



PERSPECTIVES

By Professor McKinley Burt

The New Year: How New is It?

I say "that is up to us." We will take charge or we will remain a foot ball of fate. Some of us have waited since 1965 for that manna from the 'fed': Mules, land, jobs, equity, parity, equality, education, sympathy, surcease, compensation, retribution, loans, grants, set-asides, gifts, you name it.

Has fate been unjust? I'm certain that is exactly what the dinosaur exclaimed as he gazed in consternation at the incoming meteors; just hours before the extinction of that great lumbering species, caught in an ecological niche that spelled EXTINCTION! The question of an unjust fate was, of course mute (remember, "the slings and arrows of an outrageous fate"). A better question is, where these creatures had no schools, libraries, scientists, inventors, technologies, etc.-Why could a race in possession of such an infrastructure allow the same fate to overtake them?

As I have mentioned here before, at this newspaper we receive copies of other African American newspapers from all over the country. These, in conjunction with the establishment press, make us witness to a nationwide phenomenon-a see thing cauldron of organizations and individuals, leaders and would be leaders, true believers and the television per-

sonalities, new 'saviors' and new 'sermons on the mount-a potpurri of goals and ... objective, often illdefined and at cross-purposes, all promising to save the species from extinction (remember that plaintive cry, "Black Power"?).

We plow through this morass of directions, opinions and conclusions-educate them, empower them, vote them, finance them in business, imprison all the rascals, elect "me"-and we end up with the same problem faced by a computer operator tackling an unorganized database. If the "New Year" is to be "new" in any fashion or aspect, then, certainly, we are going to have to sort out the priorities, separate fact from fiction, and be about some realistic, attainable goals (individuals and organizations, alike).

Whereas I would not dare to prescribe a national goal for an entire race of people, I do feel qualified to make some observations about the achievement of a "personal best." And, really, perhaps the latter is what any of us can really do well-a realizable goal, even when the broader interfacers would seem to offer only frustration or inertia. In this context I am looking back through the four big notebooks where I keep in calendar order copies of all the articles I've ever written for this "Perspectives" column.

I have decided that there is nothing "new" I would do this year-just try to be better at what I've been about all the time. And that is providing information and, hopefully, insight which will enable readers to better engage the complicated society in which we must all function. It

...occurs that if we were all to work at achieving a "personal best" ("Letdown your bucket where you are"), it may be that such an escalation of effort, standards, discipline and commitment could very well see one much better able to sort through that "morass" I described earlier.

As you've seen through the years, one to put things in a context of "reality and experience". Looking back through those four notebooks of Perspectives (and front page) articles, I realize that this is not a "new" thing I contemplate for 1991-just better package that material into a "personal best." This means a better structure for delivering to the nation that information which a number of readers and educators have described as "the best, documented 'Baseline Essay that in this country you should be able to material" they have seen anywhere "originated right here in Portland."

I'm with you folks, and that electronic interface and industry support I described in November and December is up and running-better each day. The lawyer and copyright office are kept busy-as are Federal Express and United Parcel, delivering material to those first clients in other cities (you've heard about "a prophet in his own land").

I wrote one of those infrequent letters to my father the other day (he's 95); "I always wondered what I'd do during my seventies and eighties. I'm setting up the stage. Yours, Junior." Are wistful New Years' resolutions really needed folks? Lets' all just KEEP ON KEEP ON! We 'can' bring about change.

Oregon Legal Services Corporation Receives grant to Implement Statewide Fair Housing Project

The Oregon Legal Services Corporation (OLS), a non-profit state-wide legal aid organization, has launched a statewide Fair Housing Project to ensure that federal fair housing laws are being observed in Oregon. The Project is made possible by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Federal Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination in housing decisions based on race, color, religion, national origin, sex, familial status (children) and handicap. The Fair Housing Project provides objective, professional investigations in response to complaints alleging housing discrimination in violation of this law.

"This program has the potential of securing the housing that many Oregonians want but cannot get. Our message is that in this country you should be able to live where you want," commented Ira Zarov, the Executive Director of Oregon Legal Services.

Throughout the state, people can call 1-800-424-FAIR to make a complaint. The Project will decide if there are reasonable grounds to investigate. If the Project decides to test, it will send out two trained investigators, or "testers," to seek the same housing that was denied to the complainant. The testers, who will match the profile of the complainant except for the grounds of the complaint, are then sent to the same rental or sales office to seek housing and to record the treatment they received.

For example, if the black complainant alleges racial discrimination, the Project would send out a white and a black tester. If the test produces strong evidence of a violation of the Fair Housing Act, the Project will provide information to the complainant regarding his or her rights and will refer him or her to a private or Legal Aid lawyer and/or the appropriate government agency.

One of the Project's goals is to help people get into the housing that was de-

nied to them illegally. However, the Project's basic goal is to educate both landlords and home seekers about the requirements of the fair housing laws. The Fair Housing Testing Project is a free service. The Oregon Fair Housing Project is holding a free informational forum on the Fair Housing Project on January 10, 1991. Representatives from government agencies, religious organizations and social services are expected to attend. State Representative Judy Bauman will be on hand to provide her remarks.

The forum will present an overview of how the program works, how to recognize the signs of housing discrimination and will also provide those in attendance a chance to meet other members of our community involved in human services issues. The forum will be held at 4:00 PM, Portland Building, 1120 S.W. Fifth, Second Floor, Room C, Portland, Oregon. For more information call: Ira Zarov at 234-1534.

According to Readers Digest January 1991

really upset, so I don't want to say anything right now. Go play, and I'll come get you when I'm calm."

2. Give Your Child A Fair Hearing. "Listen to the end, no matter what you are being told," one father advises. "If you blow up before listening to the whole story, be ready to apologize."

3. Say It With Love. Affection can heal harsh moments. It's a silent sign that no matter what disagreements or conflicts arise, as long as people can touch, they can eventually talk.

4. Value Your Child's Opinion. The best parents are those who persist in a decision, no matter how much their kids disagree. Decisiveness, however, doesn't mean ignoring kids. Children accept decisions better when they're at least consulted, and they also consider themselves as a valued part of the whole family.

TAKE A HIKE: NATURE'S PERFECT MEDICINE

Poor fitness is as dangerous as smoking or high cholesterol, according to a study by the Institute for Aerobics Research in Dallas. The good news is that moderate physical workouts can reduce the odds of dying of heart disease, cancer and other causes.

In an excerpt from "Walking Medicine," Gary Yanker and Kathy Burton explain how a sensible walking program-30 minutes a day at a brisk pace-can improve your physical and emotional well-being dramatically. Here's what else

walking can do for you:

1. Ease Aches and Pains. Muscles and joints stiffen and atrophy when not used regularly. Walking-including stretching and strengthening exercises-and is the best defense because it keeps the body flexible without subjecting it to too much stress.

High-impact activities, like running and aerobics, make your feet hit the ground with a force equal to two to four times your weight.

2. Reduce Stress. Stressful events shift the nervous system into high gear. Heart rate and blood pressure rise, and muscles tense. Dr. Claude Miller, a New York psychiatrist, recommends a brisk 15-minute walk whenever tension builds, as well as two hours before bedtime if you have insomnia.

3. Strengthen Your Heart. Brisk walking forces the heart to pump harder to deliver more oxygen to muscles. This extra pumping trains the heart to work more efficiently and thus beat more slowly than the heart of an out-of-shape person. Walking is the exercise most doctors prescribe.

4. Helps You Lose Weight. After age 25, your metabolism-how fast your body burns fuel-slows, and fat becomes harder to shed. To lose weight, most of us cut calories until we've achieved our goal, then go back to our old ways. The best way to stay thin is to cut calories and to exercise.

...And Justice For All by Angelique Sanders

In honor of the first of January, I am addressing who I would give year-end awards to, in various categories.

Who, in 1990, did the most to further racial equality?

-There's a fine line between being popular in mainstream American and selling yourself out to it (are you listening, Bill Cosby?). Spike Lee never TRIED to hit it big with white folk, but it's happening. And he's giving whites a better understanding of black culture, yet he never lost his "brother" hood.

-It takes strength enough for anybody to oppose North Carolina's powerful Senator Jesse Helms (whom I like to think of as a paranoid Joseph McCarthy II)...but that's exactly what Harvey Gantt did this year. Though he lost, it was a close race, and Gantt has a strong chance to win if he runs again: after all, he became the first-ever black mayor in Charlotte (a city with a population that's 75% white) and won his re-election bid. We're behind you, Gantt, win or lose...

-Through taking his message on the road, Nelson Mandela inspired courage in people of all races...he's this decade's Martin Luther King, Jr. His release from prison was great, but he won't be free until he can vote.

-Doug E. Doug, I thank you for your poem "Dead Bird": "Dead Bird, Yo Dead Bird Get up and fly." (If you think that's sadistic, you're missing the point.)

Honorable mention:

-Barbara Roberts...sure, she's not black, but you don't have to be to fight for blacks: she's done a lot in her Secretary of State position, and will do much more as Governor (she told me once that she's looking out for Northeast Portland, and the reform ideas she detailed showed me she's on the right track).

-Ron Herndon (We didn't agree all the time, but you're definitely fighting for what you feel is right...I know your fire for equality shall never die.)

-Darryl Tukufu (I'm sure I speak for everyone in Northeast when I say "thanks" for being who you are)

-Artist Eileen Kane, for her incredible heart-wrenching pieces on blacks -Jesse Jackson's group PUSH: many did not agree with their stance on the Nike controversy, but the underlying theme was, "Blacks, we have monetary power, take charge!" and this was a long overdue message.

Dishonorable mention

-Milli "Not Really" Vanilli: Thanks, guys...your reluctance to try to succeed

on your own merits puts a pock on black musicians.

-2 Live "As Trashy as They Wanna Be" Crew: Good Lord, men, did you learn morality? Your lyrics certainly thrash on sisters...apparently, you're not concerned with the ill effects your songs could have.

-Marion Barry: You've been a tremendous mayor, but a terrible role model (as well as a hypocrite, for your anti-drug message).

Portland Graffiti of the Year Best political message: "Vietnam II: No way!"

Best wording: "Max is Portland's Death Trolley" (with two deaths since MAX's start, I'd hardly consider it a "death trolley", but this message still shows great concern)

Best social message: The spray-painted humans, played on sidewalks (done by P.S.U. students in recognition of Hiroshima)

Best environmental message: "Resist! Bring back the wolf"

Best attempt at a message: "Think less, feel more"...I see the point to this, but it seems people aren't thinking enough, either.

Best overall message: "T.V. is the opiate of the masses"

STREET SMARTS: More young school-age children are killed each year in pedestrian accidents than in any other type of accident, according to the National Center for Health Statistics. And another study says parents may be partly to blame because they overestimate their children's street-crossing skills.

In a Seattle survey of 2,464 parents of children in kindergarten through fourth grade, researchers found that one-third of parents allowed kindergarten-age children to cross residential streets alone and first-graders to walk alone to school. "Speeding traffic or lack of safe places to walk did not influence parents in limiting their children's crossings," according to a study, conducted by the Harborview Injury Prevention and Research Center and the University of Washington in Seattle.

WHY SOME KIDS LISTEN: Child-rearing experts frequently give advice about how to communicate with children. Ray Gurendi, author of "Back to the Family," interviewed 100 successful families to find out best ways to communicate with kids. Here are some of his findings.

1. Avoid Heated Words. Parents' emotions are so closely linked to their children's well-being that no parent is calm all the time. Yet the more worked up they become, the more likely they are to say something they can't unsay.

When an issue threatens to get out of hand, one mother tells her kids: "I'm

Portland NCNW Chapter President Speaks Out

"As the president of the Portland section of the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) I felt that it was incumbent upon me in the leadership role to write a letter to the community as we prepare ourselves to enter a new year. Our leader Mary McLeod Bethune founded the NCNW in 1935. Mary McLeod Bethune's legacy reads as follows:

"I leave you love...I leave you hope...I leave you the challenge of developing confidence in one another...I leave you a thirst for education...I leave you a respect for the use of power...I leave you faith...I leave you racial dignity...I leave you a desire to live harmoniously with your fellow man...I leave you, finally, a responsibility to our young people."

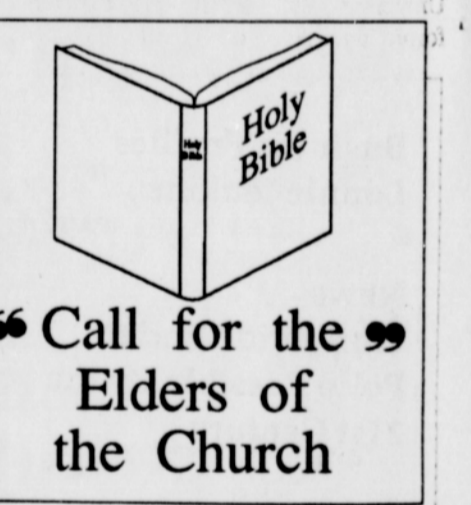
"I leave you finally a responsibility to our young people." As a community, we must accept responsibility for our young people. As we read the newspapers, we are inundated with articles and stastics about our young African American children killing each other. What is the answer? Why? What can we as a community do to stop these insane violent actions of our children? Well, I don't know all the answers, but I do know that there are some actions that we as parents, grandparents, aunt and uncles can do. We all know that our children are killing each other over wearing certain colors, mostly red and blue. As guardians, we can become more aware of the color of clothing that we buy for our children. Sure, I know that as parents we can buy anything in any color that we want for our children. I agree with you totally. But, at this point in society in our community and elsewhere, African American children are being killed because of wearing certain colors. Also, African American children are being labeled because of wearing these colors.

"I leave you finally a responsibility to our young people." We control the purse strings, we can control what our children wear. There are popular "Starter Jack-ets" that our African American children have turned into "Gang Attire." African American children are assaulting each other because of these "Starter Jack-

ets." I ask that you as guardians think real seriously before you allow your children to wear this attire.

"I leave you, finally, a responsibility to our young people." These words ring very dear and loud in my heart. Mothers, fathers, grandmothers, and grandfathers, we have seen too many of our young African American youth lying in the street dead "shot to death" by another African American youth. What a waste of life. What are we going to do? What can we do? I call now upon the grandmothers to insist that their grandchildren "Stop this violent behavior." I know that we are of age and should be enjoying "the fruit of our labor." But, I challenge you grandmothers who have the innate strength and wisdom of Harriet Tubman (she never lost a passenger when she was the conductor of the underground railroad). We lost eight African American youth this year. The fortitude of Sojourner Truth, who although she was jeered and heckled by those around her when she fought for womens rights, she stood tall, in the dedication and commitment of education by Mary McLeod Bethune who with \$1.50 and five children founded the first accredited college by an African American woman. These are the names of a few African American women who have helped us to get where we are today. Grandmothers as we begin this New Year, let's pray and once again use that "innate strength" that we know we have to get our "grandchildren" off the streets. I know we can do it! We have to do it! We must save our grandchildren!

Now, some groups have called for a boycott of Portland Public Schools. I ask that as grandmothers we send our children to school those days not only send them, but let's go with them. Let's turn this threat of a boycott into something positive. Let's attend school those days with our "grandchildren", the "future of tomorrow." Then, let's not stop there, let's visit the schools. Let's go stand in the cafeteria every morning doing breakfast, sit in the classrooms during the morning, stand in the cafeteria during lunch. Sure, we want to raise our chil-



Call for the Elders of the Church

dren's test scores, but let us as grandmothers do our part. Ministers, let's come from behind the pulpit and visit the schools also. Wouldn't it be wonderful if all ministers knew the names of the schools and administrative staff where their parishioners children attend?

The Bible says call for the 'Elders' of the church. I'm calling for elders, deacons, ushers, Sunday school superintendents, and teachers. We can help to raise the test scores but we must do our part. "I leave you finally, a responsibility to our young people."

The National Council of Negro women in their drive for excellence has now in place their "NCNW Excellence in Teaching Award" as part of its national promotion of excellence in education in the 1990's as we head toward the 21st century.

Now, as president of the Portland section of The National Council of Negro Women, I leave with you this poem for our grandchildren:

Don't use or sell dope because there is hope. Don't fight or kill each other over wearing colors, Because we're all sisters and brothers.

Don't get involved with, join or associated with gangs, Because it's time, it's it's time, it's high time to make a change!

Happy New Year Edna Mae Pitman President NCNW, Portland Section

**PORTLAND OBSERVER**  
 (USPS 959-680)  
 OREGON'S OLDEST AFRICAN AMERICAN PUBLICATION  
 Established in 1970

Alfred L. Henderson  
 Publisher

Joyce Washington  
 Operations Manager

Gary Ann Garnett  
 Business Manager

Leon Harris  
 Editorial Manager

The PORTLAND OBSERVER is published weekly by Exle Publishing Company, Inc. 4747 N.E. M.L.K., Jr. Blvd. Portland, Oregon 97211 P.O. Box 3137 Portland, Oregon 97208 (503) 288-0033 (Office) FAX#: (503) 288-0015

Deadlines for all submitted materials:  
 Articles: Monday, 5 p.m. -- Ads: Tuesday, 5 p.m.

POSTMASTER: Send Address Changes to: Portland Observer, P.O. Box 3137, Portland, OR 97208. Second-class postage paid at Portland, Oregon.

The Portland Observer welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self addressed envelope. All created design display ads become the sole property of this newspaper and can not be used in other publications or personal usage, without the written consent of the general manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad. 1990 PORTLAND OBSERVER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED.

Subscriptions: \$20.00 per year in the Tri-County area; \$25.00 all other areas. The Portland Observer - Oregon's Oldest African-American Publication - is a member of The National Newspaper Association - Founded in 1885, and The National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., New York, NY.

PORTLAND OBSERVER  
 "The Eyes and Ears of the Community"  
 Office: (503) 288-0033  
 Fax #: (503) 288-0015

Subscribe!

PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Portland Observer can be sent directly to your home for only \$25.00 per year. Please fill out, enclose check or money order, and Mail to:

Subscriptions  
 Portland Observer  
 PO Box 3137  
 Portland, Oregon 97208

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 address \_\_\_\_\_  
 city, state \_\_\_\_\_  
 zip-code \_\_\_\_\_

Thank You For Reading the Portland Observer