

# HAPPENINGS

## Sorry night at Starry Night

by Lanita Duke

Grassroot News, N.W.—One of the worst concerts in recent history occurred Thanksgiving eve at the Starry Night nightclub. It was not the worst in terms of performance by the main act, but the worst in the way the audience—the majority of whom were Black—was treated.

The O'Jays, a R&B vocal group, was advertised to perform two shows at the Starry Night nightclub. However, what the audience received was something far different than was expected.

The first show started at 8:00 with the comedy team, Endangered Species, bombing out. Afterwards, the local R&B fund group, Cool'R, performed with the same energy and professionalism always exhibited. However, many in the crowd stated that the music was too loud.

For the next hour and a half the crowd waited for the O'Jays to perform. They became restless and some demanded their money back while others demanded and received no explanation.

During the crisis upstairs another set of problems soon started to evolve. Avel Mayfield remembered, "We came for the second show which was advertised to start at 10:30. We arrived at 9:30 and were told very rudely by the staff of Starry Night to wait outside until those from the first show left. Because we were in the front of the line we could see the confusion at the top of the stairs where people were demanding their money back."

"When we questioned the staff they told us again to wait outside. It was cold and rainy that night and the crowd was insistent on coming in and that is what they did."

At 10:45 the O'Jays came out to perform in front of a hostile crowd which cooled off with each successive medley. At 11:30 the O'Jays left the stage, giving people the impression that they would be back for a



O'Jays perform at controversial concert at Starry Night last week. While in Portland, the O'Jays spoke in favor of cultural and sports ban of South Africa. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

second show. What followed that disastrous start was pure tragedy for the crowd.

The comedy team came back out and added insult to injury because their material was being perceived by the audience as insulting to Black women. "Their material was done in poor taste," stated Evelyn Crews, a member of the audience. "I did not pay my money for someone to get up on the stage and call us a bunch of 'bitches.' And it wasn't just me. They received boos and hisses throughout their act."

Endangered Species put the audience in a foul mood as they waited again for the O'Jays. According to Starry Night manager Larry Horowitz, "The O'Jays snuck out the back door."

"I wanted to cancel the concert four days before they played. I told

their management in New York, but they wanted to perform for a lesser price, since they were already in the area. Well, when they got here they didn't want to perform for that price. So while the crowd waited I was on the phone with their attorney."

Horowitz conceded that his staff might have been rude. "I apologize," he said.

Eddie Levert, a member of the O'Jays, said it was Horowitz who did not live up to the letter of their contract. "I just want to tell Portland that we don't ride in taxi cabs. We have certain riders on our contract which state the things we need. We have had trouble getting those things."

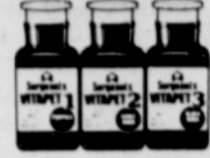
Levert said he believed Starry Night was penalizing his group just because the club didn't receive the

turnout it expected. Starry Night and the O'Jays will no doubt end up in court. The real victim of the concert was not the club or the group—it was the audience.

Mayfield stated, "There were people extremely upset by the way they were treated by the club. There was never an explanation made to the crowd. Given the number of Black people at Starry Night, I hope the next time Tom and Gracie Kennedy bring a live act to the community, we support it."

The audience for the second show started filtering out at 12:45 a.m., with an empty stage as their backdrop. One man marched angrily past this reporter, saying, "They should change the name of this club from 'Starry Night' to 'Sorry Night.'"

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## CHRISTMAS Calendar

**Christmas Bazaar & Rummage Sale**, Sat. & Sun., December 3rd & 4th, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Also pancake breakfast on Sunday. Immaculate Heart School Hall, NE Stanton off Williams Avenue.

**The Twelve Days of Christmas**, 7 p.m., Dec. 16 & 17, Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, 5340 N. Interstate Avenue. On these evenings, the IFCC Student Production Company will present a sparkling musical Christmas card with an original production of the play by Elaine Edstrom. Phone 243-7930 for tickets—reserve early as the SPC's productions are usually sold out.

**Christmas For The Family** program, 8 p.m., Dec. 16, 17 and 18, Firehouse Theater, 1436 S.W. Montgomery. Tickets are \$2 for children 12 and under and \$3 for adults. Reservations are urged and can be made by calling the Firehouse Theater at 248-4737.

**Benefit Bake Sale**, 9-5, December 10th, at the Boilermakers Hall, 3653 S.E. 34th. Sponsored by the Boilermakers Local 72 and Machinists Local 63; there will be free coffee and cider, and a raffle of silver dollars will be featured.

**Laud to the Nativity**, Oregon Repertory Singers 10th annual tribute to the joy and majesty of Christmas. Combines arrangements of traditional carols and anthems with contemporary settings. 8 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 17th, and 4 p.m., Sunday, December 18th, at Westminster Presbyterian Church, NE 16th at Schuyler, 2 blocks north of Broadway near Lloyd Center. For more info, call 227-3929.

**First Annual Festival of the Trees**—an event the organizer Providence Medical Foundation envisions becoming the winter equivalent of the Rose Festival—opens the city's door for Christmas, December 1st, with the proceeds earmarked for Providence Medical Center's comprehensive cancer program.

A different entertainment feature will fete Festival goers every 30 minutes, from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. each Festival day, all the hours the doors are open. School singing and dancing groups, church choirs, gospel singers, string ensembles, senior groups, square dancers, cloggers and ethnic performers will provide a changing panorama of performances while crowds journey through the Christmas tree forest.

**Teddy Bears, spinning tops** and celebrated bubblesmith Tom Noddy will highlight ToyWorks, a holiday festival featuring exhibits, special events and hands-on activities, all scheduled to take place at OMSI between Dec. 17 and Jan. 2. Kids are invited to help kick off ToyWorks on the morning of Saturday, Dec. 17, by bringing a handmade ornament for OMSI's Christmas tree. A decorating party will begin at 10 a.m.

**Holiday Wreathmaking Class**, a 2-hour workshop, taught by Julie Barnes, will include information on gathering and preparing materials for cone wreathmaking, as well as construction techniques. Participants will make their own wreaths in class with basic materials provided in the Exhibit Hall Classroom from 10 a.m. to noon, or from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. Cost is \$15 for Forestry Center members; \$17.50 for others. Call the Western Forestry Center, 228-1367, for a registration form.

**Decorating of Christmas trees by ethnic groups in costume**: Nationality groups will come in colorful costumes to decorate trees in the styles of their heritages. There will be live music and free punch and cookies. Begins at 1:00 p.m. in the main Exhibit Hall. Regular Forestry Center admission. (The trees will remain on display through New Year's Day.)



The Fallen Angel Choir will perform at the Firehouse Theater's Christmas Show on December 16, 17 and 18; 8:00 p.m., at 1436 SW Montgomery.

**Holiday gifts, decorations, yummys**, 4252 N.E. Killingsworth, December 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. This event is being held by a group of ladies. All items are homemade and handcrafted. Holiday baked goods and candies. Crafts from Christmas decorations to that special gift. Call 684-1960 for more information.



**African Arts & Crafts Open House**, Saturday, December 3rd, 7-9 p.m., 3909 N. Overlook Terrace (near Overlook Park). Come see authentic African hand-crafted carvings, batiks and baskets. Phone 284-7517.

**Boise Neighborhood Improvement Association**, 6 p.m., Monday, Dec. 5th, Albina Youth Opportunity School, 3710 N. Mississippi.

**North Portland Citizens Committee**, 7:30 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 6th, Neighbors North, 7508 N. Hereford.

**Mobilization for Animals, Oregon**, has established pickets in front of Edward Hamilton Furrier, 901 S.W. Washington St., and Schumacher Fur Company, 739 Tenth Avenue in Portland. These pickets will continue each Saturday until December 24th, and lasting around two hours at each site, to educate the public to the practices of trapping used in the manufacture of exotic furs and the cruelty, inhumaneness, and danger posed by these methods not only to wildlife in general but to our domestic animals as well. For more information, call 285-1241.

**Fiesta A benefit for new El Salvador Today** with the Fallen Angel Choir, Anatar Pinatas, Mexican Hot Chocolate, Latin food, and holiday gift sale. Funds raised will go to a chicken co-op in free El Salvador. 7 p.m., December 10th at the Masonic Temple, 1119 S.W. Park.

**The Black Church and its Ministers' Assistance** in developing the political awareness of the Black community, Oregon Assembly for Black Affairs Saturday Morning Forum, Saturday, Dec. 17th, 10 a.m. - noon, Immaculate Heart School, 2926 N. Williams in Portland.

**OSPIRG to host AT&T symposium**, "Phone Service: A right or a privilege?" on the effects of the break-up of AT&T. 12:00 noon-4 p.m., Sat., December 3, at the University of Oregon campus in 101 of the Erb Memorial Union. Contact 686-4377 (Eugene) for more information.