

PORTLAND OBSERVER

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"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"

March 16th, 1989

Introducing:



David Marshall
Ockley-Green
6th Grade



Donovan Campbell
Jefferson
Sophomore



Angela Witherspoon
Jefferson
Senior



Michael Thomas
Meek School
4th Grade



Talunaka Wahington
Honor Roll Student
Whitaker Middle School



Vanessa Owens
Portsmouth Middle School
6th Grade

SALUTING



When a new student begins the training program at the TimberLake Job Corps Center his first contact with the program is Warren Cunningham, Warren picks up students at the bus depot in downtown Portland and escorts them to the training center located in the Mt. Hood National Forest. Warren understands how nervous the new students are because he was a new Job Corps enrollee in the Wolf Creek Job Corps Center in 1979. Warren is an excellent example of hard work and determination. At the age of 7 Warren was involved in a near fatal accident that caused him to lose the use of part of his right arm. Later, he was expelled from Washington and Dorsey High Schools in Los Angeles, finally graduating from Crenshaw High, Warren's Mother, concerned about problems that Warren was having went with him to a Job Corps recruiters office and assisted him in filling out the application. With his Moms shove and his own desire to learn a trade Warren entered the program.

After eleven months Warren graduated from the welding program. This event occurred on Friday and on the following Monday Warren begin his new job as a welding instructor. From being one of the guys Warren was suddenly in the position of being teacher, role model and certified adult. Warren spent 7-1/2 years in that position. During that time he was part of a process that was responsible for turning around the lives of hundreds of young men, just like himself.

In 1985 Warren decided that it was time to increase his knowledge of welding on the "outside." Warren joined the ironworkers apprenticeship program in Portland where he worked for 1-1/2 years. While working in the field of welding Warren discovered that he missed the interaction with Youth participating in the Job Corps program. Consequently, he begin volunteering on week-ends at the TimberLake Job Corps Center. Eventually he left his welding position and took a position at the center. Warren now co-ordinates the Occupational Exploration Program. In that position he spends that critical first month with new students introducing them to the many areas available to them in Job Corps.

Looking back, Warren has only one regret. He stated that when he was young, many of his friends and family kept telling him that he could not do this well, or do that well, or could not play sports because of his damaged right hand and arm. Warren only regrets that he did not try sports, because he believes he would have excelled there too.

Warren, who will be assisting the M.L. King Facility Job Corps recruiter in making presentations and recruiting, has only this to say about his reasons for believing in Job Corps. "Job Corps takes the extra time necessary to make every kid a success. If Job Corps didn't bend over backwards to help kids, who would?"

OPINION:

By Jimi Johnson

In the wake of Wednesday's (March 8th) shooting at Humboldt Elementary School, I believe that tougher laws should be passed immediately regarding gun usage. For example, if a person fires a gun within a four block radius of an Elementary, Middle, or High School with the intent to do bodily harm, he or she should receive a mandatory jail sentence of not less than twenty years.

When we as a city accept the hideous action that took place on a Elementary School playground as just another "gang bang" shootout, we are setting ourselves up for the destruction of our children, our babies and our future.

The gang situation in Portland has reached epidemic proportion, and if it is not squashed now we will be living in a gang infested city well into the Twenty First Century. This despicable activity will not be isolated to the North/Northeast Community as some influential people might think, but it will soon touch the lives of all who live in this "wonderful" City of Roses.

Laws to protect our children should and must be first and foremost on our agenda. But when we allow what happened at Humboldt Elementary School to go on without seriously seeking out and prosecuting the perpetrators to the full extent of the law, we send a signal to gang members throughout the nation that Portland is "open" for notorious gang activity with little or no consequences.

At this point our leaders in City Hall seem to act as though what happens in North/Northeast Portland does not affect our "beautiful" city as a whole. But they need to understand an age old adage "study what is happening in distant places, because what is happening in distant places will soon be at your door!"

Portland's image as one of the most livable cities in America is becoming tarnished daily, in fact it is gone! When guns are fired on an elementary school playground at 3:30 pm, shortly after 5, 6, 7, and 8 years old children are dismissed from classes, we as citizens and elected officials need to take drastic and immediate action to correct this ludicrous behavior.

In my opinion, maximum and mandatory jail sentences should be handed down to all persons involved in this cowardly and ridiculous assault.

Counselor, N.E.Y.S.C.
Urban League

BLACK UNITED FRONT INVITES COMMUNITY TO MARCH AGAINST RACIST VIOLENCE

The Portland Chapter of the National Black United Front will lead its annual March Against Racist Violence on Saturday, April 1, 1989. Participants will assemble at the Martin Luther Kings Jr. Neighborhood Facility, 4815 NE 7th Ave., at 11:30 am and proceed to Alberta Park at NE 22nd and Killingsworth for a rally.

The March has been held for several years to remember the day on which Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated and to protest racist violence in Oregon and the Nation.

Black United Front Co-Chair Ron Herndon said, "We need to continue focusing attention on the increasing racist violence, not only in Portland, but the entire country. Hopefully, our efforts will help get the public recommitted to eradicating the cases of racism."

Several prominent civil rights organizations and community leaders have been invited to speak under the theme of a famous King quote, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". The Rally will include: Zeenab Johnson, Black United Front Youth Representative; Assefash Melles, Member of the Ethiopian Community; Robert Phillips, President, NAACP; Useni Perkins, President, Urban League; Gregory Gudger, Executive Director, Metropolitan Human Relations Commission; Mikail Shabazz, Muslim Leader; Kathleen Shadaat, State Affirmative Action Officer. Children from the Black Educational Center will make a special presentation. Featured Speaker will be the Reverend Alcega Boozer, of the Urban Ministry Episcopal Church.

LOW INCOME ELIGIBLE FOR CREDIT

Many low income families in Portland and across Oregon are eligible to receive an Earned Income Credit made available by the federal government.

The Earned Income Credit is a tax credit for families that work and have children. To qualify, they must earn less than \$18,576 (in 1988). The benefit is significant: up to \$874 to our most needy families.

But to receive their credit, they must file an income tax return.

That's our problem. Many of the low income families eligible for the EIC earn too little to owe any taxes. Since they don't owe anything, many don't file.

We need your help in reaching these families -- and educating them on how they can receive their EIC.

To Help you understand how the EIC works, I would like to invite you and members of your organization to the Mayor's Teleconference on the Earned Income Credit, to be held March 20, from 10 am to 12 noon, in the Portland Building, 1120 SW Fifth Avenue, second floor auditorium.

The IRS will provide us with a live presentation from Washington, D.C., via satellite. We will provide you with materials to help you sign up the families you serve.

Just think what \$800 could mean to a family that is barely getting by. We believe over 30,000 families in Portland alone qualify for this program. BUT THEY WON'T RECEIVE A CREDIT if you don't help us spread the word.

PORTLAND OBSERVER
"The Eyes and Ears of the Community"
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CONGRATULATIONS!



Mona McDonald was born in Portland, Or., graduated from Andrew Jackson High in 1977, and received a B.A. from Mt. Hood Community College in T.V. Production techniques. Mona resides in N.E. Portland along with her husband Marc McDonald and her two daughters Latoya and Marshnique. When she began working for the Oregon Lottery as Production Assistant, she said she never expected to become one of the daily 4 Host. Now that the doors have been opened for her, she hopes that even greater opportunities will arise.

REPUBLICANS LAUNCHED SERIOUS DRIVE FOR BLACK VOTES

George Bush, Lee Atwater and the National Republican Party are deadly serious about making inroads into the African-American community. Since the "New Deal" days of Franklin Delano Roosevelt African-Americans have been largely loyal democrats, serving as virtually unshakable pillars of support for Democratic Party power at all levels. Perceived as the party of the rich and the powerful and as a party whose policies were weak on civil rights and programs of social uplift for workers and the poor, African-Americans have found little to hope for within the Republican Party. For years the Republican Party likewise has simply written off the Black vote believing that to campaign in African-American communities was an exercise in futility.

Now there has been a decided shift in Republican Party strategy and tactics. With what appears to be a solid lock on the South as evidenced by recent presidential elections, the Republicans are searching for a combination of regional bases and national constituencies that will assist them to solidify their grip on the whitehouse, and challenge the Democratic Party's positions as the majority party nationwide. If the Republic Party could manage to carve out 15-25% of the Black vote consistently in presidential elections, then the Republicans would have a lock on the presidency well into the 21st century.

There is every indication that this is precisely the strategy and the goal. Under the leadership of Lee Atwater, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, and with the enthusiastic blessing of President Bush the Republican Party has Launched a full court press to recruit Black voters. Hence, in a departure from the chilly politics of his predecessor, President Bush used the occasion of the Martin Luther King Holiday to denounce bigotry and call for greater progress in the area of race relations. He talked of working of fulfill King's Dream. The President's gesture was well received.

Similarly, Bush's appointment of Morehouse President Dr. William Sullivan for the Department of Health and Human Services, and former Congressman Jack Kemp for the Department of Housing and Urban Development are also viewed as positive signs. Kemp wasted no time in declaring that the "Reagan Revolution" had not reached minorities and the poor and that in his capacity as the new Director of H.U.D. he intended to press an assault against poverty. In a recent visit to Atlanta Kemp visited the King Center and then took a highly visible tour of the "Cabbage Town" section of the city with Mayor Andrew Young, and Congressman John Lewis.

Chairman Lee Atwater for his part has taken to attempting to demonstrate that the Republican Party can have some "soul." An avid Blues and R & B enthusiast, Atwater also likes to pluck a few cords on the guitar. He recently joined Blues great B B King for a highly publicized jam in the nation's capital. In a more serious vein, Atwater has had to face the chickens come home to roost in the person and phenomenon of "former" klanman David Duke who won a seat in the Louisiana legislature as a Republican. Atwater promptly denounced Duke's election and sought to distance the National Republican Party from an obvious embarrassment. Some analysts were quick to point out that Atwater's veiled racist campaign during the general election, particularly the infamous Willie Horton commercial,

had helped to pave the way for the legitimize the David Dukes of the World. How far the Republican will go to attract African-Americans to their foldes unclear. Thus far the effort has been filled with more cosmetics and symbols than substance. It remains to be seen how seriously Republican policy priorities, and legislature initiatives will match up with a progressive African-American agenda. What is clear is that the Republicans like the view from the whitehouse, and they are now convinced that a 15-25% slice of the Black vote can cement their grip on the presidency.