

# PORTLAND OBSERVER 25¢

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"The Eyes and Ears of The Community"

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### NEWS

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## Barnum & Bailey Circus and Clown Mike Keever to Visit Portland to Promote Reading Program

□ "Cowboy Mike" Keever will bring his "magic time machine" to students at King Elementary this Thursday, in an effort to promote students' reading enthusiasm

When Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus Clown, Mike Keever, comes to town to conduct "RINGLING READERS", you can be sure he'll bring along his size 36 shoes, red bulbous nose, orange wig and an important message for children in the Portland area--reading is fun!

A nationwide program designed to encourage children to read, "RINGLING READERS" is sponsored in cooperation with Reading Is Fundamental (RIF), a national non-profit organization founded to promote reading. This year's all-new, 25 minute, live presentation will feature "Cowboy Mike" Keever and his magical time machine performing for Martin Luther King Elementary school at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday, September 6.

Children from King, as well as other Portland schools have been invited on a special field trip to participate in the program at THE AMERICAN ADVERTISING MUSEUM located at 9 N.W. Second in Portland. The field trip is sponsored by local Burger King restaurants and their community representatives Doris Bray, Mary Jorzig, Felita Burton and Charlene Gordon. Burger King is assisting schools with money for the field trips, and the community representatives will be serving students punch and cookies at the Museum.

To show children that "Reading Lets You Imagine", Cowboy Mike will take them on an exciting tour through time. An imagination time machine, run in part by children's own imaginations, allows them to discover, through



Pictured above and below are students at Martin Luther King Elementary school on Northeast Seventh and Alberta.



books, how life was in days gone by and how it might look in the future. The program strives to encourage kids to develop their imaginations and create a renewed enthusiasm for reading.

In addition, each youngster attending the program will receive the latest edition of *The Ringling Reporter*, an 8-page newspaper containing fun and fact-filled stories about the Circus. Each story was written and edited especially for children by RIF.

Immediately following the

"RINGLING READERS" program, students and teachers will tour the Advertising Museum's current exhibit BROADSHEETS, BOMBAST, and BALLYHOO: The History of Circus Advertising.

"RINGLING READERS" sponsor Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus will be at Portland's Memorial Coliseum September 12-16 with nine exciting performances. Tickets are on sale at the Coliseum Box Office and GI Joe's TicketMaster Outlets.

## BUSINESS PROFILE

### Marlon McClain

Co-President/Nu-Vision Records & Darkhorse Entertainment



MCCLAIN

BY ULLYSSES TUCKER, JR.

Marlon McClain is no stranger to the music industry, especially in the city of Portland. Throughout the sixties and seventies, Marlon played with the Soul Masters and Pleasure, one of the most successful groups to come out of the Pacific Northwest. During the eighties, he released a solo album, "Changes", and played with Maurice White, Jeff Lorber, Kenny G., and the Dazz Band to name a few. He also produced gold records for Kenny G and Nu-Shooze. If the first nine months of 1990 are any indication of his success to come this decade, music industry experts had better start to paying attention to the "darkhorse" running a strong race here in the city of Portland. Currently, he is producing Curtis Selgado, a very sassy blues man and launched New projects like the U-KREW and Dennis Springer (see entertainment page). Springer, a sax player, recently released album ("Rio") is destined to do well nationally.

At 35, McClain is not content with how others perceive his music career. He believes hard work and perfection of one's ability and product. McClain says that lazy people and egos don't progress far in the music industry.

When the Observer caught up with McClain, it was after 10 PM and he was waiting for a telephone call to Japan. He had spent the previous eleven hours in the studio (Falcon Studio) working on

the Selgado project. He stays busy these days. It seems like everyone wants him to hear a demo tape, a band, or producer an album. McClain lives by his monthly planner and sushi, the food he loves most. He also enjoys boating and McClain is single.

Portland Observer-Darkhorse Records, what does that symbolize-are you truly a darkhorse?

McClain-"Basically, we started the company and named it "Darkhorse" because it's something that can come from behind and win. It's a good way to describe what your concept is about. I would say i regards to seeing potential and being able to take it from the developmental stage, I've always been successful in doing that. Groups like the Dan Reed Network, U-DREW, my early work with Nu-Shooze, and Jeff Lorber Fusion were all unknown talents with great potential. People didn't believe that they had this potential. I've always been in a position to realize this potential and I guess from that aspect, I guess the darkhorse premise is true...

Portland Observer-Have you always been an underdog or darkhorse and if so, is this the reason why you take chances on darkhorses?

McClain-"Yes, I've been the darkhorse or underdog. I've always enjoyed the challenges of being the underdog too. Usually when someone says that something or someone is not happening, I try very hard to prove that it is. Sometimes, you must take chances to prove that these things can happen, but the rewards are greater than the risk. For example, let's look at the cases of the Dan Reed Network, U-KREW, and Dennis Springer-my partner (Mike Mavrolas) and I are investing in some product that we think is happening. We're spending our own money on our label, Nu-Vision Records, to create a certain amount of activity in the Northwest, and hopefully get major record companies interested. Now, all of these groups deal on a major label and this would not have happened had we not invested in these people. We made some noise."

Portland Observer-It's one thing to be in a position to take economic risk on new talent, but actually having talent is another issue. You can't create an overnight sensation. The artist must bring something to the party-what do you look for in potential investments?

McClain-"Talent, number one. CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

## Whom Shall We Educate--Student or Parent?

by Professor McKinley Burt

It is not an 'either/or' situation, but hold that for a moment. First, let me congratulate and offer encouragement to all the many devoted parents and guardians of Portland school children. It is you who will entrust your young ones to a process that should prove to be a time of educational challenge and renewed friendships. As I said last week in my article, "Welcome Back to School," we hope that this newspaper with its summer-long advocacy for 'Educational Excellence' has been able to reach the school administration with its forthright critiques of policy. Having said that, let us begin a series of examinations of the roles and concerns of the parents in this district -- a process we would expect to enhance the learning environment of the system as a whole. Though our earlier evaluations have been directed primarily to the classroom, teacher and administration, we have by no means failed to recognize the key

role played by the home. Nor have we underestimated the negative impact there of adverse social and economic conditions that can seriously impede academic performance.

What we did do early on (and for the past three years) was to point out that there existed in this nation a number of model situations which portray the very essence of "Education Excellence," and that access to the methodology and guidelines;xxz that made these achievements possible is not very difficult at all. This is true, of course, only if 'those in charge' have a serious and committed intent to repair the disabilities of so many failing systems. As we have been aware, in many cases, the remedy can come about only through the intervention of the public at large -- AND THE PARENT, SPECIFICALLY!

I had this in mind when suggesting to our readers that they obtain from Portland's "Albina Ministerial Association" a copy of that very useful book and

video, "Partners for Success: Business and Education" (\$9.95). The clearly written information and formulas for educational excellence described by 'successful' school principals support my contention that these are readily available and documented examples of educational excellence in current practice around this nation. Therefore, there is no excuse whatsoever for any school district to claim that its doing the best it can "in face of governmental restraints and mandates and the traumatic economic condition of the parents" -- when, in fact, districts with half its resources are winning national acclaim for their efforts. GET THE BOOK!

Throughout this series we shall endeavor to provide Portland parents with a number of relevant materials that can assist them in interacting with the system in an effective manner. For example, let us recommend the following not-to-large or complicated book -- perfect for an age of planned confusion where school

district employed statisticians are extremely well paid to manipulate the figures on the academic performance of your children. This common-sense introduction to the art is "How to Think About Statistics," by John A. Philip, Jr., W.H. Freeman and Co., 1988 ed.

Although there are many other applications for this knowledge and insight, every parent with a child in school should keep in mind, "You can be informed by statistics or fooled by them, but you can't escape them!" I have found this manual extremely useful and recommend it without reservation. Only arithmetic is required for the minimum computations, making it an excellent tool for those who have had 'no course in statistics.' When I speak of "planned confusion," I have in mind not only those periodic grade performance bulletins issued by school districts -- especially when under fire -- but also the esoteric and rarefied atmosphere where SAT scores are published, examined and assessed according to conflicting objec-

tives or personal agendas.

There is much more of course to this business of being a caring and effective parent of children who will be entrusted to this process of "educational challenge" where the results can be rewarding beyond expectations or can be "terminal." As I have reminded you at other times, we are in a "technological age" where excellence in science and mathematics -- as well as basic skills -- will be a prerequisite to a meaningful position in the workforce and the gauge of life-time earnings. Many parents will not under ordinary circumstances possess the economic means to provide the home environment conducive to learning activities of this level. We will want to deal with this.

I believe I have spoken to this situation in the past and what I shall explore in this series is a way -- economic and social -- that 'all' parents and the community can formulate and implement an organized effort to overcome this disability. If "Avon(R)" can deliver cos-

metics and jewelry into 'disadvantages' homes, then surely a caring community can deliver an educational product to the same consumer. I gave relevant descriptions of my early and middle childhood learning environments where there was provided every motivational tool and aid from science books and magazines to construction and scientific toys (Erector sets, chemistry sets, models of flora and fauna and the like).

I would like also to present a great deal of information and suggestions on proven, positive activities for youngster. Which can have a relevance to educational excellence as well as recreational value. There will be much else that should be part of a caring and supporting home environment -- things that a school system cannot and should not attempt. A lot of the resources available to accomplish these tasks are more readily available, and less expensive than we think. Please follow this series; we 'can' bring about a change if we have the energy, will and commitment.