many

do not have bands or orchestras that are of such quality that they would draw students. Therefore there is little participation in high school music (about ten percent as compared to the fifteen percent expectation).

The Jefferson program will be taught on the conservatory concept combining certified teachers and professional musicians. Students will already have some background but will have advanced courses and will perform in small groups and concert groups.

Urban League questions School Board procedure

The following are excerpts from the Urban League of Portland's presentation to the Portland School Board at its public hearing on priorities last Monday. The presentation was made by Ms. Jeanna Wooley.

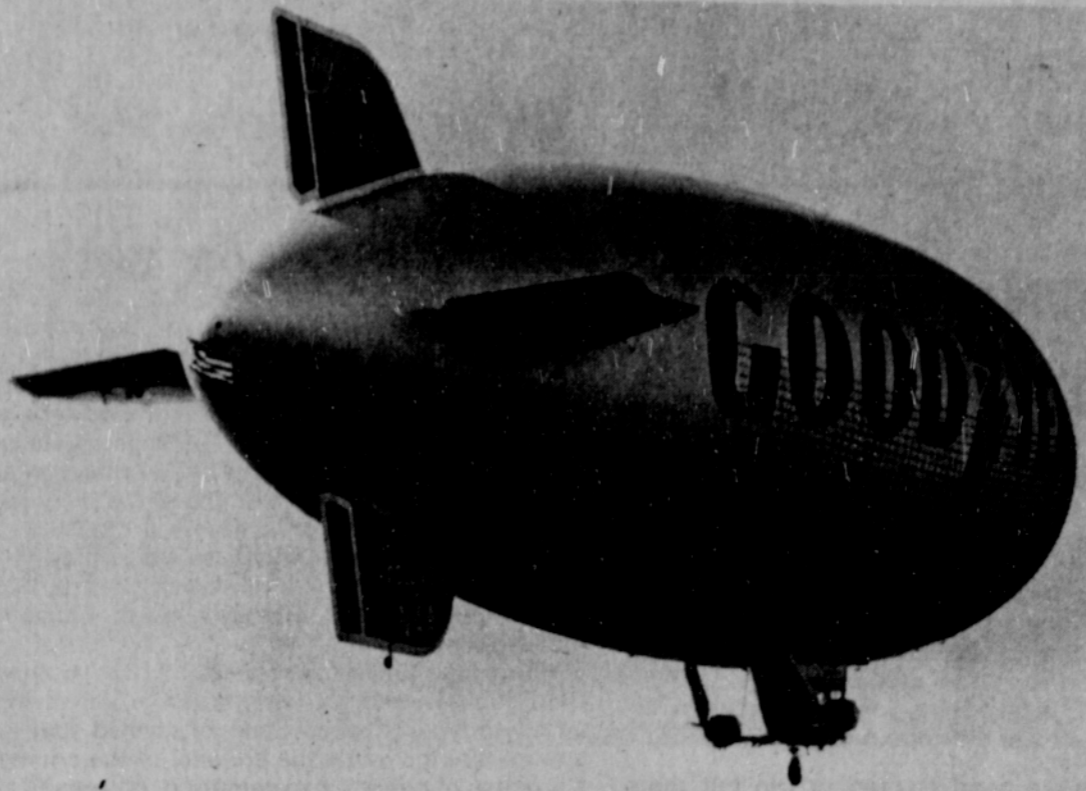
"Last November, the Board of Education indicated in public that it would not seek budget increases by way of election for approximately a two-year period. Recently, and without adequate explanation, that decision was altered. Thus, rather than an extensive period of discussion and explanation, we are now faced with a limited time in which to make important decisions. Your letter requesting public involvement reflects the expedient stance which the Board of Education is now required to take. The questions are, as a consequence, closed and narrowly worded. They at-

tempt to seek only those responses which will support the need for an election which is already scheduled. The Urban League Board of Directors not only finds the nature of the questionnaire to be somewhat condescending, but we also think this is attributed to a time frame that is too tight to allow for full and open discussion.

"The Urban League has been proud to have helped in the creation of the Community Coalition for School Integration. This organization has involved many groups and numerous individuals in a long and arduous process. It has given a measure of proof to that belief that citizen initiative, together with the Board of Education's support, can be positive and productive. The outcome will lead to a better informed community; one

more fully aware of the challenges it must face in the years to come. The experience of the Coalition demonstrates that citizens are deeply concerned, and that they are willing to invest personally and financially in their schools. If the Board of Education truly wants the counsel of the community, a process of patient involvement of citizens is a good place to begin. The Coalition proves it can be done."

Regretting that the School Districts request for their participation did not allow the Urban League to make an adequate response, Miss Wooley continued. "In the future, please be assured that the Urban League is ready to participate in any long-ranged process which will help the Portland Public Schools determine priorities for the coming years."



The Goodyear blimp "Columbia," flies over the city during its annual Rose Festival visit to Portland.



Al Williams, Observer advertising manager leaves the blimp after a ride over Vancouver. (Photos: Dan Long)

Want to ride on the Goodyear blimp?

Want to ride in the Goodyear blimp? Four lucky Boise eighth graders will win a ride, sponsored by the *Portland Observer*. So when the blimp hovers over Boise School on Thursday evening, in it will be four students and their principal, Dave McCrea.

The students will earn their ride by writing an essay.

The contest design as well as the judging points -- with heavy emphasis on originality and imagination -- were determined by the eighth grade teachers, Nellie Larson and Norvella Long, and upper grade supervisor Jerry Simmitt.

Contest judges are: Herb Cawthorne, director of PSU's Educational Op-

portunities Program and columnist for the *Observer*; Chuck Hagens, president of the Boise Neighborhood Association; Edna Robertson, director of the Northeast Neighborhood Office; and Ron Sykes, *Observer* Sports Editor.

The 192 foot Goodyear blimp has a cruising speed of 35 miles per hour, propelled by two 210 horse power 6 cylinder engine. It carries six passengers plus the pilot.

The blimp is called a "non-rigid" airship because its envelope has no interior framework but maintains its shape entirely by internal pressure of the helium gas.

The mighty display of lights is made

possible by 3,780 incandescent lamps. Messages to be run on the 105 foot signs are put on magnetic tape in a special lab in Akron. A typical six-minute tape consists of forty million pieces or bits of "on-off" information which, when run through special electronic readers on board, control lamps and color selection.

The Goodyear blimp is in Portland for the Rose Festival. Passengers are restricted to the media and special Goodyear guests, with others having to journey to the winter base in Miami for their rides.

As we go to press, suspension hangs over Boise School. Who will the lucky students be . . . ?



Melanie Batiste, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Alvin Batiste, Oregon Air National Guard, and her mother Rosalie, discuss Melanie's future in the

Melanie Batiste joins Air National Guard

PORTLAND, OREGON -- Fleet-footed Melanie Batiste, University of Oregon women's track record setter, has joined forces with the Oregon Air National Guard.

The tall, slender woman, daughter of Alvin and Rosalie Batiste of Portland, will attend basic training this summer and undergo training at the Portland Air Guard Base as an intelligence specialist with the 153rd Tactical Air Control Center Squadron.

A 1977 Lincoln High School graduate, she set records there in the 220-yard dash. Now in her first year at the state university in Eugene, she is

the Northwest Collegiate Champion at 200 meters and is a record holder in that event. She is a member of the University of Oregon 440 and mile relay teams, both holding the school records.

"She's been running ever since she learned how to walk," said her mother, Rosalie Batiste.

Melanie is one of the first women ever to be offered an athletic scholarship to the University of Oregon.

"The sky's the limit for Melanie," said Tom Heinonen, her track coach. "She has made incredible improvement this year by training in a

sophisticated program. She is a national class sprinter. This year, after only eight months training, she came within one place of making it into the national finals at the national championship in Knoxville, Tennessee.

"I think she will benefit greatly from the Air Guard," Mrs. Batiste said. "The training she will receive there fits in very well with her future plans. She wants to be an air traffic controller."

During high school, Melanie worked part-time at the Portland joint Armed Forces enlistment center, and probably got her inspiration to join the Guard there, her mother said.

Soweto massacre one of many

remember soweto?

yes.

For decades, Black South Africans have organized and attempted through boycotts, strikes and demonstrations to change the system of apartheid which denies them political, economic and social rights that are guaranteed to the white minority population. In each instance these attempts have been met with violence by the South African police. Thousands of Blacks and some whites have been banned, detained, imprisoned or killed for their efforts.

On June 16, 1976 the South African police fired into a peaceful demonstration of protesting students in the township of Soweto -- the totally segregated Black area fourteen miles from Johannesburg. The Soweto incident attracted worldwide attention. The official death toll was 170 -- two white and 168 Blacks. However, Africans on the scene reported that up to a thousand were killed and many more arrested, wounded and beaten.

Soweto was not just one day of protest or an isolated incident. It represented months of organizing all over the country and was merely the largest and most tragic of many protests.

Today, two years later, the struggle for the most basic of political, social and economic rights continues in Soweto, South Africa and in all of southern Africa. Today, however, the deaths and detentions in South Africa that result from day to day struggles aren't told because of the October "crackdown" which outlawed the Black press and silenced many leaders and opposition organizations.

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