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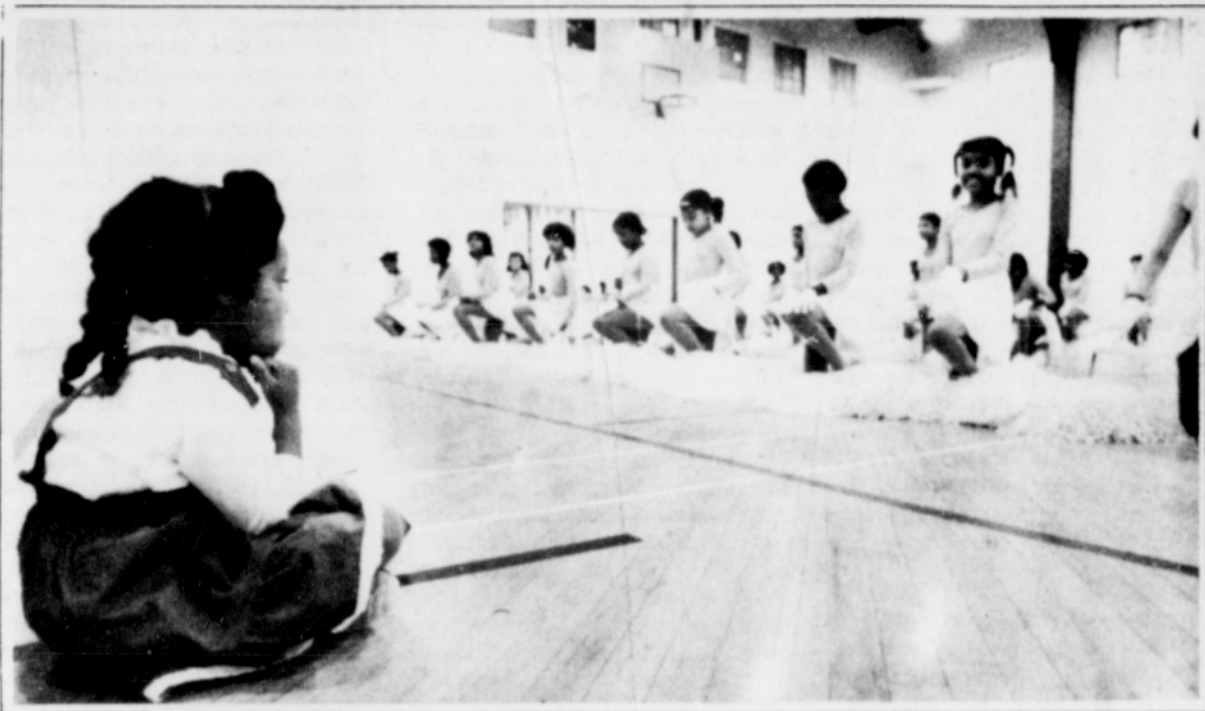
Volunteer of the year

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Shequale Williams, 3 years old, watches a rehearsal of the Ebony strutters drill team.
(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Utilities overcharged ratepayers

Portland General Electric and Pacific Power & Light overcharged their ratepayers \$151 million in federal taxes in 1982 that the utilities never paid to the federal government, according to figures released today by the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group, (OSPIRG).

In reports filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, PGE listed \$67.4 million in 1982 federal tax expenses charged to ratepayers, yet PGE received a \$13.4 million tax refund; for a total overcharge of \$80.8 million. PP&L charged ratepayers \$45.9 million, yet received a \$24.3 million refund; a total overcharge of \$70.2 million.

"The arrival of April 16 is painful for many Oregonians, but for PGE and PP&L, it is a time of celebration," stated Eric Stachon, OSPIRG utility program director. "Tax Day means increased profits for the utilities, thanks to loopholes in the federal tax law that they take advantage of."

Stachon said the "phantom taxes" cost the average PGE residential customer over \$64 in 1982. PP&L customers saw their bills increase, on the average, over \$36. Stachon cautioned, however, that the total cost to consumers is much higher.

"Phantom taxes increase the rates that commercial and industrial

customers pay for electricity. They pass these costs on to consumers in the form of higher prices for their products."

OSPIRG has asked Oregon's congressional delegation to support a bill introduced in Congress which would revoke the federal law requiring these tax overcharges. The bill, called the "Phantom Tax Reform Act", is sponsored by Rep. Thomas Harkin (D-Iowa).

"Utility rates should be based on actual costs," Stachon said. "That's only fair. Consumers should not be forced to make monthly involuntary loans to their utilities."

Peace investors "redirect" taxes

A group of Portland taxpayers gathered Friday in front of the offices of the IRS to announce that they have refused to pay taxes for military purposes and have instead "redirected" those funds for a peaceful purpose.

Participants with the group, known as Portland Peace Investors, then deposited personal checks in a large envelope on which the words "Internal Revenue Service" had been crossed out and replaced with

the words "Portland Peace Investment".

The total amount will be presented to Health Help, a local volunteer-staffed free clinic which serves medically indigent persons in Northeast Portland.

In a prepared statement, the group appealed to the IRS to regard their respective tax obligations as having been fulfilled in this unique way. They asked the IRS not to attempt collection of additional funds

by seizure of personal income, savings, or property.

The group said that they were acting in response to a deeply held conviction that the military policy of the United States Government is morally unacceptable and that to support it with tax dollars would be a serious compromise of their personal moral principles. At the same time, they expressed a willingness to accept any legal penalties which might result from their actions.

The individual amounts which were redirected represent the percentage of personal income tax payments allotted for specific military expenditures in 1983 and/or the Federal excise tax on telephone service. Since World War I, telephone taxes, in various guises and amounts, have been imposed to raise revenue for military operations.

In its statement, the group commended Senator Hatfield and U.S. Representative Les AuCoin for their sponsorship of the World Peace Tax Fund bill. If passed, it would allow conscientious objectors to contribute the military portion of their federal tax into an alternative fund which could only be appropriated by Congress for non-military purposes.

"Our action today," said John Schwiebert, pastor of Lincoln Street United Methodist Church, "is undertaken with the hope that what we now do as a necessary act of civil disobedience will one day be offered as a legal option to every American citizen."



Edna Pittman has been selected as the recipient of the Oregon State Division Fellowship Award for \$2,000 for the academic year 1984-85. "I will work toward a masters in public administration at Portland State University. I'm delighted that I will be able to continue my education. Thank you!"

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Campaign '84:

District 18 race is on

Editor's note: Each week between now and the Oregon primary, May 15th, the Portland Observer will examine the candidates and issues of concern to Portland voters.

This week: a candid look at one Republican and two Democratic candidates for State Representative from District 18. A third Democrat in the race, Harold Williams, refused to be interviewed by the Portland Observer because of the probing nature of the questions asked.

If elected, what are among the steps you will institute to promote economic development for residents of District 18?

Debnam: "I will cut away restrictions that cause economic development to be stifled, such as taxes that are restrictive to economic growth in the state. The first place you start is with the state. You have to improve the state climate to improve the local climate. A free enterprise zone will help with marketing and promoting the district to outside business interests."

Carter: "Many dollars have been spent through the Portland Development Commission. Businesses and residents have developed nine different steps for economic development in our district. The problem has been implementation. We have not had the leadership to follow through on those objectives. I will work on those plans to produce for District 18."

Leek: "The Community Development Finance Corporation will provide bonds to improve

roads, sewers and whatever necessary for the infrastructure. This will give people in District 18 an opportunity to get employment with the state. I introduced and was successful in passing HB2804, which required every public job vacancy to be listed."

Who are you going to support and vote for President of the United States?

Debnam: "In the primary, I can't vote Democratic. I have my hands full working on my own campaign. My campaign is similar to Jesse Jackson's, in that they told him not to run and they told me not to run. However, the focus of my campaign is local."

Carter: "I am supporting Jesse Jackson. For the first time in the history of Black people, we have a voice to negotiate as opposed to participating."

Leek: "I'm still undecided whether I'm supporting Jesse Jackson or Walter Mondale. I filed as a precinct committee person 'uncommitted'."

The low-income and the elderly are faced with inadequate health care resources. How will you address this issue and how will you provide medical coverage for those without?

Debnam: "There are programs that already exist. If they need to be increased, I will be all for it. At the same time, I don't think we can have an open check book to try and solve the problem."

Carter: "Last year I talked with six top administrators at Kaiser

Hospital about cost containment, comprehensive medical care and medical care for young people who have compound medical problems. There are some things in the making and I will follow through on that."

Leek: "The 'medically needy' Bill that we passed deals only with children and pregnant women. What we need is a 'medically needy' Bill which will be fully funded to reach all Oregonians who need the assistance. Money is tight and the poor are truly invisible to most people in Salem."

What type of communication link will you establish to keep in tune with the voices of District 18?

Debnam: "I will work closely with the neighborhood associations and attend block meetings."

Carter: "I think Commissioner Jordan has done an excellent job of bringing about his Luncheon Forums. I would like to have forums and townhall meetings in churches and at neighborhood association meetings."

Leek: "In the last session, I was the only representative to hire someone to do constituent service in the district. I created a phone line so people could call up directly. I took questionnaires and invited everyone to come to community meetings. My efforts, if re-elected, will be along those same lines."

Why should residents in District 18 vote for you?

Debnam: "I'm a new player to the scene. I'm not tied into any of the machinery, whether it be Black (Please turn to page 2, column 1)



CHAD DEBNAM

Chad Debnam

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W.— Chad Debnam is the lone Republican candidate in a district that is predominately Democrat. "I see that as a positive. A lot of the problems we are facing would not be problems now if the Democratic party had the solution."

Because of Oregon's closed primary system, only Republicans can vote for Debnam. He said he will not and is not pushing the Republican party in the community. "I'm saying, vote for me because I have solutions to some of the problems faced by the district. The free enterprise system, less government involvement and returning back to the basics are good platforms to run on."

I feel there are opponents who (Please turn to page 2, column 1)



MARGARET CARTER

Margaret Carter

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W.— Margaret L. Carter is the leading Democrat contender for State Representative of District 18. "Last year, I felt so strongly about the Legislature playing God with our lives as it relates to the sales tax and the total tax system."

She is facing the fight of her life, but it is small in comparison to her helping to raise nine children while obtaining a masters degree. "People who knew me asked me to run. I talked with many ministers who told me that we needed more Christian people involved in the political process."

Carter's shining political moment came last fall when she won the community's straw ballot at the District 18 leadership forum. "I am (Please turn to page 2, column 2)



REP. ED LEEK

Rep. Ed Leek

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W.— District 18 was created by residents of Albina with the hope that a person of color would represent a community of color. Political inexperience in 1982 filled the race with eight candidates and Ed Leek beat the leading Black candidate by less than sixty votes.

Incumbent Leek is running on the platform, "That I've done a good job for residents in District 18."

"The message the Legislature received from the Black community was there should be a representative from this community who would speak clear on the issues that confront the community. I believe I have done that."

The last day for candidates to file for political office was March 15th. (Please turn to page 9, column 3)