

Family wage jobs decrease in Oregon

by Robert Lothian

"Oregon's good jobs are increasingly being replaced by low-paying, often dead end jobs." That's the conclusion of a report released in July from the Joint Legislative Committee on Trade and Economic Development.

The report, "Declining Number of Family Wage Jobs," documents what economic analysts have described as Oregon's trend toward becoming a new Appalachia. As in other parts of the country hard hit by the recession, many of Oregon's good jobs of the past are gone, replaced by jobs in fast food places and gas stations.

The state lost 75,000 jobs to the recession, according to the report, along with the headquarters of three "Fortune 500" corporations and 65,000 residents.

Of the jobs lost, 60,000 of them paid an average wage of \$10.00/hr. or more, mainly jobs in lumber, wood products, construction and manufacturing. They were the kind of jobs that brought in a "family wage" — \$20,000/year or more — enough to provide a moderate standard of living for an average family. The jobs also provided a secure tax base for the state's social services.

But according to the report, only about half of the 25,000 jobs produced by the "recovery" have been high paying jobs in those industries. "Instead," it says, "Oregon's recovery has been primarily fueled by growth in services and retailing industries with average wages between \$5.00 and \$6.50 per hour," or between \$10,000-\$13,000/year.

A look at the jobs available at the State Employment Division office at the Albina Multi-Service Center shows that \$5.00/hour and \$6.00/hour jobs are few and far between. Many job seekers are faced with the prospect of a minimum wage job, and it doesn't take a mathematical genius

to figure out how far a \$3.35/hour job goes in supporting a family.

Many Oregon families can look forward to a lower standard of living and a poorer quality of life, the report says. And for communities, the situation means an eroded tax base and impaired ability to pay for the public services — education, police and fire protection, road repair and parks — that have contributed to Oregon's quality of life.

According to the report, the average family with an income of \$20,000 per year paid an Oregon income tax of \$1,000. But a typical family with a \$12,000 - \$14,000 income paid about \$500 in income taxes.

Things are not likely to get better soon. Oregon will not gain back its 1979 employment peak until 1987, given the current pace of recovery, the report says. And what is happening in Oregon is also a nationwide trend, according to the report: traditional well-paid jobs in auto, steel, coals, glass, rubber and other basic industries are on the decline, turning once thriving communities into ghost towns.

The report says that for minorities and women, who never made those good wages in the first place, the outlook is discouraging. Women and minorities "may find the good jobs disappearing at just the time they get an equal chance to compete for them... if the number of good jobs continues to decline in the long term, women and minorities might find it that much more difficult to achieve equality in the workplace."

The report also mentions that many of the state's good jobs were also union jobs — high wages and health and welfare programs were won through collective bargaining and strikes. The decline means a loss of bargaining power for unions, and many previously union families are now without health insurance.



Joan Smith, one of the 19 candidates who ran for the City Council seat vacated by Charles Jordan, publicly endorsed Herb Cawthorne today. Cawthorne faces Dick Bogle in a runoff election for the seat on Tuesday, December 18. Smith said, "I am a former chairperson of the Portland Planning Commission, so I know, first-hand, the challenges of being an effective government leader. So does Herb Cawthorne. He has held public office before, having been elected and having served the past 5 1/2 years on the Portland School Board. He has a proven track record that shows he knows how to get things accomplished; that shows he has the skills to translate talk into action. If I could personally talk to each and every person who voted for me in the November 6 election, I would encourage them to vote for Herb Cawthorne for City Council on December 18."

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Teen pregnancy on rise

According to the Oregon State Health Division, one out of 11 Oregon teens, 15-19 years old, reported a pregnancy in 1981. Teenagers face serious health risks and medical complications during pregnancy and childbirth. For teens there is a greater risk of maternal or infant death, and an increased risk of having infants with low birth weights, congenital defects and mental and physical handicaps. These poor birth outcomes are frequently attributed to inadequate prenatal care and poor nutrition.

More than 90 percent of all teens who give birth keep their babies. However, they often encounter medical, economical and social problems. It has been estimated that three quarters of all mothers age 17 and under lack health insurance, making it difficult for them to obtain health care. Teens who become pregnant are much more likely to drop out of school and become dependent upon welfare. A teen mother who is still in the process of growing up herself, often needs help in learning how to cope with the demands of parenthood and in sorting out her own needs for support and survival.

The Teen Connections Program is focusing its outreach efforts in North Portland where the need is significant. However, anyone who calls the information line will be assisted no matter where they live in the city.

Both adult and teen volunteers are needed by the program. Anyone who wants to volunteer may apply by calling the Program Coordinator at 286-8371.

The Teen Connections Program is part of North Community Action Council's Northcare neighborhood health program for the medically

needy. Pregnant teens comprise a medically at-risk group since they frequently defer or neglect health care. Northcare will provide short-term health care, health care screenings, and help in accessing care from established health providers to meet serious or ongoing needs. Those who will be helped include the working poor and unemployed who are without health insurance or the ability to pay for care, and those who are at risk of serious health problems but who fail to seek care for one reason or another.

Northcare recently received a \$15,000 challenge grant from the M. J. Murdock Charitable Trust, and a \$5,000 grant from the Oregon Community Foundation. About \$25,000 has been raised for Northcare, and an additional \$25,000 is being sought to qualify for matching grants. Additional monies have also been donated for remodeling clinic quarters.

Candidates to debate at King

City Council hopefuls Dick Bogle and Herb Cawthorne are scheduled for a joint appearance Thursday evening, December 13, 7:30 p.m. in the King School Cafetorium. Issues of concern to the community — prostitution, jobs, etc. — are on the agenda.

It is important that citizens hear the candidates. It is also important that the candidates hear the people. This meeting will be a "Hear and Be Heard" opportunity.

Be an informed voter. Attend the

meeting December 13 and vote your choice on December 18.

The meeting is being sponsored by a number of community groups and individuals. It is for all the people of our area, including Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Black United Front, Oregon Rainbow Organizing Committee and Neighborhood rescue.

For more information, call Bob Nelson, 287-4050 or 248-4575.

Official Notice of BIENNIAL ELECTION of Officers and National Board Members

Portland Branch NAACP

December 9, 1984, 4:00 p.m.

Hughes Memorial Church

Doors Open at 3:30 p.m. to check voting eligibility.

Please note: The meeting is the SECOND SUNDAY rather than the Third Sunday as is usual.

This is the annual meeting as well as the Biennial Election. There will be some annual reports on Branch Activities. Dick Bogle, Candidate for City Commissioner, will speak at 4:15. (Herb Cawthorne spoke November 18 at Branch Meeting.)

Any member over 17 who is in good standing 30 days before this election is eligible to vote.

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Hazel G. Hays, President Janet Clemmer, Acting Secretary



Magazine for Black men

It's been said that there's a magazine for nearly everyone, but until now there's been none for a long-neglected group of readers: upwardly mobile, professional black men. MBM, the new magazine for Modern Black Men changed all that on November 27, when the premier issue hit the newsstands.

Drawing on today's finest writers, each issue will feature the latest news in fashions, relevant and timely advice on personal finance and careers, in-depth profiles of today's most fascinating personalities, and regular coverage of health, grooming, sports, entertainment, and the arts - all the areas of interest to the contemporary black man and his lifestyle.

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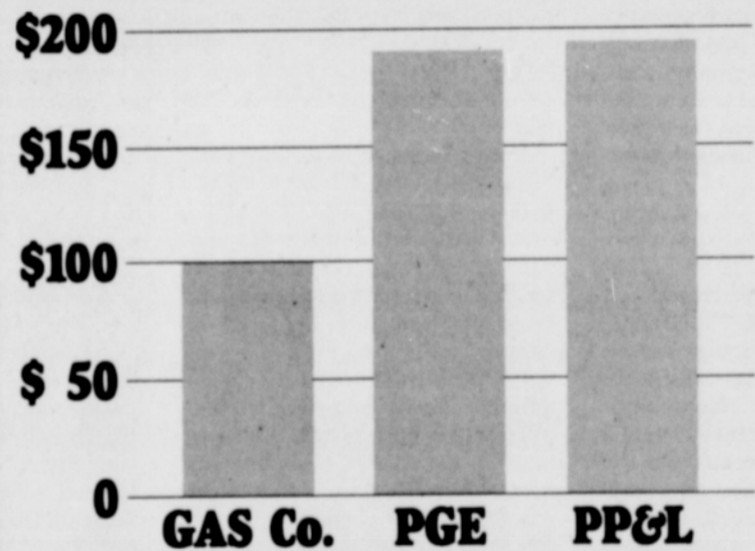
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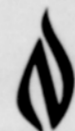
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