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"The Eyes and Ears of The Community"

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Beauty In Your Own Back Yard

by Tony Washington Photo by Veronica Green



Nikeshia Breeze Hunter of Sherwood, Oregon, winner of The Oregon State Miss Cinderella Contest in 1988, was named National Young Miss of America 1991-92 Pre-teen on August 8th, 1991 in Palm Springs, Ca. She is the daughter of Terry and Kay Nelson, and CiCi and Steven Hunter. She is 11 years old and attends Hopkins Elementary School in Sherwood. Nikeshia was crowned by her sister, Celeste. This is the first time this has ever happened, where a sister has crowned another sister in successive years. Nikeshia's long range projections look good. Her other activities include modeling, gymnastics, dancing and singing. Nikeshia was an extra in the current movie Kindergarten Cop. She is a compassionate person who is very willing to help other girls realize their dreams.

At the national competition the girls were judged on scholastic achievement, interviewing skills, poise and personality and in the categories of essay, sportswear, evening gown and talent. Her talent consisted of the song

"If You Believe" from The Wiz.

Nikeshia achieved top 5 in the essay and state costume. Her costume was a beautiful Oregon Christmas tree which lit up when she was on stage.

Nikeshia hopes to utilize her new title in the coming year by helping Barbara Roberts' New Youth Development Program for homeless children and to work in all capacities as a role model.

Aryanna Hunter, age 8 and the younger sister of Nikeshia, was awarded 1st runner up to the National Queen in the Petite Division.

Nikeshia's first start was through MARI (Minority Artists Representatives, Inc. and Joe Bean Keller) along with Ronetta Walker of ABC KIDS. Getting the opportunity such as this is an honor according to Nikeshia she is a hard worker and deserves the most recognition possible. So poised, and very serious about the future, it's lovely to know that kids today are our natural resources of tomorrow. Nikeshia, congratulation from all of us!

Was Columbus A Hero? Who Cares!

by Professor McKinley Burt

Was he just a lucky adventurer who used the vagaries of the ocean currents to pull himself up by his nautical bootstraps to reach a honored place in history? Or did he as the National Council of Churches has said, open the remainder of the world to "genocide, slavery and exploitation"? In any case the national media has launched a massive binge of rhetoric and hype that will last through the next 12 months.

As we approach the quincentennial celebration of the DISCOVERY (?) OF AMERICA (October 1492-1992), we find that Christopher Columbus' admirers or detractors have been solidly in one camp or another. Some groups like the Irish and French Catholics saw him early on as an "Instrument

of Divine Providence," though propelled by the less-than-divine patronage of Queen Isabella of Spain who wished to gain the lands, gold and trade of the "Indies." Others have said that "America" should have been named for Columbus; instead, he was said to be "manifestly appointed of God to be the Finder of these lands."

On the other side of the coin, native Americans are not that enamored of Columbus. They have described him as a pirate or worse, and as a person who "makes Hitler look like a juvenile delinquent" (Russell Means, Vernon Bellecourt). When this "discovery" topic comes up in discussions with African Americans, my experience has

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Karis Stoudamire to Visit Our Sister City



Karis Stoudamire, along with nine other girls from the Portland Metropolitan area have been selected to participate on a fifteen (15)-and-Under group basketball team which will compete in Sapporo, Japan, beginning August 15, 1991. We will be playing in the Junior Goodwill Games against basketball teams from Portland's "sister" cities from Japan, Russia, China and West Germany.

Though basketball is a primary focus while on the trip, the girls also will have the opportunity to experience a homestay with a Japanese family after the competition is over.

Young Local Model Shoots Commercial



Sheena Ter'e Crittenden, a young Portland actress and model, was recently involved in the shooting of a commercial at various Oregon locations, including Pioneer Courthouse Square. Sheena is a graduate of ABC KIDS Acting & Modeling School and is presently attending American Dance Theatre and advanced acting classes at ABC KIDS. She is just six years old and has already done community plays, fashion shows and a dance production. Sheena is the daughter of Teresa Crittenden.

Black United Fund to Hold Second Community Forum

The Black United Fund will hold its second Community Forum of the year on Tuesday, August 27, 1991 from 10:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. in the conference room of the U.S. Bank at 5505 N.E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd. Community Forums are a series of workshops for nonprofit organizations.

This month's workshop is titled "Nonprofit Management for the 90's" and will be presented by Gary Withers, J.D., the Executive Director of the Center for Management of Nonprofit Organizations at Concordia College.

Aretha Brown One of Job Corps Best

by Tony Washington



Aretha Brown and her son, Elisah Stone.

At the age of twenty, Aretha Brown, the mother of one child, Elisah Stone, needed to get a different focus on her life. A graduate of Jefferson High School, there was a definite must to start her life over. Aretha is a member of the new Non Resident Program at Sprindale Job Corps, where transportation, child care, training and job placement is available. She recently went to give more insight to caseworkers and managers about better or new ideas for the program. What's needed in our community is better job skills among our youth. We as adults need to set an example for Aretha and others. They're so important to our future.

Aretha enjoys picnicking and being with her 14 month old son. Job Corps has improved Aretha's communication skills, which is a must in the business world today. She's very concerned about her life and is making new friends. She wants to see a change, and old friends sometimes must be forgotten. A role model, but not perfect, she's enjoying her success. And the Portland Observer is also! If any needy single parents would like to get the same or similar opportunity such as Aretha. It's easy to do. Job Corps offers a college program, where the fee is paid for by them. Give Lana Barr, State Director, a call at 1-800-344-4349 or 229-5366.

Youth Gangs Program Director Completes Probation



Stanley Peterson

On July 1, Stanley Peterson completed the initial 90 day probationary period required of all staff hired by the North Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods. Peterson took over the reigns of the Youth Gangs Program after having successfully directed the Grace Collins Memorial Center from eminent shut down by Children's Services Division, to full recertification.

The Youth Gangs Program, an outgrowth of the Youth Gangs Task Force, has been in operation for three years. It is a unique community based program tasked with prevention, intervention and referral service programs and activities. Under Peterson's direction, John Canda, the Outreach Coordinator supervises field activities of six (6) outreach workers: Art Richardson,

Billie Porter, Roberta Taylor, Lewis Williams, Madolyn Frazier and Byron Brown. The program works extensively with Portland Public and East County schools to reach "gang involved, gang affected and at risk" youths. Many are involved in the Juvenile Justice System while others are caught up in the seeming excitement and flash of gang culture and lifestyle.

Outreach work includes group and individual encounter sessions at schools and frequently in home, discussions, awareness training for parents, school administrative and teaching staff, presentations to community organizations and businesses.

There are a host of other social or public events where YGP staff have assisted to prevent potential violence when rival gang members are present at a location. The Rose Festival "Fun Center," is one example of the effectiveness of YGP outreach. It is a widely held opinion that the absence of violent acts and arrests previously associated with gangs, was in part due to intervention by YGP staff, in cooperation with a well planned and executed coverage strategy on the part of the Portland Police, under the direction Sgt. Steve Smith.

Peterson is a native of Portland having returned a year ago to work for Merrill Lynch. After graduating from Linfield College he enjoyed a successful career in Sales and Marketing for major corporations including NEC Information Systems, ITT, Memorex and Boise Cascade.