

# Meet Tri-Met's driver of the month

"I work the job; the job doesn't work me!" That, according to Tri-Met's January Operator of the Month David Dent, Jr., is the whole key to driving.

Dent, one of twelve children and a native of Roanoke, Virginia, said he's come to realize that tough times growing up steeled him for the demand of professional bus operations. "There's a tendency as you're growing up to think that you become an adult at age 18. That's not true. When you're an adult, a mature adult, you'll know it by the way you think," Dent said.

Dent says he reverses the traditional roles of working and raising a family. "Raising a family is a full-time job — so much so that being a bus operator becomes therapy for me. You meet all kinds of people — when you hear what problems they have, you start to realize what kind of good job you have. I'm blessed!" exclaimed Dent.

Dent said he likes people and likes to see them smile. Very often, he will tell people to smile when they get aboard his bus. "I don't let anyone make my day," he pointed out. "That's because other people can also break my day. I make my own day."

Eventually, Dent would like to write a book for passengers on "How to Catch a Bus." He explained that many riders don't know how to do



DAVID DENT, JR.

that, and what they do sometimes winds up getting many bus operators upset. "Those who try to catch a bus when it is not at the stop or in the middle of the street really get me," Dent added.

One of Dent's ambitions is to be

Operator of the Year. "In 1986, you can quote me on that!" Another goal is eventually purchasing a home for his mother, Thinne Dent, who still lives in Roanoke. Two of Dent's brothers and three of his sisters have moved to Oregon. Dent lives with his

wife Wanda in Northeast Portland. The couple have 17 and 14-year-old daughters Angie and Angel, 12 and 8-year-old sons Daniel and David III, and a two-month-old granddaughter, Krystal. Krystal was born just three days after Dent's 35th birthday in December.

Dent talks frankly about problems he has had in his career in the past. A knee injury during his early days with the district and stuttering are hurdles he says he's overcome with a positive attitude, which he says wasn't always there.

"Being Driver of the Month proves to me, and I hope other people, that you can do anything you want to do no matter who you are or what problems you have. All you have to do is make up your mind to do it and then really work at sticking to it.

"This is the biggest thing that's ever happened to me since I was named Most Valuable Player in high school." Dent played football at Lucie Allen High School in Roanoke. His MVP designation came in his Junior year.

"When I get up in the morning and look at that Operator of the Month certificate on the wall, that's all I need to keep on keeping on," Dent proclaimed. "Mind you, I'll be talking with you people again!"

# Forum explores concerns of Black women

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — Kicking off Black History Month on an upbeat note, The Black Cultural Affairs Board at Portland State University hosted Delores P. Aldridge, chairperson of the National Council for Black Studies.

In a noontime lecture on January 30th, Aldridge said the role of Black women in the 21st century must be one of "a vanguard and to act as a change agent to bring about change in institutions. We cannot afford to sit back in fear of being defamed. We have to speak up, be leaders and risk-takers."

Aldridge added that Black women must overcome myths of their superiority and economic advantage in the workforce, "because the statistics do not bear this out."

Aldridge said the percentage of Black women professionals have doubled since 1950. Also, the number of domestics have declined by more

than 50 percent. But the number of Black professional women is still small when compared to white women and white men. Black women are not primarily in white collar occupations as is the case for white women.

Aldridge, a Ph.D. is Director of Afro-American and African Studies at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia. She is an administrator, consultant, researcher, teacher and therapist. Wherever she goes the banner of "Black women excel!" follows. "We should demand all resources in the Black community to be utilized to their fullest. Black women cannot afford to sit back. We must come forth to ensure the development of Black men, Black women and the Black family," she exclaimed.

Aldridge said she believes the Women Liberation Movement has addressed the needs of Black women in general. "However, they have not moved to that extra dimension of

addressing those concerns of Black women that are unique to Black women because we are Black.

"White women have benefitted on the backs of the civil rights movement," Aldridge added. "It's high time Black women begin to realize some of the benefits white women have accrued. Just like we had to break down barriers of an 'old boy network,' we cannot afford for there to be an 'old girl network'."

Participation is the easiest remedy to this narrowness of perspective. "Black women can ill afford not to be out there fighting for women's rights.

We need to be there with equal voices so we can protect our concerns," she continued.

Aldridge is also concerned with the plight of the Black family which she says must be viewed in a larger context. "The Black family is suffering from the debilitating effects of racism and prejudice. This racism is made even more subtle in the 1980s as American leaders try to do for the world what they have not done at home. This is to enable America to be a free country with equal access to realize opportunity for all its citizens."

# County seeks nominations for new citizens' committee

"We're looking for citizens with a strong interest in county-wide issues and a positive vision of where the county will be in five years," states Pauline Anderson, Multnomah County Commissioner. Commissioner Anderson, liaison for the county's new Citizen Involvement Committee, is sending letters to neighborhood groups, existing citizen boards and commissioners, and other civic organizations, asking for nominations of individuals to serve on the 23-person committee. The committee was created by ordinance pursuant to Charter Amendment 25 adopted in the November, 1984 election.

"We hope to select individuals who represent a broad range of age, race, sex and economic status," said Com-

missioner Anderson. Geographical diversity is insured by the ordinance. The Board will select 12 people from recommendations by the six area Portland neighborhood associations. Seven will be selected from recommendations by cities and community groups from the recommendations by county boards and commissions and other civic or community organizations.

According to the ordinance, the Committee may study and discuss county priorities, policies, programs and procedures. It may recommend plans or policies on any matters affecting the quality of life in the county, and strengthen existing citizen involvement on boards and commissions.

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