

OBSERVATIONS

FROM THE SIDELINES
By Kathryn Hall Bogle

Police Officer Carmen Sylvester is an "Officer Friendly" of the Portland Police Bureau.

Of course she is friendly. By nature she is a friendly person, but the tag "Officer friendly" she acquired by her work for the last two years in the safety education section of the Bureau's Traffic Division. Sylvester is one of four persons designated as "Officers Friendly."

In a day's work Officer Sylvester visits any of 28 schools in the Portland area. Boise, Eliot, Benson high, Central Catholic are all on her beat. Or, she could show up at a big picnic at Oaks Park. It all depends on where she might be needed to keep juveniles in the general public reasonably aware of the basic safety rules of traffic. She is in charge of Safety Patrols, she teaches safe bicycling, and safe walking on city streets.

"I've been a police officer since I joined the force in May, 1974," says Sylvester. "The Affirmative Action program of the City of Portland attracted my attention to the minority hiring possibilities open to me and I gave it a 'try.' I received on-the-job training accompanied by tutoring at school, had my 18 months of probationary street training with follow-up training at the Police Academy. I've been on the force ever since."

Born and reared in Portland, Carmen Sylvester said she had been assigned as a street patrol officer in the several sections of the city—N.W., S.W., S.E. and North for her first five years as a policewoman. She feels that her acceptance by the public in those sections of the city was normal.

"Persons in those areas did not seem concerned about my race nor that I am a woman. It was, and is, the uniform that people see and react to. Oh, sometimes I have heard remarks directed at my race, but I look like I mean business and I know that in most instances people (in trouble) are really 'talking to the uniform.'"

"I did work in Albina for a short while. There I received the most verbal abuse I've ever had—from 'one of us.' It was very disappointing. They would not talk to a white officer that way, I'm sure."

Mrs. Sylvester, a product of parochial schools in Portland, attended Holy Rosary, Immaculate Heart and St. Philip Neri. Lincoln High School also was a part of her secondary schooling. Her college studies, continuing at Portland Community College locations, are being paid for by LEAP (Law Edu-



Police Officer Carmen Sylvester and fellow officers in the office of the East Precinct Traffic Division.

(Photo: Thomas Golden)

cation Assistance Program), a federal education program.

"This is a good profession I'm in. I'm learning. I'm earning. My tuition is paid, my uniforms are paid for by the City. I am given responsibility. I am doing something for someone else. Where else can you get all this without a college degree?" asks Sylvester.

A divorcee, Sylvester has four children between the ages of 15 and 11 years. When she cannot be at home with them, a neighbor family, or their own father, who lives nearby, rises to any emergent need the children may have, the mother said.

After work hours, Officer Sylvester finds time and pleasure in coaching volleyball, softball and track at Holy Redeemer Catholic School. For sheer recreation she bowls with the "Five Grand," a Catholic Women's league.

Without overlooking the element of danger possible each day on her job, Sylvester does not let that factor weigh heavily on her mind. Her family had more than a few apprehensions when she began but now they see her job as a career, fulfilling for her and as an exciting part of her life.

Police Officer Sylvester recommends police work "for any qualified young person who is a high school graduate and is over 20 years of age."

To honor and welcome Dr. Paul Williams, the new vice president of Portland Community College, the Oregon Alliance of Black Educators

and the Black staff of Portland Community College acted as sponsors for an informal reception on last Sunday afternoon, September 20 at the Cascade Campus.

The event was seen as a marker of a most important step in the history of the college as it pointed up the inclusion of the first Black professional to be named to a top management position within the P.C.C. system.

Many of the guests in attendance were educators themselves and all had responded gratefully to the open invitation to attend. Standing beside Dr. Williams to receive guests were College President Dr. John Anthony and Mrs. Anthony. Fall flowers in rich jewel colors, a tea table laden with party food, a champagne fountain and the PCC Jazz Trio playing background music kept the afternoon light and sparkling.

Nicholas Barnett, of the PCC staff and coordinator for the reception organizers, was master of ceremonies for the day. Barnett arranged an hour's program following an invocation by the Rev. John Garlington of Marantha Church.

There was beautiful music by the Joyful Sounds choir under the direction of the incomparable Margaret Carter, a brief address by Dr. Anthony, remarks by PCC Campus Executive Jim Van Dyke and more music by a Marantha trio. The ever-stirring strains of "Lift Every Voice and Sing" gave the audience a chance to sing-a-long.

The honored guest received an enthusiastic welcome to the campus by

Dana Easley representing the Cascade student body.

In making his response Dr. Williams, in his campus office since early summer, expressed his pleasure with his new position as vice president of educational services. In this role he accepts the responsibility to "design and develop curricula and to set standards for faculty and course approval."

Mrs. Williams will arrive soon from the couple's home in Stockton, Cal.

Barnett named a few of the persons who had assisted in making the afternoon a success. He credited members of the several local chapters of sororities and fraternities, Dr. William Gerald, president of the OABE, Dr. Ernest Hartzog of the Portland Public Schools, who is also president of the National Alliance of Black Educators. Others named were: Odessa Hendrix, Belva Seabury, Julius Stokes, Yvonne Williams of PCC and Jim Van Dyke also of PCC staff.

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From the Front Door
by Tom Boothe

From the Front Door, I must let you know the quality and commitment of a few of our citizens living and working right here in our Northeast Community (Albina).

Since the Exodus Clean Team was organized, there have been Citizens who have not supported the Cleanliness Concept at all, there have been others who have weakly agreed with the concept, there have been others who have supported the concept at arms length, and then there are those who have supported the concept whole-heartedly. These are the people whom I am going to acknowledge at this time.

On September 12, 1981, the Exodus Clean Team had its first picnic, at Blue Lake Park from 10:00 am 'til 4:30 pm. A full assortment of food, drink, and games were provided. Food ranged from bar-b-que chicken, hamburgers, hot dogs, three different types of potato salad, and an endless assortment of cookies, cakes and snacks, such as potato chips, watermelon, etc.

All food was prepared by Exodus Clean Team enthusiasts. The coordinator of the picnic was Mr. Taheed Sadrudin and his entire family. Other key persons were: Ms. Wanda Harding, Ms. Penny Mylar, Ms. Marsha Griffith, Ms. Linda Gray, Ms. Rosalie Boothe, Mr. Johnny Johnson, Mr. Daryl Griffith, Ms. Katie Wieland. Many of the older children took responsibility in organizing games and prizes. Some of the games were softball, foot races and horseshoes. It was a truly heart wearing experience to see the enthusiasm of our Community Adults and Children having constructive "Clean" fun and really caring about each other. I wished that some of our skeptics and critics could have seen the Exodus Clean Team at Blue Lake Park actually practicing Cleanliness, Caring, Courtesy and proving that there are people who live in Albina who can set the pace for Cleanliness in Spirit, Mind, Body and Property.

I wish to also acknowledge the Columbia Bus Company for providing transportation; also those many contributors who donated to the Exodus Clean Team. For it was those donations that made this summer's end picnic possible.

Continue to donate to the Exodus Clean Team. You can actually see your dollars at work right now, because the Exodus Clean Team is working to make our community a better and safer place to live, work and do business.

A public service brought to you by House of Exodus



Cell Talk

by Asmar Abdul Seifullah
aka Joe West #40404

Prison is a breeding ground for tension and racial prejudice. It is the ideal environment for these civil germs because of institutional structure and policy which leaves the racial prejudices of inmates unchecked. This is reinforced by white and Black prison officials who encourage racial separation. Prisoners bring their racial prejudices to prison and so do the people who operate the institutions.

The first thing that takes place when new prisoners (fish) arrive at this or any other state or federal institution is the separation of ethnic, cultural, political and social groups. The current offense also plays a role in the breakdown and separation of prisoners. Traditionally men with violent crimes migrate toward each other, murders, armed robbers, and the rapist comprise this group. These men are considered heavies by prison officials because of the long sentences they incur and their inclination toward the use of violence as a means of criminal expression.

Generally murders and armed robbers run state joints because of the absence of organized crime figures, who as a general rule end up in federal institutions. Burglars and thieves who have stolen a substantial amount of property are next on the list in the hierarchy of prison rule. Also included in this grouping are drug dealers that are able to rise to the top of the hegemony if they can provide the same services inside.

At the very bottom of the totem pole are the sex offenders. In most states these men are sent to special

institutions because their life expectancy isn't very long on the big yard. But such isn't the case in the Oregon penal system; sex offenders (rapos) walk the yard free from harm. Their haven is the prison chapel and the surest way to spot one is to go to Sunday services and count the amens. The most religious people in institutions are generally sex offenders. They seem to find solace in religious doctrines while incarcerated.

Beyond the above classifications and even stronger than the rule of prison hierarchy is the racial breakdown. The first commandment in prison: thou shalt not integrate. This commandment is strictly enforced and those who transcend it find themselves ostracized by the prison population.

Chicanos and Indians tend to maintain their own lines of separation. They are very race-conscious but in a violent situation one would tend to believe that they would side with Black prisoners. Of course this is just an assumption on my part, but it has validity.

Because race is such a strong determining factor in prison life, the actuality of racial violence is ever present. If a white inmate assaults a Black inmate, all Blacks feel threatened or shamed, and vice-versa. Most prison riots take racial forms at one point or another because it's so easy to marshal support along racial lines. The bigoted, racist mentalities of prisoners stand out for clear examination in most institutions but I would have to say that it isn't as bad in Oregon as it is in other places.

White prisoners who have never

ridden a motorcycle in their lives become bikers in prison. The attraction is found in the fact that the bikers represent the strongest group in the white-prisoner hierarchy. Blacks who have never ascribed to any racial or political doctrine become the most militant of prisoners while incarcerated. These alliances made through race are generally carried on after release. We must bear in mind that most prisoners come from very small worlds. Their social, economic and educational identities are defined by their criminal achievements. These attributes are reinforced while incarcerated and the incentive for change isn't provided by prison officials.

Recent racial disturbances at the Oregon State Correctional Institution were only ripples in the great tidal wave that could take place behind the walls of Oregon State Penitentiary. The ingredients are all here—anger, frustration, overcrowding and racial hatred. A significant number of minority prisoners also add to the recipe for racial violence. The disparity in release has minority prisoners disturbed and their frustration may find its expression in violent terms.

"Let us hope that this prediction never comes to pass but in all honesty it could happen. People—both Black and white—are serving too much time behind these walls, racial hatred exists, discrimination in release exists, administrative and legislative ineptness exists and everybody behind the walls is wondering where Judge Burns is with the decision to end this appalling situation."