

Martin Luther King Remembered

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"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"

Saturday School Report Card

by Nyewusi Askari

Due in great measure to the enthusiastic efforts and participation of community residents, activists, educators, teachers, students, performing artists, ministers, churches and others too numerous to name, the Black United Front Saturday School is scheduled to begin classes February 20, 1988.

The Saturday School System will consist of approximately 15 churches and institutions which are located in North/Northeast Portland. The churches include: Mt. Olivet Baptist Church, Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church, St. Andrew's Catholic Church, Highland Baptist Church and Mallory Avenue Church.

Door-to-door recruitment of students will begin February 6 in the North/Northeast community and will cover the Vernon, Humboldt and King attendance areas. Volunteers and parents who still wish to contribute to the school's success are encouraged to call Avel or Karen at 230-9427.

Teacher Training Session

Last Saturday morning, approximately 70 volunteer teachers, tutors and instructors attended the Saturday School's first Teacher Training Session in the conference room of the Albina Human Resource Cen-



Approximately 70 volunteers attended the first Saturday School's Teachers' Training Session. Photo by Richard J. Brown

ter, 5411 N.E. Union Avenue. The session was conducted by Ron Herndon, Co-Chairman of the Black United Front.

Teachers were required to read and discuss three important works that will provide the foundation upon which the School will operate: (1) The Black Child — A Destiny in Jeopardy; (2) Functions of Culture for Black Children and (3) Conceptual Model for Developing Positive Programs for Black Children.

It was made clear during the discussion of the works that few of the

teachers believe that white-controlled educational institutions — regardless of whether they are elementary schools or universities — will educate Black, poor white, American Indian and Hispanic children.

"The Black Child — A Destiny in Jeopardy," by Dr. Bobby Wright, stressed the need for African-Americans to work toward developing a Black social theory. According to Dr. Wright, "A social theory determines the destiny of a people by establishing guidelines of life, e.g.,

it defines their relationship with other living things, it defines values and rituals, methods of education, etc. . . ."

"The Conceptual Model for Developing Positive Programs for Black Children" (Eugene Useni Perkins) explored the educational, cultural, social and economic oppression of Black children. Once these areas had been spotlighted, the model moved to show how the positive development of Black children can be accomplished in the areas of (1) self-appreciation, (2) self-assertion, (3) self-reliance, (4) self-affirmation, and (5) cultural awareness.

Using this model, the Saturday School will focus on "family strengths" and strive to give the children (1) a sense of identity, (2) a sense of history, (3) a sense of struggle, (4) a sense of responsibility and (5) a sense of nationhood. Along with creating a liberated student, the School will emphasize (1) educational excellence, (2) cognitive skills, (3) survival skills, (4) analytical skills and (5) vocational skills.

The session provided teachers with information on how to go about developing cultural programs for Black children. This particular



Ron Herndon leads the discussion during the Training Session. Photo by Richard J. Brown

information stresses the importance of (1) helping children to feel proud of their Blackness in everything they do, (2) inviting Africans from the continent to talk with the children as often as possible, (3) making every effort to have your materials contain Black images, (4) establishing the programming of Black culture as a priority, (5) consulting with knowledgeable Black people in various fields to help you implement certain programs, and (6) never using Black in a negative or derogatory manner.

Aisha Irving, age 12, said he is glad he came to the session. "My mom told me about the Saturday School, and I wanted to help tutor the kids. I think this will help me, because I'd like to be a teacher when I grow up. Plus, it feels good to be part of something like this," he said with a smile.

Pam Phillips expressed similar sentiments. "As an original African-American from Portland, I am excited about the Saturday School. All children want to know who they are. I was no exception. As a child, I used to spend recess time in the library searching for books about Africans. I won an award for reading so many books, but none of them mentioned anything except for slavery. The Saturday School will offer positives for children by teaching truth in history, art, etc., while building self-esteem. It's a step in the right direction and I'm glad to be a part of it," she explained.

Ron Herndon, at the close of the session, summed up the School's basic philosophy: "Our job is to teach the students how to think, not what to think. Because if they don't know where they are going, then any road will get them there."

Willamette Week Cartoon

by Nyewusi Askari

A cartoon showing two robed and hooded figures, with one holding a book with the title's first word being "Klan", appeared in the Dec. 22-28, 1987, edition of the Willamette Week newspaper. The caption was "Don't you love it when they're still warm from the dryer?"

When the Willamette Week published the Callahan cartoon described above in its Dec. 22-28 issue, no offense was intended according to Mark Zusman, Editor. However, when the cartoon was brought to the attention of Black Oregonians, most were offended and outraged. Among that group is Kathleen Saadat.

When Ms. Saadat saw and read the cartoon, she immediately wrote a letter to Zusman and the Willamette Week. The letter asked for an apology for publishing the cartoon. Contacted by telephone, Ms. Saadat said she was acting as an outraged, private citizen who is very sensitive to and concerned about the positive development of race relations in the State of Oregon. She said she doesn't feel that the Willamette Week's display of racial insensitivity is a reflection of the true racial sentiments of the majority of Oregonians.

Ms. Saadat's letter reads: " . . . This letter is in reference to a cartoon you published in Willamette Week, Vol. 14, No. 9, Dec. 22-28 issue. Specifically the Callahan cartoon on page 8. To say the

least, the cartoon is in extremely poor taste. It is neither funny or thought provoking. Along with the apology due your readers, you might take the time to denounce the K.K.K. They are not funny, they are not cute, and they are not yet history. There is absolutely nothing funny about advocates of white supremacy, especially in a city

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— Kathleen Saadat

where recently (Nov. 11, 1987) a Black woman was attacked by a white teenager who use racial pejoratives prior to his physical assault upon her automobile, the results of which left her with cuts on her corneas. Oregon is a publically-announced target for Aryan Nation infiltration. Oregonians must be aware of the messages we send and work against bigotry. I am sure you will agree and hope you will apologize for publishing the cartoon . . ."

Responding to questions posed by The Portland Observer, Willamette Week Editor Mark Zusman said he is sensitive to Ms. Saadat's position. "I understand why the cartoon may have offended some of our readers. On the other hand, I think that John Callahan is a valuable cartoonist. One who is both funny, and, I think, infuses his work

Construction Brigade From Portland Goes to Nicaragua

The Ben Linder Construction Brigade left Sunday night for Corinto, Nicaragua, representing the culmination of months of preparation and planning. The Portland-Corinto Sister City Association spearheaded this effort which also involved hundreds of individuals and organizations donating time, money, and materials.

Thirteen brigade members embarked at midnight on a fifteen-hour trip to join two other brigade members already in Nicaragua. After spending a day in the capital city of Managua, they will continue on to Corinto. Corinto is Nicaragua's main port. It is a town of 30,000 located three hours northwest of Managua. In April 1985 Portland's City Council voted to make Corinto our official sister city.

In Corinto, the brigade's main project will be repairing the town's only hospital. Repairs will include work on the roof, painting, installing new screening and lighting. Approximately \$5,000 was contributed in cash or in-kind donations just for building materials and tools. With the cooperation of Farmers for Peace in Canada, about \$3,000-worth of these materials have already been shipped. This includes zinc roofing, paint, and fans. The brigade is taking additional tools and materials. They also have a bicycle, a sewing machine, hospital lab equipment, and a high school physics kit — all donated by Oregonians for the people of Corinto.

The brigade will spend three weeks in Nicaragua. Besides their stay in Corinto, they will also visit Managua, Leon, Masaya, and Matagalpa where they will visit the grave of Ben Linder.

While in Corinto, brigade members will be living with Nicaraguan families. During the stay they will meet with community groups, unions, opposition parties, and other organizations. "When we return, we will take every available opportunity to let people know what we have learned on our trip," said one of the brigade members.

Individual brigade members have financed their own way. Many have raised money from their relatives, friends, and co-workers, and even went door-to-door after Christmas soliciting contributions in exchange for hauling



P.C. Peri is one of the thirteen Ben Linder Construction Brigade members who left Portland Sunday night for Nicaragua. Peri, an employee at Boeing, will be in Portland's Sister City of Corinto helping with the repairs on the town's only hospital. Photo by Richard J. Brown

away used Christmas trees.

"We are like the tens of thousands of others across the country who were inspired by the example of Ben Linder and stepped forward after his murder to join protest actions against the U.S. war in Nicaragua, to join volunteer work projects like this one in order to see Nicaragua for themselves and take action in solidarity with the Nicaraguan people. The U.S.-organized Contra mercenaries may have killed Benjamin Linder. But they cannot kill his example," stated Susan Leo, a member of the brigade.

with a certain amount of social commentary. It may not have been done in this particular cartoon. He is someone I enjoy publishing and will continue to publish," Zusman said.

Zusman said there is very little that appears in the Willamette Week that doesn't offend someone at some point along the line. "John Callahan's cartoon was not printed to give credence to the K.K.K. I

think it was an attempt to simply take a figure that has a uniform, identifiable for good or for worse, and make a lighthearted comment about it. My concern is I think people are making too much of an inference out of that cartoon to suggest in any form or fashion that John Callahan or Mark Zusman or Willamette Week is endorsing the principles of the K.K.K. or anything they stand for. If individuals saw

that cartoon and felt that there was an attempt on the part of the Willamette Week or Callahan to give legitimacy to the K.K.K., I apologize for that . . ." Zusman explained.

John Makareno, a Northeast Portland resident, believes Zusman and the Willamette Week, whether they intended to or not, gave credence to the K.K.K. by publishing the cartoon. "Sure, he can apologize, but that doesn't explain why

Willamette Week allowed the cartoon to be published. It's as if they didn't see the sheets. It's as if they ignored what the presence of the K.K.K. has meant to African-Americans in this country," he said.

Black Oregonians who have seen and read the cartoon agree with Ms. Saadat's position that the matter is neither funny nor thought provoking. As one put it, "It's the same old soup warmed over."