

METROPOLITAN



Heidi Durrow (second from right, front row) was among the 85 that attended the presentation. Durrow also spent two weeks in Nicaragua last summer. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

Witness for Peace reunion

by Robert Lothian

The 1985 Oregon-Nicaragua Witness for Peace delegation got together for a reunion and slide show at St. Andrew Community Center Saturday night.

The delegates, including *Portland Observer* photographer Richard Brown, showed slides and told of their experiences while volunteering on a coffee farm in the war zone.

Many of the color slides were Brown's. He related his experience in the town of Bluefields on the Atlantic Coast, where most of the population is Black.

Witness for Peace, an interdenominational religious organization, formed in 1983 after an attack by the CIA-backed counterrevolutionaries known as *contras* on the Nicaraguan village of Jalapa. The organization has sent 1200 witnesses into the war zones to witness atrocities and act as a moral counterweight to *contra* activities.

The Oregon delegates came from as far away as Eugene and Astoria for the reunion. They included teachers, a farmer, students, a poet, and a photographer, ranging in age from 50

down to 17. They were Hispanic, Native American, Black, Asian-American and white.

"We went to document the atrocities in Nicaragua and to wage peace," said Kathy Smith of Portland. Smith said the witnesses came closer to the war when *contras* came within three miles of the Ernesto Acuna coffee cooperative. All work stopped for three days and the delegates waited tensely near a bomb shelter and listened to the sounds of fighting. Luckily, the *contras* were fought off as they had been in a 1984 attack, and no one at the cooperative was hurt, she said.

Brown said he was impressed by young boys barely able to hold up a rifle who took on responsibility for defending the farm.

Lupe Quinn, a teacher's aide from Eugene, said that older children carried the younger children to bomb shelters as part of a defensive plan in which all farm residents had a task. Although no one was hurt, the attack slowed down production and took a psychological toll, said Quinn. "The people there have to live with it every day," she said.

Brown described Bluefields as a picturesque Caribbean fishing community where "all the activity takes place around the docks."

"Oregon's got nothin' on Bluefields." Many of Brown's slides showed the expressive faces of children. "The kids don't have big radios to carry on their shoulders, so they'd sit around the radio station," he said.

Brown said that when the ferry that was to carry him back to the capital was destroyed by *contras*, he stayed on for several days with a lobster fishing family on an island.

Returning to Managua, Brown attended the sixth anniversary of Nicaragua's revolution — with 50,000 excited Nicaraguans. "I was overwhelmed," he said.

"I didn't see anybody holding guns on people and making them stay, contrary to what we hear about the *Sandinistas* and their relations to the people," Brown said.

Other Witness for Peace delegates at St. Andrew were John Addigo, Rob Proudfoot, Pam Fitzpatrick, Craig Marquarot, Marion Malcolm, Joyce Hainsworth, and David Barnes, all from Eugene, and Lois Morford of Astoria.

Statewide conference on homeless

A growing problem in Oregon is the plight of the homeless person and for the first time, providers, concerned citizens, government officials and homeless people will gather together to explore the related concerns and issues.

A Conference on Homelessness with Robert M. Hayes, Staff Attorney and Founder of National Coalition for the Homeless will be held Thursday, Nov. 7 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 1838 S.W. Jefferson St., Portland and at 7:30 p.m. at the Central Presbyterian Church, 1475 Ferry St., Eugene.

The conference is sponsored by Community Ministries Commission of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and more than 50 other local organizations and state-wide agencies involved and concerned with the special needs of the homeless person in the State of Oregon.

Portland Mayor Bud Clark will address the Portland conference along with Central City Concern Director, Donald Clark; Rustin Kinsey, President of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; Jean DeMaster of Burnside Projects; Gary Vaughan of Operation Nightwatch; Ellen Lowe, Legislative Commission of Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; Audrey Hurlburt, a flood victim of Harney County; Karen Thunderhawk, West Women's Hotel Director; Janice Adams, Mission Outreach of First Presbyterian Church in Portland; Frank Shields, Sunnyside Family Shelter; Tom Settlemier, St. Vincent dePaul Society of Albany, Oregon; Rick Bauman, Oregon State Representative; Sharon Slatters, Director of Mental Health Assn.; Peter Paulson, Director of Northwest Pilot Project; Mary Daddio, President of Volunteers of America; Michael Sloops, Burnside Community Council; Barbara J. George, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon; Rodney I. Page, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon.

Panels, speakers and displays by various homeless providers will also be featured. Register by calling the Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, 221-1054.

Make It Official!

Join the Rainbow Coalition
General Membership Meeting
Tuesday, November 19, 7:30 P.M.
St. Andrews Hall
806 N.E. Alberta St.

PSU offers seminar on South Africa

by Nathaniel Scott

Beginning Monday, Nov. 18, Portland State University's Black Studies Department will offer a three-credit seminar on South Africa. Dr. Candice Goucher said this is the third year she will teach the course. However, she maintained, this is the first time the course will be cross-listed with another department within the university.

The course will be cross-listed with the history department, Goucher said. Cross-listing reflects the importance of the South African issue.

Classes for the four-week course will be held Monday and Wednesday from 6:40 until 9:20 p.m.

Goucher said, "The South African question is probably the major international issue of the present time."

The root of South Africa's apartheid system goes back to the late 19th century and the beginning of industrialization in southern Africa, Goucher said. "The election in South Africa in 1948 is what is called the apartheid election because it brought into power the nationalist party that still control the political power today."

"We will look at the history of women in South Africa," Goucher said. The course will give some historical background information on South Africa which is important if one is to understand how the apartheid system works.

Goucher maintains that the course will bring out the United States "historical role" in supporting the apartheid system, both directly and indirectly.

"There is no direct military aid but there is a lot of indirect aid through investments with companies in South Africa," Goucher said. "[A number of American companies] oppose labor unions in South Africa. Management has tried to impose what is profitable for the company and what is not for the worker."

Labor unions serve a very important function in South Africa, Goucher said. They create a voice for Black workers. Approximately four-and-a-

half million people [white minority] subject some 24 million Black people to a racist, oppressive, non-democratic form of government.

Goucher said the Black population in South Africa is better educated than many people realize. "There is a strong Black intellectual force in South Africa," she added.

One of the problems in resolving the situation in South Africa is that the legitimate Black leadership is either in exile or in jail," Goucher said, adding, "Those are the people Botha's gov-

ernment should be talking to."

According to Goucher, the African National Congress came into existence in 1909 and they must be recognized.

"Nelson Mandela is one of the highly-regarded leaders and he has been in jail for a quarter of a century," she maintained.

Goucher said the four-week course will consist of films, guest speakers and at least one Black South African student from the University of Oregon.



Dr. Candice Goucher — "The South African question is probably the major international issue of the present time." (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

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In some places people believed that whoever cuts the last sheaf of wheat at harvest time will marry within the year — to someone old.

In ancient Rome, brides were often wrapped from head to toe in orange-colored veils.

Some people once believed that the best butter was made when the tide had just turned.

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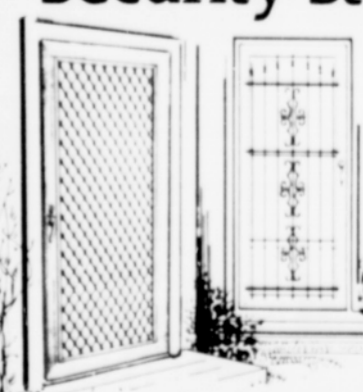
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