



Have a safe
Fourth of July!

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Legislature's Task Force Says "Minority Teachers Don't Need Know Nuthin'--Look Who They is Teachin'"

By Professor McKinley Burt

Under the heading "Task Force Calls Teacher Test A Failure", last Tuesday's Oregonian reported that in the opinion of a legislature task force, "Oregon should scrap a basic skills test for teachers." Their findings lead to the conclusion that "The California Basic Educational Skills Test is not a test that will determine whether or not you would make a good teacher." The spokesperson was LaVonne Lobert-Edmo, a Salem student resource specialist and chairman of the Minority Teacher Task Force.

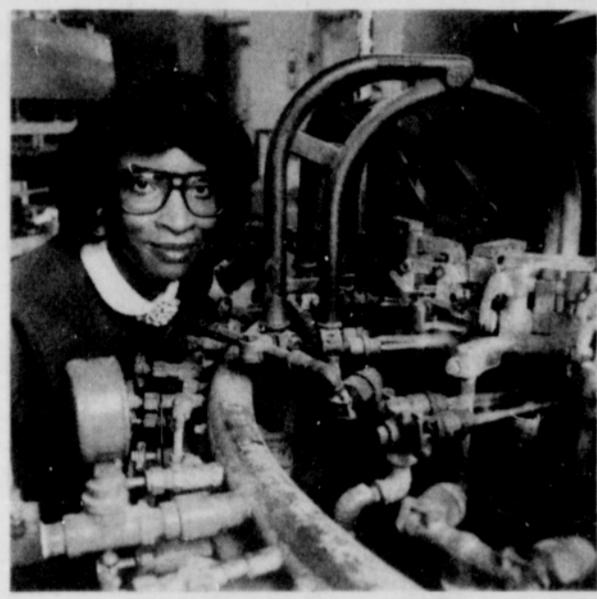
Oregon's Teacher Standards and Practices Commission voted in May to SUSPEND THE BASIC SKILLS TEST FOR 180 DAYS. Now it is suggested that a permanent educational travesty may be inflicted upon the "minority" students of this state--for it is quite certain that school principals will not allow teachers who fail the test to teach other than minority pupils. When I refer to these persons as half-literate I use the term advisedly as you can determine for yourself from the following statistics (multiple choice questions, yet).

"During the 1988-89 school year in Oregon, about 55 percent of the 152 minority persons taking the California test passed. Eleven of 25 black test takers passed; 19 of 47 Hispanics passed. By contrast, 2,413, or 80 percent, of 3,027 white test takers passed."

That makes it quite obvious what it is exactly that the test does determine; large numbers of our populations have suffered educational disabilities which have assured them a listing among those who will be unable to compete or otherwise effectively interface in today's world of technology and increasingly sophisticated workplaces. But, it would seem that we have those who would empower these failures to transfer their disabilities to yet another generation. And it seems like only yesterday that we had to put down the assault of the

neo-primitives who wished to introduce "Black English" or similar degeneracies into an already defective curriculum.

The oldest of canards has been trotted out: "But because the exam,



General Electric Co. engineering apprentice; Do you think that a "skills test" failure taught her?

like most standardized tests, is biased against minority groups', teacher-training schools are looking for 'other' ways to assess a teacher's basic skills... WHAT THE TESTS ARE BIASED AGAINST IS IGNORANCE!--An ignorance of the basic skills and techniques (math and language) necessary to decode the elaborate data base of knowledge which supports our contemporary culture. And whose fault is that?

There is little need to cite again the litany of educational debacles and inequities that have brought about this horrendous situation--this newspaper and other media across the country have detailed the problem ad infinitum. Parents, taxpayers and a "minority" of effective educators have screamed almost in vain for too long--ever since that Catholic priest in Chicago wrote, "Why Johnny Can't Read", and that was decades ago (to be followed on

years later by his second book, "Why Johnny Still Can't Read"). The book "Cultural Literacy" is an excellent exercise in middle class polemics (intellectual masturbation), but hardly addresses the problem of a seriously flawed delivery system for providing a decent educational product to our children.

Rather than continue the "litany of inequities", I prefer to re-emphasize the "Success Models" which were described in last week's front page article and in the "Perspectives" column. We were told of the exemplary accomplishments of 22 nationally-recognized principals who are successively educating African American children at the same level (or better) as white pupils in their cities ("National Association of Schools of Excellence"). Further, we saw that this quite feasible methodology had been packaged into a manual and video and delivered to every school principal in the state of Oregon: "Partners For Success: Business and Education." National distribution will follow.

And it was in the Perspectives column that we described the one hundred year-old model of Bishop Daniel Payne's "classic curriculum" for "free Negroes" in the antebellum South. And the fantastic accomplishments of the Black Catholic priest, Father Clements, whose classic school is the model pursued by hundreds of thousands of African American parents in revolt against the educational travesty imposed upon them by an uncaring and inept school district.

I know that this week I promised "specific science models and role models, but this local travesty required our immediate attention. On page nine of this issue be sure to see our feature on Miss Tara Louise Johnson, a high-achieving African American student who obviously was not taught by teachers who failed the California Basic Educational Skills Test.

At Least \$500,000 for Metro Area Gang Prevention Approved Representatives, AuCoin Announces

At the request of Congressman Les AuCoin (D-First District), the House of representatives today approved at least \$500,000 for Multnomah County gang prevention efforts. The funds were part of a \$5 million appropriation for such programs nationwide.

"The Crips and Bloods from Los Angeles travel up I-5 to our neighborhoods to recruit vulnerable young people," AuCoin said. "So finally, at long last, Congress is starting to see this for what it is--a national problem. This \$5 million nationwide is a recognition that we've got to pay a heck of a lot of attention to prevention so that we can change the conditions that allow gangs to get their hooks into our kids."

The action by the House today will expand juvenile justice and delinquency prevention programs dealing with juvenile gangs, drug abuse, and drug trafficking. At least \$500,000 is recommended for Multnomah County's demonstration project which is designed

to restructure the value systems of gang involved youth.

Over the course of two years the Multnomah County demonstration project evolved during a series of meetings AuCoin held with juvenile counselors and outreach workers.

The Congressman pointed out that there are a number of excellent programs in the Portland area designated to combat the growth of gang violence. "While studying Portland's gang problem, it became clear to me that what was needed in Multnomah County was a coordination of efforts and a developed comprehensive approach to fighting gang activities."

The Multnomah County project's focus is on restructuring the value systems of gang-involved youth, restraining them in healthier alternatives to drug and alcohol abuse and addiction, building positive, socially acceptable behavior patterns by providing skill de-

velopment activities, and providing isolation from other gang members.

Young people are attracted to gangs for the support and feeling of importance which is missing in their lives, AuCoin explained. "Putting kids in jail or throwing them in McLaren does not solve the problem. It only delays it. The goal of this program is to give these kids the intensive training and support they need to make the decision to walk away from gang activity," he added.

Addressing the bill's approval on the floor of the House, Jimmy Brown, Multnomah County Juvenile Counselor and co-author of the demonstration project said, "This is the federal help we've been looking for. We've been working with Congressman AuCoin on this project for the last year, and it's great to see these results."

Sharon McCormack, chairperson of the Youth Gang Task Force, said "the Youth Gang Task Force is terribly

Twenty Thousand Rotary International Conventioneers Visit Portland

The Four-Day Convention Draws People From Around the World

by Angelique Sanders

Twenty thousand people, from varying regions of the world, converged in Portland this week for the Rotary International Convention, promoting fellowship as well as boosting the local economy.

Numerous worldwide cities bid on the privilege of receiving the 81st annual Rotarian convention; "Portland Wonderland" (as a Rotary pamphlet refers to the Rose City) won the final verdict.

The Rotary Club's purpose is to spread fellowship and goodwill through enlisting members/volunteers and, through fundraising, to "take on" various humanitarian projects on a community level. Recent projects of the Portland-area chapters of Rotary International include Meals on Wheels (which supplies meals to homebound elderly and otherwise restricted persons), Reading Tree (a summertime reading program to encourage youth literacy), and Village Corps (a block of residence intended to fight drugs and other community nuisances).

The first Rotarian project was in Chicago in 1905: the objective was to install "comfort stations" (restrooms) in the City Hall. The Rotary Club, though their efforts were only partially successful at that venture, set a precedence for future Rotarian projects, as well as offshoot service programs.

Four years ago, an RI project was to make the polio vaccine more

readily available to those in need in underdeveloped nations. Through the efforts of the club, the single vaccination cost dropped from \$2.00 to \$0.20, and distribution increased dramatically. Last year, at the Albina Spring Festival, the 41 Albina chapter members raised

found 700 Rotarians servicing as airport "greeters", welcoming an estimated 8,000 people into Blazer hometown.

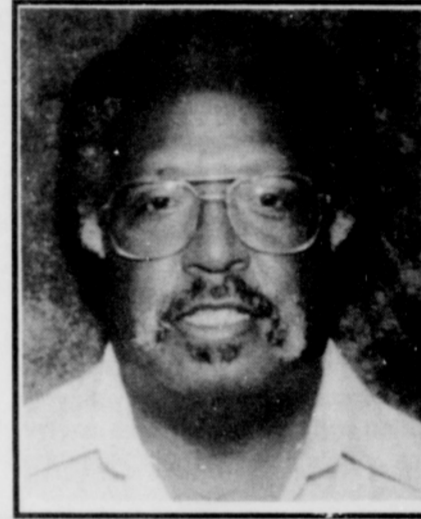
The first (and only other) time Portland hosted the annual convention was in 1911, while the club was still on a national level. Only 149 Rotary members made it here, but the friendships that sprang up en route proved fortunate: that same year, the Rotary Club became an international organization. Today, the 85 year-old RI has 20,000 members spread throughout over 100 countries worldwide.

This year's activities included fellowship meetings to unite members, sightseeing excursions, social lunches, as well as a festival at the South Park Blocks downtown on Tuesday. Next year's convention sight is Mexico City.

"I haven't seen a frown yet," beamed the president-elect (one-year president as of July 6) of the Albina chapter, Robert Butler. "It's really a good thing for Portland."

This year in Portland, the local chapters are hosting a foreign exchange student from Brazil, and giving a U.S. student the opportunity to cross-culturalize in a one-year Brazilian stay.

Robert Butler encourages new Rotary members. If you live and work in the Albina district and are interested in joining, contact any Rotary member or call Butler at 287-1745.

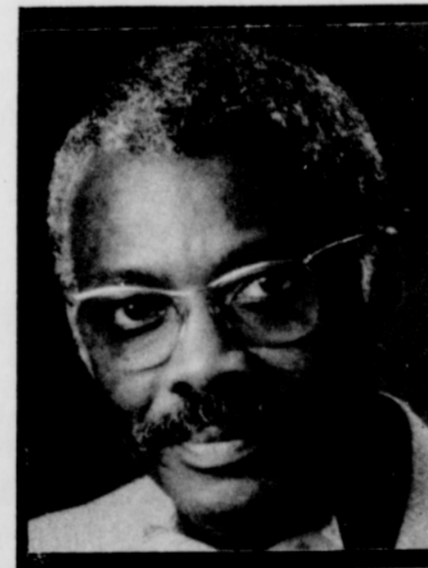


Robert Butler, President-Elect of Albina's Rotary Club

enough money and volunteered their time to serve free hot dogs and hamburgers. It went over well; they served over 1,000 hungry festival-goers, and the City of Portland invited them to display a float in 1989's Rose Festival. Despite the Rotarians' decision to decline (due to low policing funds), this year they have opted to accept.

Additionally, last Saturday

Local Photographer Earns Trip to Washington, D.C.



Richard Brown, selected by Smithsonian to be honored in America's capital

years in the service, which took him all over the world, he concentrated on photographing people.

His commitment to portraying people as they are, unreluctant on stereotypes, has marked his work since that

"Brown's commitment to people has extended to active participation in his community's political life."

time. This commitment is obvious in his photographs of Black people which show Black American experience and life in a positive light not often in media images.

Since 1979, Brown has been a freelance photographer in Portland, Oregon. His work has appeared with us, as well as with the *Oregonian*, *Willamette Week*, *The Oregon Magazine*, *Clinton Street Quarterly*, *The Skanner*, *The Catholic Sentinel*, *CISPES Alert*, and in national publications such as *Ebony*, *Newsweek*, *Black Enterprise*, and *The Guardian*.

Brown's commitment to people has extended to active participation in his community's political life. This involvement allows him to maintain a

fresh perspective on a wide range of subjects.

In 1985 Brown travelled to Nicaragua representing the Portland Rainbow Coalition and applied his humanistic approach to photographic documentation in that country. The settings in which they find themselves. Although avoiding the "blood and guts" photos typical of photographic reports from war-torn countries, his work is profoundly moving and enables people to remain open enough to question the circumstances surrounding the people's lives he depicts.

Brown won an "Excellence in Journalism Award" in 1985 from the Society of Professional Journalists for a photograph essay on Black life in Oregon in the *Clinton Street Quarterly*. His work has been included in several group shows with the Black Artists' Guild, of which he was a founding member. His work has been included in several group shows with the Black Artists' Guild, of which he was a founding member. His work has also been displayed in shows in the Photographic Image Gallery, the Federal Building, Victoria's Nephew, the White Gallery, the Camerawork Gallery, the Portland Building, the Mayor's office and the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center. Brown serves on the Executive Photographers' Forum.

The Portland Observer is the Official
Newspaper of the African-American Festival