

A Christmas Story

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Merry Christmas
FROM THE PORTLAND OBSERVER STAFF



"I Have No Gifts
to Bring"

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"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"

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Joe Holcomb Remembered

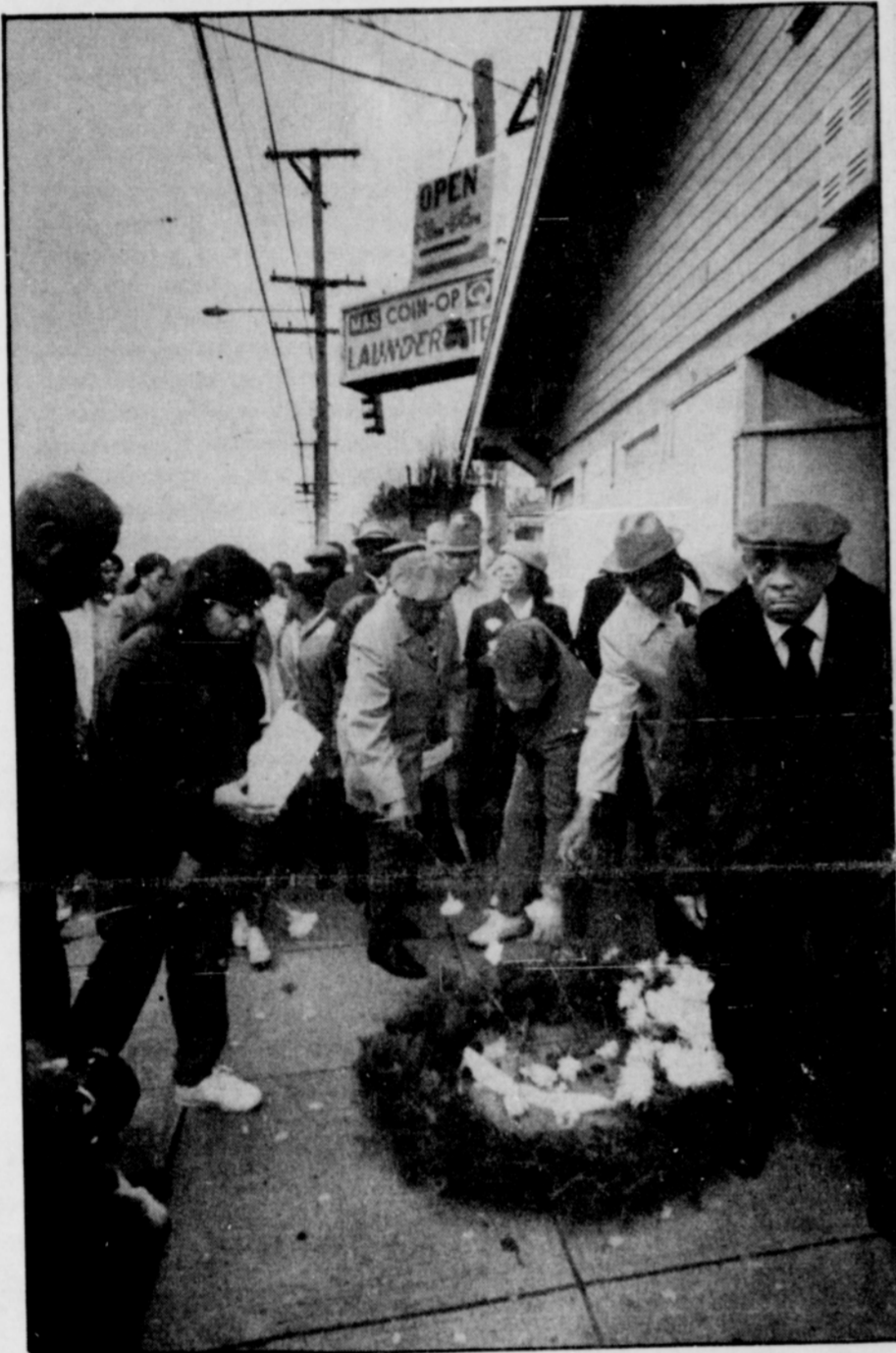
by Nyewusi Askari

Saying that they are tired of being the victims of senseless crimes and violence, approximately 200 tearful but angry citizens paid their last respects to Joe Scott Holcomb last Saturday. Meeting at the First AME Zion Church, members of the congregation expressed anger and outrage over Holcomb's death and charged that City officials are not doing near enough to stem Portland's crime rate. In remembrance, the mourners marched five-blocks, in silence, to lay a wreath and yellow flowers at the doorway of the building where Holcomb was shot.

John Scott Holcomb, 27, was shot dead Dec. 12, while attempting to aid a woman who was being harassed by two men near a coin-operated laundry.

At the meeting, David Hupp, a local resident, characterized Holcomb's murder as an act of terrorism. Addressing the crowd, Hupp said, "Why do I call this an act of terrorism? Because our city is under seige from a variety of sociopaths and psychopaths, some of them our own sons and daughters." Hupp explained that he feels no protection from the City, and that although the problems of crime are citywide, they are particularly focused in the Inner Northeast community. "We already are occupied by terrorism from within. And apathy, cynicism, racism and a smug delusion of personal safety are our enemies," he said.

Rep. Margaret Carter, D-Portland, saying that her heart was saddened by Holcomb's death, encouraged City and state legislators to join hands in the fight against crime. She warned against characterizing Holcomb's murder as a Black or a White problem. "Crime is a state-wide problem," she explained.



Over 200 angry citizens marched with Joe Scott Holcomb's widow, Janine Skenandore (2nd from left), to the Launderette where he was murdered, and placed a wreath and flowers.

Jim Kelly, who was Holcomb's employer at the time of his death, said the Portland Chamber of Commerce's decision to form a Commission to study the crime problem and its statement that the crime problem isn't as bad as the news media says is a slap in the face of victimized

citizens who know otherwise. "The Chamber of Commerce makes me embarrassed to call myself a businessman," he said angrily.

In a moving, tearful tribute, Harold Williams, of Pen Nor, Inc., called Holcomb "a hero." "Now is the time for the community to come together and rid itself of something shameful. Joe Holcomb is truly our hero," Williams said.

The silent march, which was led by Jim Kelly carrying a large wreath, began at the corner of Vancouver and North Skidmore Street and ended at M&S Coin-Op Launderette at 4236 N. Mississippi Avenue.

It was a chilling procession. A slow and painful walk toward the place where Holcomb was murdered. Along the way, the curious could be seen peeping from behind window shades. Up ahead, a lone Portland police officer directed traffic. Along side streets, cars stopped, giving the appearance that their drivers were sharing moments of silence with the marching mourners. As the mourners neared the Launderette, they began to sing "Amazing Grace," a song they sang throughout the laying of the wreath and the flowers. Hardly an eye was without tears, grief and sadness. Men cried. Women cried. Small children cried. Strangers cried on each other's shoulders. Friends held onto each other for physical and emotional support.

After the last flower was placed on the wreath, the marchers walked back down North Skidmore Street, singing "We Shall Not Be Moved."

And according to these humble, peace-loving citizens, they are not about to allow pimps, drugs, murderers and the like to move them out of their neighborhoods. That, they say, is the spirit of Joseph Scott Holcomb.

Photo by Richard J. Brown

Reggie Blake: Emanuel Hospital Employee of the Month



Reggie Blake, Staff Nurse — "This job is all personal satisfaction." Photo by Richard J. Brown

by Lori Callister

Reggie Blake didn't go into the nursing profession for the glamour. She didn't go into it for the money. She did it because she loves to see people get well.

And at Emanuel Hospital & Health Center, Blake is an impor-

tant part of getting well for many patients. Blake was chosen employee of the month at Emanuel recently for her outstanding work in the Orthopedics Unit where she is a nurse on the evening shift.

Reggie has been with Emanuel almost 18 years, just about since she graduated from Walla Walla College in nursing. And nursing is where she has wanted to stay.

Her skills as a nurse and her level-headed cool in crisis situations have been praised by her co-workers. Those qualities also led to her serving as assistant head nurse and evening nurse supervisor for the entire hospital until she realized these duties were taking her away from what she loved best — taking care of patients.

"You don't realize what you do for people until later, sometimes. It's really great when patients come back to visit."

So she chose to stay a staff nurse, "simply because I like to take care of patients. This job is all personal satisfaction. We see patients who are debilitated or all banged up from accidents and we can see them get well and get up and walk away."

Blake says she doesn't consider the work she does particularly special. But the staff and patients do. She is praised for her excellent way with patients that goes beyond routine. See "Reggie Blake", page 7

Tubman's Success Reported

by Nyewusi Askari

Back in November, when Mr. Paul Coakley, Principal of Tubman Middle School, presented his progress report to the Desegregation Monitoring Advisory Committee, he reported that the middle school was experiencing a very exciting and productive year. Citing the return of 92 percent of last year's staff, Mr. Coakley said this was a marked improvement over the previous year.

Here are some additional highlights from that report:

- There are 662 students at Tubman this fall which includes 439 Blacks, 186 Whites, 17 Asians, 13 Hispanics and 6 Native Americans.
- Tubman has a total certified and classified staff of 70 which includes 30 Blacks, 33 Whites, 5 Hispanics, 1 Native American and 1 Asian. There is a total certified staff of 53 which includes 18 Blacks, 29 Whites, 4 Hispanics, 1 Native American and 1 Asian. There is a total of 13 on the classified staff which includes 11 Blacks, 1 White and 1 Hispanic. There are 5 Blacks and 3 White employees on the administrative staff.
- Tubman has a number of after-school clubs to encourage students

in a positive direction: the Say No to Drugs Club; Chess Club; International Cooking Club; Astronaut Club; Double Dutch Club; a Jazz Band; the Japan Sister City Club; and the Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Club. On Thursday, with all of the clubs and the After School Study Program going on at the same time, there are 130 students participating. The MESA Club has 47 students participating this year.

- Tubman's Local Citizens' Advisory Committee (LCAC) has helped to organize a special purpose for each month.
- Tubman has a Parents' Screening Committee of 12 persons who participate in the hiring of new staff.
- On October 16, 1987, internationally-known author, Walter B. Meyers, visited Tubman. The students read his books before his visit, so they could be well-prepared.
- The Tubman Administration and students get together each year to assess the year and to decide ways they can improve Tubman. This year they worked on improving hall and cafeteria behavior. They have posted rules and have a Clean Up Behavior Program (CUB).



Paul Coakley: "92 percent of last year's staff returned, a vast improvement over the previous year." Photo by Richard J. Brown

• A committee, under the direction of Barbara Johnson and Linda

Wakefield, has written out lesson plans for homeroom teachers to talk

to students about being successful, developing good study habits and

time management.

• The Tubman Administrative staff hopes to bring Jawanza Kunjufu as a consultant to Tubman to contribute ideas on student achievement.

During his report, Mr. Coakley emphasized that the Tubman staff believes in promoting and encouraging positive student behavior. He expressed deep appreciation to Laura Ford, Community Liaison; Linda Wakefield, Assistant Principal; James Brannon, Assistant Principal; Vern Marshall, Program Coordinator; Bruce Tubre, Students Management Specialist and Barbara Johnson, Guidance Counselor for the work they have done on the After School Study Program.

He said that he knows Tubman is off to a great start and that he is proud of how much the staff, parents, DMAC members, and others have helped to give so much to Tubman.

He invited community members to come to Tubman on any Tuesday or Thursday, 3:20 to 4:20 p.m. to participate in the After School Study Program.