

# Al Harris: Dedication to music

By Nathaniel Scott

There are many things of an attractive nature through and about the City of Portland. Some of these things are the result of Black culture, emanating in the form of verse, song and music. One such person who dispenses Black culture in music is Al Harris.

Al Harris is working towards a degree in music composition and dispensing joy and happiness as he strolls the streets of Portland. Born in Atlanta, Georgia, thirty-three years ago, where he attended Clark College, he has since put together a string of school attendances that speak well of his desire and ambition, Lewis & Clark, Portland State University and Marylhurst. One of his ultimate goals is to reform the "New World African Band" which he once had with Tom Boothe, and play original compositions that he as well as other local musicians have written.

Al is dedicated to the music field and has hundreds of compositions that he has compiled over the past two decades and is particularly pleased with the things he has done within the last decade.

"I view music as a vehicle of expression and I try to tell of the things I have seen through my music, but I will not sacrifice the principles of my music or of myself for the sake of commercialization.

My spirituality in music goes deeper than that," he asserted.

But, he is quick to give credit where it is due. "A number of people have been instrumental in my career, but, Mr. Clarence Gray and Rudi Mwangosi have been most helpful, because they have taken a great interest in me and my music." When asked what he wanted to accomplish in life, his answer was: "I, the same as most people, would like to secure a living through my field, and at the same time bring joy into the lives of others." Spirit, determination and desire tell what Al Harris is all about.

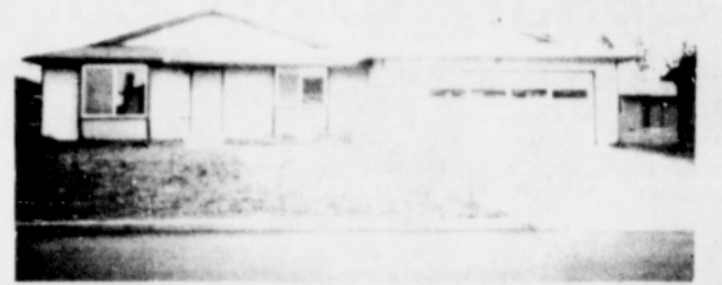
He plays a total of eight instruments, and keeps the Kalimba, an African instrument, in his possession at all times. The Kalimba's African name is "Mbira" and it produces a strange sound that denotes the heritage of the American Blacks; a mixture of many things that flourishes with sound and purpose.

Al Harris is just one of the many Blacks who wave the much needed banner of Black culture in the City of Portland.



AL HARRIS

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## St. Andrew auctions material

St. Andrews Community Center announces its 7th annual Building Materials Auction on Friday September 19 and Saturday the 20th.

The Community Center, located at NE 8th and Alberta, serves the neighborhood with programs designed to reach all segments and ages of the community. Area children participate in the after school program from September to June, a full day summer school curriculum, athletic groups and open gym time, youth group and family story telling nights.

Senior citizens hold weekly quilting bees, join in senior bingo, and are served in their homes through the shut-in visitation and transportation services coordinated through the center. People of all ages participate in folk dancing, spanish classes, jazz dance classes, volleyball, clown classes, hand-in-hand festival, fiestas, community seminars, meetings and celebrations. The community center is available to neighborhood groups such as the Portland Black Repertory Theatre, R.U.N.T., Narcotics Anonymous, Tribes of One Feather, and the Spanish community on an as-needed basis.

The Building Materials Auction will feature new and used building materials, including a new furnace, new storm windows and doors, a new gas grill, electrical work, a custom bathroom vanity, plumbing, insulation, windows, doors, paneling, cabinets, and much more. The silent auction and preview will be Friday, the 19th, from 7 to 9pm. The oral auction with the renowned Russ Kerns as auctioneer, will be held from 11am to 3pm on Saturday the 20th. In addition, a special adult fun auction will be held Saturday night from 7pm to 1am.

The fun auction features items solicited from parish members and friends. This year's list of over 100 items includes stays at vacation homes in the mountains, at the beach, and in Hawaii, a six day sailing trip to the San Juans, bicycle tune-ups, and exotic dinners. A special item this year will be an election night party catered for 100 people - sure to be a bargain! One \$2.00 bid card will be good for all three auctions.

All of the money raised by the auction will go to support the work of the community center throughout the coming year.

St. Andrews Community Center is affiliated with the Health Help Center, the St. Andrews Legal Clinic, the Clothes Closet, and the St. Andrew Community School.

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