

Fifth Annual National Black Wholistic Retreat

In the midst of this era of conservatism, material acquisition and individualism, an unique event has been unfolding for the last four years. Various African-American scholars, poets and activists from around the country have been meeting in order to develop a vision for the rejuvenation and development of Black people in America. They have met under the banner of the National Black Wholistic Retreat.

The retreat is sponsored by the National Black Wholistic Society: A society of educators, administrators, and students who are concerned about the issues which affect the lives of African American people.

The goal of the retreat is to create an environment where African-Americans can find solutions to the physical, spiritual and intellectual problems which they confront, and to enjoy themselves in the process.

Previous speakers who delivered lectures or presented workshops at the retreats were Dr. Frances Cress Welsing, Dr. Maulana Ron Karenga, Dr. Asa Hilliard, Dr. Barbara Sizemore, Dr. Na'im Akbar, Drs. Nathan and Julia Hare, Brother Haki Madhubuti, Brother Bob Law, and many others. These brilliant and distinguished scholars shared their analysis and solutions to such critical issues as Economic Development, Black Male/Female Relationships, Health, Religion and Spirituality, The Black Family, Mental Health, the Destruction of Black Men and Women in the '80s, and the Systematic Reconstruction of the African Mind.

Participants have been "inspired and rejuvenated" and felt that the retreat provided them with numerous practical solutions to some very pressing problems. It also gave them an opportunity to exchange ideas with African-Americans from various parts of the country. One participant from New York stated, "I liked the openness, positive feelings of moving toward a solution to help us as African people gain our position again in the world."

For those who have missed previous retreats the Fifth Annual National Black Wholistic retreat will be held

May 26-28 and July 28-30, 1989 at the Kings Lodge in Otisville, New York. The Theme for the retreat is "A Celebration of Black Women: Struggles, Victories and Connections." The speakers for the retreats will include Dr. Frances Cress Welsing, Drs. Nathan and Julia Hare, Sonia Sanchez, Dr. Morris Jeff, and others. Special guests include Betty Shabazz (wife of Malcolm X), Gwendolyn Brooks, and Susan Taylor, Editor in Chief of Essence Magazine. The workshop topics will include:

Dr. Frances Welsing, "Black Women and White Supremacy"; Drs. Nathan and Julia Hare, "Raising A Nation Alone; The Dilemma of Single Parents"; Sister Sonia Sanchez, "The Quiet Journey into Being a Woman"; Dr. Morris Jeff, "The Africinity of Love and Sex"; Dr. LaFrancis Rodgers Rose, "These Sexist Black Men That We Love So Deeply."

The retreat will be held in one of the most beautiful areas of New York's Shawangunk Mountains. The breathtaking mountains and forest lands will enhance the spiritual aspect of this event.

In addition to the workshops and lectures, there will be ample opportunities for other stimulating and relaxing activities such as swimming, meditation, yoga sessions, Black Films, Video series, nature trails, volleyball, basketball, and tennis. Entertainment at both retreats will be provided by the Leon Thomas Quintet.

For information about the Fifth Annual retreats, contact the National Black Wholistic Society, P.O. Box 69241, St. Louis, MO 63169 or call (617) 427-1150 (Boston). The cost of the retreat is \$255, which includes housing for three days and two nights, delicious and healthful vegetarian and non-vegetarian meals, admission to all seminars, workshops, films, entertainment, yoga and meditation sessions, plus unlimited access to a wonderful and rejuvenating natural retreat area.

If previous retreats are any indication of success, then the Fifth Annual retreat should be a very rewarding and enriching experience. It's an experience that every serious African-American should have.

To Possum Or Not To Possum Is Not The Question?

by Nyewusi Askari

Last week, the Portland Observer reacted (in print/front page) to the NE Reformer (labeled by community writers as the Deformer) attack on Ms. Edna Robertson, Mr. Charles Ford and Mr. Ronnie Herndon. As expected, it didn't take long for Ms. Joyce Boles, the Reformer's Editor and Publisher, long to respond. This week, Boles submitted a long list of questions to the Observer - namely: (1) Does your staff ever attend Coalition meetings to watch Herndon loyalists step all over Inner Northeast residents, both Black and white? (2) Do you think any take-off on any comic strip featuring animals, local Black leaders and southern dialect is automatically racist? (3) How should a white writer proceed who wants to poke fun at a pompous, bombastic Black leader who is selling out his own people? (4) How should a white writer proceed who wants to lampoon an incompetent city employee who is Black? At the end of her cover letter, Boles declares, "You guys really blew it, but you demonstrated the depth of your hatred and insensitivity toward whites, and therefore your own racism."

Obviously Boles illustrated understanding of African-Americans is worse than that of a blind possum sittin' on the nose of a Pit Bull dog. Her efforts to holler "reverse racism" comes off like a cotton ball shot from a demented cannon - all noise, no fire. Not even a puff of understandable smoke! Boles throws out a red flag when she burps out the statement "You guys really blew it, but you demonstrated the depth of your hatred and insensitivity toward whites, and therefore your own racism."

At a time when race relations in America are receding toward an unhealthy condition, Boles attempts to drive a unhealthy wedge between white and black neighbors who live in Inner Northeast. Her statement is immature, desperate, and without foundation. "Hatred" and "insensitivity" and "racism" are words she uses

very loosely and dangerously.

The Observer's response to Boles attack on members of the African-American community was not racist, was not insensitive and was not laced with hatred. It was put simply: "The African-American community don't need her brand of yellow journalism." There was also another message: "As far as the African-American community is concerned, her newsletter, in which she attacked Robertson, Ford and Herndon, was racist, insensitive and outta pocket/outta line/outta time." The African-American community stands firm on that ... now, then and when ... ever it occurs.

African-Americans do not think it's funny to poke fun at those who have a proven record of dedication, commitment and loyalty to the improvement of our community. Even less funny are words which describe those same persons as pompous and bombastic. Apparently Boles is shooting from the foot and maybe this explains why, as she puts it, "the intentions of the column simply went over most readers heads - both white and black." Boles failed to realize that what she described as "over most readers heads" was simply an exercise of good, solid judgment on behalf of the readers in question.

The citizens of Inner Northeast Portland, Black and white, have worked very hard to shape solid, stable race relations. That more than 2,000 persons participated in the City's rally against racism-black and white--demonstrates that citizens of all colors have joined hands to make sure that racism does not become the order of the day. Thus the question ... Who is Boles speaking for?

Boles is tripping down a blind alley. And, although she seems to be seeking answers to specific questions, personally, I don't think she is ready to face the African-American community on that level ... not as long as she has the pages of the NE Reformer to hide behind.

To Boles I say, "To Possum or not to possum is not the question, is not the answer. It is simply not ..."

JOBS & CLASSIFIED

PORTLAND/OREGON VISITORS ASSOCIATION ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID DESIGN, PRODUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF VIDEO, FILM AND SLIDE SHOWS

BIDS DUE: Friday, February 24, 1989

The Portland/Oregon Visitors Association is requesting proposals for the design, production and development of a 5-7 minute video, film and slide show for promotional use in the marketing of Portland as a convention destination.

The association seeks individuals who have experience in developing quality productions and possess the creative skills to showcase Portland as a popular destination to convention planners and delegates. Familiarity with Portland is a must. A budget of \$30,000 has been established for this program.

Should you have further interest, please contact Sylvia Robles (275-9752) for a detailed RFP, or write P/OVA, c/o Sylvia Robles, Three World Trade Center, 26 S.W. Salmon, Portland, Oregon, 97204.

OREGON STATE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID

FOREST RESEARCH LABORATORY
STRUCTURAL REHABILITATION PROJECT
BIDS DUE: Tuesday, February 28, 1989 until 2:00 P.M. (PST)

Sealed bids for the Forest Research Laboratory Structural Rehabilitation project will be received by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education until 2:00 P.M., PST, February 28, 1989.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the OSU Physical Plant, Adams Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-2001 or telephone (503) 754-4921.

OREGON STATE BOARD OF HIGHER EDUCATION ADVERTISEMENT FOR BID

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING CENTRAL SWITCH
HALON FIRE SUPPRESSION SYSTEM PROJECT
BIDS DUE: Thursday, March 2, 1989 until 2:00 P.M. (PST)

Sealed bids for the Administration Building Central Switch Halon Fire Suppression System project will be received by the Oregon State Board of Higher Education until 2:00 P.M., PST, March 2, 1989.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting the OSU Physical Plant, Adams Hall, Corvallis, Oregon 97331-2001 or telephone (503) 754-4921.

PORTLAND OBSERVER

"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"
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"The whole history of the progress of human liberty shows that all concession yet made to her august claims have been born of earnest struggle . . . If there is not struggle, there is no progress."

- Frederick Douglas

Pacific Power salutes the many great men and women honored during Black History Month.



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