

# Governor appoints Black, Hispanic Commissions

Governor Victor Atiyeh has announced that, in response to recommendations by his Advisory Committee on Minorities, he will establish by executive order a Commission on Blacks and a Commission on Hispanics.

The Governor will prepare legislation to be submitted to the 1981 Legislative Assembly to have

commissions continued and funded by statute. This is also in accordance with the committee's recommendation, with the intention that the commissions not be dependent on the attitude of each governor.

Nominations and applications for membership on the commissions are being accepted and should be sub-

mitted immediately to Ms. Kay Toran, Department of Affirmative Action, State Capitol, Salem 97310.

Ms. Toran, who is chairman of the advisory committee, told the *Observer* that she was pleased with the committee's report "which was timely and significant. It contained much information on issues that Blacks and Hispanics consider to ef-

fect their lives. We tried to cover the state to get input from as many people as possible."

As far as is known, this is the first time the State has gone out to get input from minority communities.

"The Governor is very accepting of the idea of two commissions, and he hopes that people will rally to support the legislation."

The Commissions will monitor state agencies as they relate to Blacks and Hispanics; do research; be advocates; assist problem solving on the executive and legislative level.

The commissions are proposed as having nine members each and although membership will not be restricted by geographic areas, state-

wide representation is sought. The Governor also hopes to include all age groups.

The Advisory Committee was appointed by Governor Atiyeh to advise him on the need for and the role of a commission on minorities. This was the result of refusal of the Legislature to establish Black and Hispanic commissions.

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Anticipating a "Special Homecoming" filled with pleasure are: (standing L to R) Douglas Lewis, Nathaniel Phillips, Dennis Springer, Michael Hepburn, Donald Hepburn, Bruce Smith. Seated L to R: Sherman Davis, Bruce Carter and newest member from Philadelphia, Tony Collins.

## 'Pleasure' comes home

When it comes to their music, Pleasure has always meant business. They've spent years honing their craft, refining their concept, their approach.

The members of Pleasure all hail from Portland, Oregon, although Phillips and Donald Hepburn have relocated to the Bay Area and Michael Hepburn is currently attending school in Seattle.

As high school freshmen, Phillips and guitarist Marlon McClain started a band called *Franchise*, soon joined by drummer Bruce Carter. From time to time, different members of *Franchise* sat in on gigs with a local jazz-funk group called the *Soul Masters*, which included Donald and Michael Hepburn, Bruce Smith, Sherman Davis, and Dennis Springer. Eventually, about nine years ago, the two bands merged into *Pleasure*.

On *Special Things*, their sixth Fantasy album, Pleasure has reached a high water mark of both artistic excellence and commercial

appeal. It's the second time they've produced themselves - their previous effort yielded the top ten R&B single "Glide," which won them a share of the pop audience as well. *Special Things* contains exceptionally consistent, high-quality music that should help make Pleasure a household name.

"The music industry needs Pleasure," declares keyboardist Donald Hepburn, "because we dare to be ourselves. We set our own standards, and we're not interested in being a clone of whatever group or trend is happening at the moment."

"Of course, if you're going to be an individualist," Hepburn continues, "you're going to get criticized, and we've gotten our share. People have said we're too radical, and one writer actually said that Pleasure was too good for its own good!"

"We do try to be different musically," admits bassist Nathaniel Phillips, "but if people

get into what you're trying to do, that raises the concept of popular music to a whole new level. For instance, if you listen to "Take A Chance," on the new album, there's a lot of unusual stuff going on. There's a very hard groove, and that's the vehicle on top of that there's all that dissonance, and muted trumpets. Not your average pop tune! But people react very strongly to it."

Pleasure's nine individuals are very much committed to being a unit and to growing together as a band. "I can hear more of a group approach on *Special Things*," says Michael Hepburn, Pleasure keyboardist. "It's less focused on what a particular person wants to realize as an aesthetic. Collaboration is very important to us."

Adds Phillips, "There isn't one song of mine which hasn't been enhanced by an idea from someone in the group. That's definitely how we work - it's the team ball." (Please see Page 6)

## Principal speaks on education

Part II

By Stephanie Cole

school in the City...

*Observer:* What specific financial resources?

*Gerald:* We have Title I additional money, we have State Disadvantage Fund, we have the Special Childhood Early Education, we have a different kind of kindergarten program in terms of an all day support system and we are working toward having one instructional aid for every teacher in the school. So resource wise we have the resources to keep us going.

*Observer:* Would a boycott of schools in October have an affect on the school district financially?

*Gerald:* If children are out during the critical period in October, yes the district would lose financially.

*Observer:* There are many people who believe that children should be in school regardless of political and educational issues. As a principal, are you relieved that the boycott was postponed?

*Gerald:* I'm glad that children are in school, that's my job. My job is to have a program for the children. We were going to stay totally out of the political arena, in terms of the boycott. We went ahead and I instructed the staff to prepare a program for the children at that level. If the children came, to present it to them, if they didn't come, then to give it to them when they arrived to stay totally out of the politics of the boycott without passing a personal judgement on whether children should be used in political issues. I think that each parent must make that determination for their own children. They must decide whether or not the merits of having a child in school or

whether or not the symbolic act of being out accomplishes more. As a principal, I'm obliged to look at it from the point that here's a school we hope your kids are here. If they are, we are going to give them the best.

**Note:** There's a considerable amount of controversy regarding the issue that standardized tests are a true measurement of Black children's abilities, potential and accumulative knowledge. Recently white educators and psychologists advocate that because of continual low scores on achievement and I.Q. tests, Blacks and other minorities are therefore "inferior" intellectually to whites. These inductions have acclaimed wide coverage by all factions of the media. But on the opposite side of the issue, there are both Blacks and whites in the field of education who advocate that the "standardized" tests aren't an accurate monitor of Black children's capabilities and accumulative knowledge, because Blacks and other minorities come from different culture backgrounds, the format of standardized tests are in direct conflict with their culture. These inductions have hardly caused a peep from the media. In the midst of this controversy, there are some who believe that Blacks and other minorities should adapt to the standardized tests geared to white society. Some minorities have been successful, others haven't. On the other hand, there are educators who think separate tests, geared to the culture of Blacks but equivalent to standardized tests should be used. (Please turn to Page 10 Col 1)

## School Board bungles first personnel hearing

The Portland School Board held its first public hearing on a personnel dismissal Monday night, at the request of former school district employee C. Eddie Edmonson. All district employees who are demoted or dismissed have the right to a hearing before the School Board, which must be held in private unless the employee chooses to have a public hearing.

The district has not had prior public personnel hearings. Most employees take their grievances to a hearings officer, who submits a report to the School Board. The

School Board then uses that report to confirm or deny the action of the Superintendent.

There was considerable confusion about the procedures - with board members Wally Priestley and Steve Buel basically objecting to the format. The district's case was presented on the written record of the hearings officer, and Edmonson was given forty minutes to explain his case. This format allowed for no questioning of supervisors or fellow employees.

Priestley questioned whether that could be considered a "hearing"

and whether the district could or should limit his rights. School attorney Don Jefferies explained that Edmonson's attorney had agreed that since Edmonson had a hearing before a hearings officer, they would limit themselves to a forty minute presentation to the Board. The attorney had objected to the fact that the earlier hearing was not before the Board, that the hearings officer is a school district employee, and that witnesses were not under oath.

Edmonson, who is Black, was (Please turn to Page 10 Col 3)



Two near fatal accidents, pets being hit by cars, numerous fender benders and the high speeds at which vehicles traveled through Williams Avenue prompted the Humboldt Neighborhood Association (HNA) to seek to have the street closed to through traffic. According to Madelyn

Noabush of HNA, the action started in March of 1979, continued through months of negotiations with the City Traffic Department, and ended Tuesday with the closing of Williams Avenue at Jessup Street.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

## Nicaragua government launches 'Year of Health'

The next twelve months have been declared the "YEAR OF HEALTH" in Nicaragua. The Nicaraguan National Government of Reconstruction (NGR) targeted health care as one of three main priorities following the successful overthrow of the Somoza dictatorship by the Nicaraguan people and the Sandanista National Liberation Front (FSLN) in July of 1979. The other priorities were and are the literacy campaign and physical reconstruction. The first phase of the literacy campaign was recently completed with the teaching of half

a million people to read and write in a few short months. Physical reconstruction continues and the next year will see health care as a central focus.

Health care is an urgent and pressing need in Nicaragua. The bloody war against Somoza and his hated National Guard left 40,000 persons dead and another 100,000 wounded, over half of whom require on-going care. This situation is compounded by the destruction of schools, factories, hospitals and crops ordered by Somoza and carried out by the National Guard

as they fled the country, not to mention the looting of the National Treasury by Somoza. On top of all this, the 40 year Somoza family dictatorship left a legacy only partially reflected in some of the following figures:

- Malnutrition, 80% of children under the age of 5
- Infant mortality, 121 per thousand births, as compared to 1-2 per thousand in wealthy areas of the U.S.
- Life expectancy, 52 years, as compared to 73 in the U.S.
- Illiteracy (prior to recent

literacy campaign), 80% in the countryside, 40% in the cities.

• 82.4% and 36% of urban population without sanitation.

Because of this situation, the National Government of Reconstruction established the health care priority and within weeks of the Sandanista led victory over Somoza, began an immunization program for children against polio and other diseases. Within a few days, over 80% of the country's children were immunized. But even this kind of spectacular commitment and mobilization of the Nicaraguan

people cannot immediately overcome the realities of the Somoza legacy. A reporter for the *Oregonian* recently visited the country and has noted that due to lack of supplies etc., patients are two (2) to a bed in some hospitals and everywhere there is a lack of supplies and fundamental equipment.

Shortage of medical supplies and the sparseness of international aid (with a few exceptions) make the struggle for decent health care in Nicaragua difficult. Some aid has come to Nicaragua from various Latin American countries and

European nations. Aid from the U.S. has been tied up in Congress for some time and only recently did President Carter finally release the aid so it could be sent.

The Portland Nicaragua Support Committee, an affiliate of the National Network in Solidarity with the Nicaraguan People, is a local group of students, working people, clergy and professionals that has been working for over the last year to share information about the new Nicaragua and other countries in Latin and Central America. It has (Please turn to Page 10 Col 1)