

Studying route to job parity

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — Neither rain, snow, sleet nor hail will slow this postal employee from his appointed task. Mr. Walter Morris, the Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action Officer for the U.S. Postal Service, spends his time sensitizing an institution to people of color while devoting an equal amount of time preparing people of color for employment and upward mobility.

Morris performs community outreach with tutoring material in one hand and a firm belief in discipline and the work ethic in the other.

"I'm here to make job opportunities available to those who are willing to apply themselves. I have gone into the community and distributed test material but a quick glance at the test results tells me that many young Blacks did not take the time to study it," Morris noted sadly.

Employment at the Postal Service starts with a simple memory test. Morris said by studying the material he passes out the test becomes a piece of cake.

"If people would just take the time to prepare themselves for the test, we would have a better opportunity to reach job parity at the Post Office," he said.

Morris blames this test phobia on declining interest and performance in school. "Education is the key. We need to learn how to go to school, sit in class and apply ourselves. I look at many of the young Blacks who cannot take this test, and I know that kid did not stay or pay attention in class. We have the potential and it's upsetting to me to see those who do not expand on the opportunities we created," he added.



WALTER MORRIS
(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Morris started his postal career a quarter of a century ago in 1960 when there were only 12 Black mail carriers. "A that time, the highest job a Black man could get in Portland was a waiter or a redcap. In 1959 I went to the library and studied the postal exam. It took eight hours to take the test which consisted of tracing a letter from New York to California. This

same test is now an hour. Kid's today have it made," Morris said.

During the 1960s, Morris took a year's leave of absence to work as an anti-poverty worker. It was during this period in Portland's history that the city forced Black families to move from their homes so they could build the Fremont Bridge and expand Emanuel Hospital.

"I would go door to door and try to explain to people what was happening," Morris said. "They started to listen to me when it was too late."

Morris was also an early educational activist who challenged the discriminatory practices of the school district's desegregation plan.

"I would go to school board meetings and they would not listen. But ten years later the community forced them to listen," he added.

Morris has been a silent element and advocate for change in Portland. "It's upsetting to hear older people say God will make a way. God has already made a way. The door is opened. Now, it's up to us to walk through."

Boosters elect new president

Sam Brooks, president of S. Brooks & Associates, has been elected 1985 president of the North/Northeast Business Boosters.

Other 1985 officers include vice presidents, Neil Kelly, chairman, Neil Kelly Company Designers/Remodelers and Tex Marx, vice president, Electromatic; secretary, Bud Emery, dean, Portland Community College Cascade Campus, and treasurer, Terry Thompson, vice president, U.S. National Bank.

Appointed to the organization's board of directors were Emery and Wally Scales, Portland Trail Blazers. New members on the board of directors are Alvin Manus, The Flower King; Eileen Terry, Southland Corp., and Larry Wilson, Convenient Food Mart.

The North/Northeast Business Boosters is an 80-member organization of business people working to improve business opportunities and economic development in inner North-Northeast Portland.



SAM BROOKS

conomic development in inner North-Northeast Portland.



Margaret Carter (D., District 18) and Dolores Atiyeh cut the ribbon to open show in Salem. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

International Women's day shows varied cultures and achievements

by Lanita Duke

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — March '85 is roaring with the achievements of women of color as International Women's Day celebrates the contribution of all women Saturday, March 9th, at the YWCA, 1111 S.W. 10th.

In the State's capital, a photo exhibit entitled, "Black Women — Achievement Against the Odds," is on display until March 27th in the Capitol Galleria at the Capitol Building in Salem, Oregon.

Robert Phillips, coordinator of the exhibit, said, "I had an interest in wanting to correct the inaccuracies in history due to the exclusion of Black women in the State of Oregon and American history."

The local achievements of Black women are reflected by Hazel G. Hays, first Black female administrator in State Government, Judge Mercedes Deiz, Oregon's first Black female judge and Willa Dorsey, internationally renowned gospel singer.

Locally, International Women's Day will showcase the musical talents of Janice Scroggins, the Jazzmin Jazz trio, the Jefferson High School Choir and Toshi Reagan, daughter of Sweet Honey in the Rock's founder, Bernice Reagan.

Daylong dance performances from Modern Jazz to traditional Spanish, Middle Eastern and African are expected to fill the day with positive rhythms.

Visual arts, poetry, films, multicultural food and crafts with a political forum on "Successful Women" are among the highlights. Childcare will be provided for a nominal fee. The celebration starts at 10 a.m. and runs until 6 p.m. For more information, contact Linda Shirley at 223-6281, extension 219.

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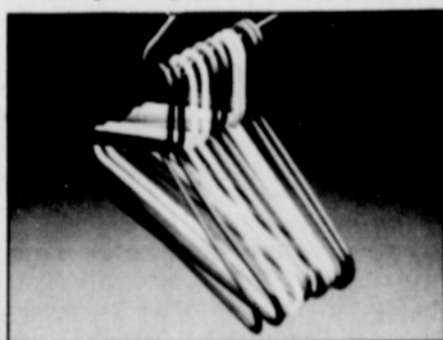
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