

# Juneteenth Day benefit slated

by Nathaniel Scott

"Free At Last" is the theme for the Grace Collins Memorial Center's observance of Juneteenth Day, coordinator of the event, Danny Bell said. The observance of Juneteenth will be held Saturday, June 23rd, beginning at 8 p.m. in the center's auditorium, 128 N.E. Russell Street. Admission is \$3 for the general public and \$2.50 for senior citizens and students. Reverend John Jackson, co-chairman of the Black United Front, will be the guest speaker.

The Juneteenth observance will also feature the Ronnie Wright Community Singers and gospel soloist ("Brother") Chris Stephens.

In addition to the preservation of the historical aspects of Juneteenth—"slavery to emancipation"—Bell said, the event will raise funds for one of Eliot neighborhood's oldest social agencies. To wit, the Grace Collins Memorial Center day care, pre-school, neighborhood recreational facility, and for many, a haven in time of trouble.

Approximately 31 years ago, the center opened its doors on N.E.

Rodney and Monroe Streets, Evelyn Collins, the center's founder and director said. She accomplished the feat with a \$300 loan and her \$300 life savings.

The center's philosophy, according to Collins, has never wavered. It has always been based upon "the teaching of Christ" without practicing "religious biases."

The non-profit day-care center mostly provides services to "low-income" people, Collins maintains. Approximately 55 children, ranging in age from six weeks to 11-years old, are currently enrolled in the program.

Fees at the non-profit day-care center are on a sliding scale, she said. The base is the parent's gross income.

Like many a social agency in these financially depressed times, Collins said, the center is "going through a financial problem." And to help elevate the "problem", canned foods and financial support are needed.

Since 1980, when the day care last received Childrens Services Division (CSD) money, Collins said the bulk



Evelyn Collins (l), founder and director of the Grace Collins Memorial Center day care, pre-school and neighborhood recreational facility, with Danny Bell. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

of their support has come through foundation gifts, grants, and private donations.

"Donations go into a scholarship fund to help pay the difference of

what the parent is able to pay," she said. The scholarship, the Grace Memorial Scholarship Fund, like the center, was named in honor of Grace Collins, her mother.

# Struggle for Jackson delegate continues ...

The Oregon Jesse Jackson for President Committee announced Thursday, June 14th, their intention to "continue to exist and work even though the primaries are over," said John Blank. The committee will build on the foundation created by the Jackson of "an insurgent political force—a 'Rainbow Coalition'."

Electing Ron Herndon as one of Oregon's two "unpledged" delegates to the national Democratic Party convention, in San Francisco, is the group's immediate focus, said Blank. Jackson supporters hope a majority of the 250 delegates are Jackson supporters elected recently at congressional district conventions.

Blank said the 36,000 voters statewide (about 10 percent of the total) who voted for Jackson will be disenfranchised by the very party they are registered in if Jackson supporters don't even have one delegate going to San Francisco.

If those 10 percent were fairly represented, Jackson would have 5 delegates from Oregon, he said,



Jackson supporters talk strategy at Third District Convention. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

"and we're only asking for one." Jackson supporters are being asked to attend the state convention this Saturday at the Kresgi Theater

on the Willamette University campus.

Carpools will leave the King Center at 10:30 a.m. For more infor-

mation, call 230-6908, for the third congressional district or 224-3096 or 246-3417 for supporters in the first district.

# Duarte's election won't stop killings, torture

by Robert Lothian

The victory of Jose Napoleon Duarte in El Salvador's March elections was hailed by the Reagan administration as a triumph for democracy and moderation.

Both Reagan and Carter before him have linked U.S. military and economic aid to that country with improvements in human rights, specifically with government-led attempts to curtail murder and torture of civilians. Duarte's election and recent tour of the U.S. seem to be paving the way for more military aid.

But, Ivan O. Escobar Melendez, U.S. representative of the Salvadoran Human Rights Commission, said in Portland, May 30th, that the violence is likely to continue under Duarte.

The problem, according to Escobar, is that those in the Salvadoran security apparatus responsible for the killing and torture, remain in power under Duarte, and the weapons they use to do the killing continue to be supplied by the U.S.

"What reason do we have to expect that the situation will change when the armed forces are not actually being affected?" he asked.

Escobar said the trail of blood leads to Minister of Defense and head of the National Guard Carlos Eugenio Vidas Cassanova and others in the top echelons of the Salvadoran security forces. Vidas Cassanova is personally responsible for the massacres of civilians, and he is covering up the investigation into the deaths of the four American churchwomen in 1980, according to Escobar.

"Although they are responsible, they are not being punished. The armed forces are so accustomed to killing, that the only way to improve the situation is to put those on trial who are responsible for the killing. But the U.S. has to be very sincere to push for the trials... Duarte had the chance to do it but he didn't take full advantage of his support from the U.S. Congress and administration."

Duarte was president from March 1980 to March 1982, during the height of recent violence. Over 30,000 Salvadoran citizens died while Duarte was president then, according to Escobar, and they died mainly at the hands of security forces. Also, he said, Archbishop Romero, the four American churchwomen and two American land reform advisors were murdered during Duarte's previous presidency.

Far from influencing peace, "military aid from the U.S. is only prolonging the suffering in El Salvador," said Escobar. More military aid has meant more, not less guerillas, he said. In 1981, the U.S. sent \$5 million in aid and there were about 3,000 guerillas, according to Escobar. By 1984, he said, the U.S. had sent \$300 million in aid and there are about 15,000 guerillas. In the same period in the U.S., said Escobar, the percentage of those living below the poverty level rose from 12% to 17%.

U.S. weapons are being used by the security forces to kill civilians, and far more civilians are dying than soldiers or guerillas, he said. "We'll never forget how many brothers and sisters have been killed by military weapons sent directly from the U.S."

Although most people concentrate on the tortures and assassinations, said Escobar, jobs, education, health care, and freedom

to travel and organize political groups are also human rights that are lacking in his country, he said. In El Salvador, he continued, 60% of the population is illiterate, children start work at age 8 and it can take up to three weeks just to get an aspirin from a hospital. "From those terms you just can't say that human rights are improving in El Salvador," he said.

Escobar is a founding member of the Salvadoran Human Rights Commission, which formed in 1978 to keep alive the discussion of human rights as the violence increased, and to keep records of the murdered and disappeared. The commission keeps photo albums of victims of the violence and helps relatives identify dead and disappeared family members. The commission also sends statistics to Amnesty International and other human rights organizations. Escobar has travelled back and forth from El Salvador to the U.S. since 1978, and he has been speaking extensively across the U.S. since 1983.

The commission, with its headquarters in San Salvador, has often been the target of violence. Four board members have been murdered and two have been kidnapped. Its office has been bombed and bodies dumped outside the door.

"When I was deciding to become a founding member of the board, I had to think what might happen to me," said Escobar. "But you know the responsibility to work for human rights in El Salvador is pushing me to continue. We are so attached to life that usually we don't think we may be killed. I know in my heart that nothing is going to stop the people of Latin America from having a society with human rights."

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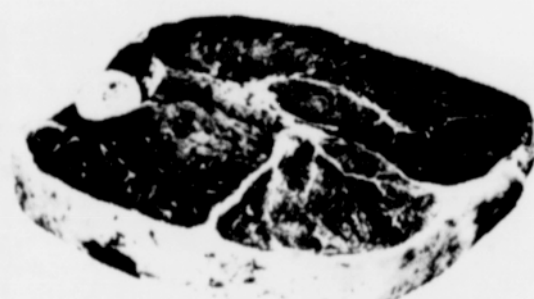
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