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"The Eyes and The Ears of the Community"

JANUARY 24, 1990

Black Women: The Second Part

By Ulysses Tucker, Jr.

It's great to know that people are reading the Portland Observer these days. As expected, I received a few letters and several telephone calls from supportive, angry, or even amused readers. I heard from old friends, ex-girlfriends, and from people who may eventually become friends.

First of all, it was not my intention to offend, point fingers, or cause any confusion in the black community. My intent was to address some basic issues and problems affecting the lives of black men I know through my civic-professional involvement. Frankly, I've had some of the same experiences as these black men, but I was not writing from a personal perspective. I wanted to create dialogue and believe me, I think that mission was accomplished.

I find it truly amazing that one story could provoke so much conversation and generate so much energy among readers. I was stopped at church, in the Safeway, at red-lights, and confronted while out to dinner with friends. I heard that it was discussed in bars, on the bus, City Hall, barber shops, and a host of other places. I was told that I only like white women.

I only wish that people would put the same type of energy into voting, taking care of their children, being positive role models, and making our community a place to live. Why not commit to the NAACP, Big Brother - Big Sister Program, or Urban League like many of you committed to analyzing the story? Obviously, I plucked a few nerves out there. Now, I will share with you some of the reactions I received or better still, nerves I plucked!

For starters, every single, college educated, childless professional that contacted me thought the story was good. They were very interested in meeting some of the professional black men that I talked about and curious as to where we hung out around town. These women complained about there not being any place to go and be around black professionals.

Then, there were the divorced parents or single parents, who felt offended because the black males I wrote about did not desire this type of situation. One black woman suggested that black men raise their standards for mates once they attain a certain economic/social level. This may be true in some cases, but there are also divorced black men who are single parents who are in the same predicament. All they want to do is peacefully co-exist at this

stage in life. Both parties involved have a great deal to offer each other. It's just a matter of how much emotional baggage and past pain they bring to relationships. We all have something to offer and I think that point was made clear in the last story.

The question remains, is it wrong for a college educated, childless professional black male/female to want a college educated/professional black woman/man with no kids? Should a black man/woman who does not meet these standards be offended? It's not for me to judge. I only know what I as a black man want or does not want in a relationship.

This leads me to another issue addressed in a letter. I mentioned that I do know some black males who do not mine helping to stabilize existing families, but they have to cope with biological fathers attitudes or the woman not wanting anymore children. One letter suggested that many black males in this city are not in a position to help existing families and went on to say that he had no desire to be with a woman with children. Again, that is his or her prerogative.

On the topic of females being ruthless and materialistic, one brother noted that Portland does not have a corner on the market when it comes to those characteristics. He said that there are ruthless/materialistic women all over the United States, not just Oregon. The same principle applies to men also as I mentioned last time. People are products of their environments, be it dysfunctional or functional, their experiences and role models. Sometimes, we need to evaluate our past to see how we interact with people today.

The issue of inter-racial dating caused the most uproar in the last story. One brother called me at my "real job" and accused me of making his life ruff. His white girlfriend read a copy of the Observer and questioned him about how serious he was about their relationship. She didn't like the part about white women being easy to dump or the part about brothers hanging out with white women until they found the right black women. Again, the opinion shared in the last story was not a universal law. It was what worked for the person I mentioned in the first story. Sadly, one brother said that he found it very hard to deal with black women in relationships. I asked him what color is your mother? He said black of course. I then asked if he got along with her? He said no. Get the picture?

Some of the readers accused me of personally attacking them. This was not the case at all. Readers read and recognized what they wanted too. They only saw what they wanted to see. Many people go through life the same way or relationships for the matter. Then, they wonder why certain problems exist or why someone is no longer in their life.

Some of the local women were offended because the story suggested that the more ambitious sisters leave town to chase their career dreams. They were mad because it seemed like only the less ambitious ones stay here. As suggested in the last story, there are some quality black women in this city, but the fact that many leave town does not help the chances of a black male meeting a mate. Black males also leave town and never come back to Portland. Face it, black people are culturally isolated and greatly outnumbered in Oregon. I grew up in a housing project with more blacks that the entire state of Oregon within ten blocks.

Lastly, the only other real issue that surfaced was the lack of social outlets for black professionals or black people for that matter. Outside of a couple of "joke joints," there are no places for folks to gather, interact, exchange business cards, or network. I've learned to make due with what is available. As one brother noted, "I ski and don't see sisters. I go to nice jazz clubs and don't see sisters. Where are they?"

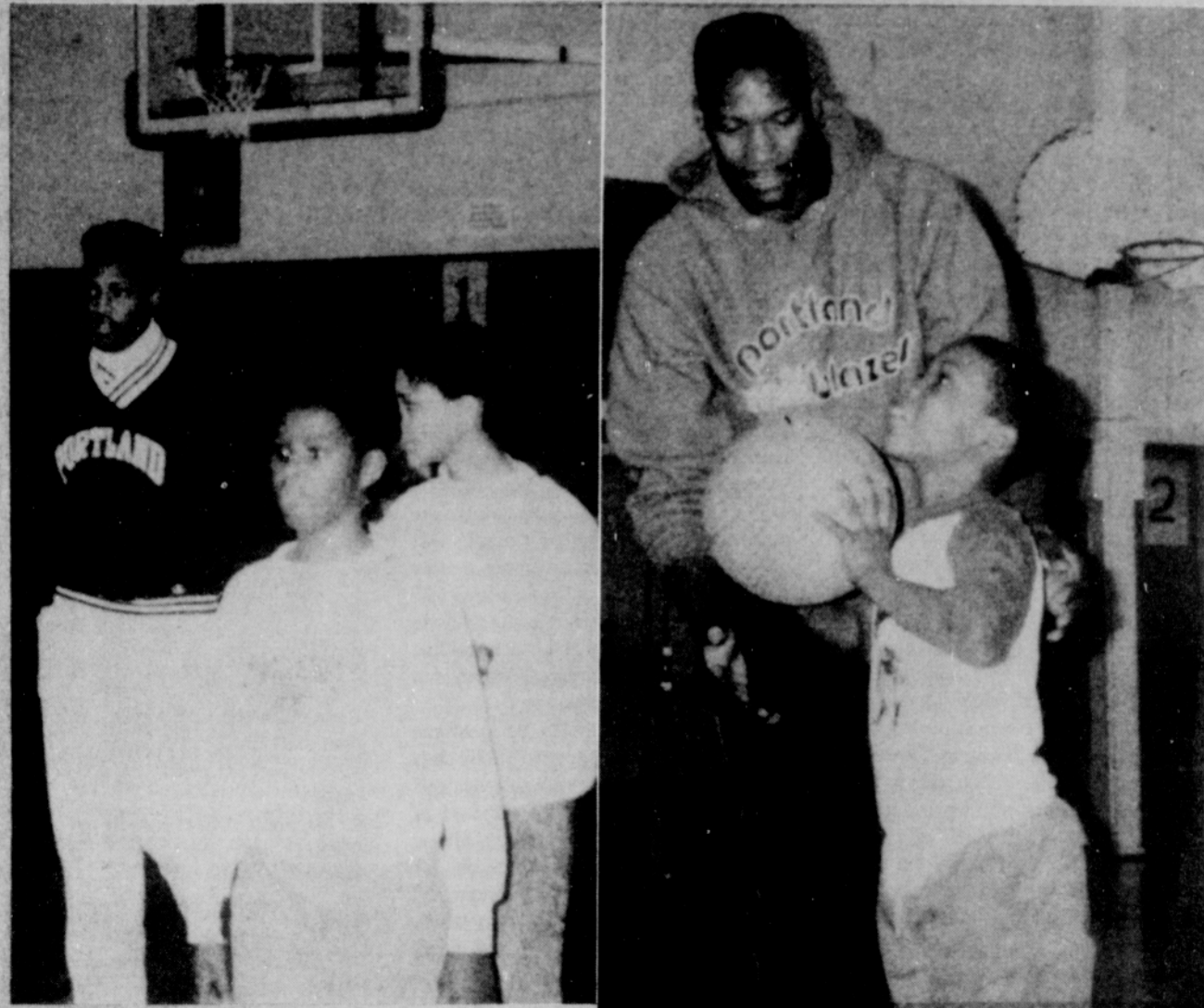
According to one active church member who called, there are some great sisters at her church and suggested that I help to organize a forum or event for black people to address this situation. There is a great need to say the least. What do you suggest?

Some say attend church regularly and others say designate a meeting spot. At one point, I'm told, that there was a regular gathering at Harrington's (downtown) where Black professionals exchange ideas and information.

Be it church, at a forum, or at a designated space or place, we still have a problem. I'm pleased to know that I helped to get the dialogue in the open and very hopeful about a forum possibility. Moving into the competitive 1990s, we need to be prepared emotionally, politically, economically, and morally.

My grandmother once told me, "... it's not so much as finding the right person, it's being the right kind of person."

Blazers Hold Clinic For Columbia Villa Youth



By Dan Bell

50 young people warmly received Portland Trailblazers Kevin Duckworth, Jerome Kersey, and coach Rick Adelman Saturday as they ran a brief basketball clinic and gave motivational speech against drug use at University Park Community Center.

The children ranged in ages from 8 to 15 and participated in basketball programs at University Park, and Matt Dishman Community Centers.

Center Director Lee Jenkins said that the clinic was a result of efforts made by Chris Shelton, a Multnomah Community

Service Officer with Multnomah County Sheriff's Office. Shelton is a member of Columbia Villa Safety Action Team, and an acquaintance of Kevin Duckworth.

The Blazer members divided their skills to instruct the kids on different aspects of basketball. Kevin Duckworth, led drills on dribbling, Jerome Kersey gave pointers in shooting techniques, and coach Adelman ran drills on defense.

Afterwards each Trailblazer gave an impromptu speech on the merits of good and responsible decision making. Focusing in on how good decision making will

make positive impact on each individual life. They stressed that the ability to make thoughtful decisions will enable them to make choices that are best for them and their future.

Lee Jenkins expressed that Saturdays event is one of several activities geared to encourage the community's youth in positive manner and to give them some positive re-enforcing experiences.

Other projects in the future are a skiing trip, with the Ebony Rose Ski Club, and possibly a wrestling safety clinic instructed by local professional wrestlers.

Local Writers Invited To Submit Poetry In Honor Of Black History Month

In honor of Black History Month, U.S. Bank is requesting poetry be submitted for publication in area newspapers. Local writers are invited to submit their original works of poetry preferably limited to 20 lines to:

U.S. Bank Public Relations
African-American Reflections
P.O. Box 8837
Portland, Oregon 97208

Deadline for entries is January 31, 1990.

All written pieces should be typed and double spaced. Please indicate whether the writer is an adult (over 18) or a young adult (13-18) or a child (12 and under), and whether the writer wishes to remain anonymous. All entries must include name, address and phone number for consideration. All entries must be original works by the submitter.

Up to 24 poems will be selected for inclusion in a special poetry section provided by U.S. Bank in local newspapers. Pieces selected will be published one time only during Black History Month, February 1990. Due to volume, pieces cannot be returned.



Samuel Pierce
Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard
by Samuel Pierce continued
next week

OAME Presented With Special Award

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) on Wednesday, Jan. 24th presented a special award of nearly \$150,000 to the Oregon Association of Minority Entrepreneurs (OAME) along with the Portland Community College (PCC) for their joint proposal to enhance the success of minority-owned businesses throughout Oregon.

Erline M. Patrick, SBA's Minority Small Business and Capital Ownership Development Associate Administrator, presented a \$149,774 check to Samuel Brooks, OAME's founder and Executive Director. In a ceremony held at the Portland City Hall.

Utilizing the resources of the PCC Small Business Development Center and OAME's extensive business network, the proposal is designed to provide technical and managerial assistance to eligible businesses.

OAME's "circuit rider" program in addition to some 20 small business development centers throughout Oregon will make accessible needed business services such as seminars, workshops and one-to-one counseling qualifying entrepreneurs statewide.

The SBA award is a result of a competitive process in which profit and non-profit organizations were asked to develop innovative programs providing management and technical assistance to disadvantaged firms.

OAME is a non-profit organization with a primary aim to promote entrepreneurship and economic development for ethnic minorities throughout Oregon. The organization operates across ethnic lines and sets out to bring ethnic minorities and non-minority businesses into productive networks.

Oregon Premiere Of 'The Meeting' On Stage At IFCC

Malcolm X. Martin Luther King. Two exceptional leaders fighting for the freedom and dignity of their people; two exceptional leaders separated by diametrically opposed methods; two exceptional leaders searching for common ground: THE MEETING, by Jeff Stetson, is a powerful enactment of a fictional encounter between Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. They come together for the first and only time in a Harlem hotel in 1965 to discuss the struggle for black equality. This meeting never took place, but Stetson has constructed a gripping, believable format to showcase the ideas and philosophies of the two men, and to probe beyond the public personae in an effort to understand the men themselves. The IFCC is proud to present the Oregon premiere of this thought-provoking script. The IFCC production reunites Rick Jones and Anthony P. Armstrong, most

recently seen together in WOZA ALBERT. Jones directs and appears as Malcolm, and Armstrong plays the role of Martin Luther King. They are joined by Brian G. Dance in the role of Rashad, Malcolm's bodyguard.

THE MEETING opens to the public with a gala benefit performance and champagne reception on February 2nd. Performances continue through March 4th, Fridays and Saturdays at 8 pm and Sundays at 2 pm. Tickets are \$25 for the opening gala which serves as a fundraiser for the IFCC, \$12 on Friday and Saturday nights, and \$11 on Sunday afternoons. Discounted group rates are available. Advance ticket purchase is a strongly recommended. The IFCC box office is open Tuesday through Friday, 3:00 to 5:30 pm and Saturday 1:00 to 4:00 pm. Call 243-7340 for ticket purchase and information.

Legislative Task Force Examines Social Service Delivery

SALEM--A legislative panel is seeking public input on a variety of social service issues, it was announced today. Representative Stein, chair of the House Task Force on Human Resource Reorganization, invites all people involved in the social service system to a meeting January 24 in the state capitol.

Stein, a first term lawmaker from Portland, said that the task force is looking into legislation for the 1991 session that would initiate a strategic planning process to develop a rational plan for delivering social services in the next century.

"In light of federal initiatives and demographic trends, we need to use the 1990s as the time to position ourselves for the future," Stein stated. "By the year 2050, 1 out of 4 U.S. citizens will be over the age of 65. We will need to educate and employ every person in order to provide all of our social needs." Stein said that the task force will be looking into reframing social problems, clarifying goals, and identifying ways to meet our social challenges in the next century.

The purpose of the January 24 meeting is to solicit input from policy makers, clients, workers, and providers involved in human resource, education, housing and job training services about the future of social service delivery in Oregon. Rep. Stein has recruited fifteen volunteer professional facilitators to guide small group discussions. Any one interested in participating at 1:00 in Room 357 of the State Capitol should contact the task force staff at 378-5781.

New Location:

Portland Observer
4747 N.E. Martin Luther
King, Jr. Blvd.
Portland, Oregon 97211

Martin Luther King, Jr. Elementary School Plant Trees For King



Community members plant living memorial in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. at Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School. Present at the ceremony are Charles Jordan Portland Parks Director, LeVern Davis Martin Luther King Jr. School Principal, Beth Stout Friends of Trees, and Ron Wyden U.S. Congressman.