

The Portland Observer 25¢

Grace Collins Memorial Center Receives \$25,000 Donation

BY D. BELL

On Thursday December 19th, Robert Pamplin presented the board of directors of the Grace Collins Memorial Center a check for \$25,000.

Dr. Pamplin is a prominent businessman and minister, who is a senior pastor at Christ Community Church located in Newberg Oregon.

The Christ Community Church also provides various social service agencies such as Wings of Love and Stay Clean Inc. with food.

According to Ralph Davis chair of the Collins Center Board of Directors, the gift Dr. Pamplin bestowed upon the center will wipe out outstanding federal and local taxes.

When asked to comment about the donation, Dr. Pamplin said he felt that he could not do otherwise and that the Collins Center has been an important community facility for many years.

Saturday evening Dr. Pamplin received the Founders Award for his generous and longtime support at the first annual Grace Collins Memorial Center Appreciation Award Banquet.

Some of the other individuals who also received plaques of recognition for their commitment and support of the center were: Margaret Carter, District 18 Representative; Joyce Washington, Operations Manager for *The Portland Observer*; Stan Peterson, Director of Youth Gang Task Force;



LaVern Davis, Principal at Martin Luther King Jr. Early Childhood Education School; Ralph Davis, an employee with Multnomah County Corrections, and

Miss Evelyn Collins who was awarded a plaque for Lifetime Achievement. Charles Jordan served as the banquet keynote speaker.

The Collins Daycare Center is currently accepting applicants for infants (6 weeks or older) toddlers, preschool and latch-key children.

DMV's New Program On The Road

Oregon's Re-Examination Evaluation Program for drivers is up and running at full strength. The Re-Examination Evaluation Program is DMV's innovative new method to re-examine drivers who may no longer be qualified to drive. While this program is for all drivers, most of the drivers involved are seniors.

The program begins when DMV receives a request to test a driver. The request can come from police officers or members of the public, including family members and friends. If DMV believes the person to be tested may not be qualified to drive, DMV sends the person a letter offering him or her the opportunity to be retested or meet with a driver improvement counselor.

Drivers who choose to meet with the counselor are scheduled for an appointment at a local DMV office. The person meets the counselor in private, one on one. At the meeting, the counselor evaluates the driver's ability to safely operate a vehicle. The counselor will:

- *Conduct an oral quiz or traffic laws, rules of the road and safe driving practices.
- *Check vision.
- *Conduct a behind-the-wheel evaluation of driving skills.

ation of driving skills.

- *Check reflexes and response times.
- *Review medications taken.
- *Look for cognitive impairment (dementia).
- *Discuss findings and recommendations with the driver, including alternative transportation methods.
- *Counsel and assist the driver in preparation for knowledge or driving tests, if the test are required.

The program has been evaluated by DMV's research specialist, Dr. Barnie Jones, Research Analyst. The results show that drivers perceive this program as being a positive approach to the driver re-examination process. Drivers believe the program is fair, the atmosphere is pleasant, and they support the program.

DMV also offers a brochure especially for seniors, called Safe driving tips for older adults. Older drivers are encouraged to read this publication, which is available in most division offices, or by calling DMV's Public Affairs Section at 378-6966 and requesting a copy.

For more information on this program, call Pete Nunnenkamp, manager for the Driver Safety Section, at 378-6713, or Dr. Barnie Jones, at 378-7541.

Merry Christmas

African Americans Celebrate Their Heritage: Kwanzaa

BY PROFESSOR MCKINLEY BURT

It is that wondrous and spiritual time of year again when, at the winter solstice, African Americans begin their celebration of KWANZAA--A festival born of the ancient African traditions of harvest and thanksgiving.

At once solemn and festive, the twenty-five year old American celebration begins the day after Christmas and is structured around seven consecutive days of homage, dedications of purpose and responsibility, feasts, and the recognition of basic values for the race and community. The American tradition began in 1966 when Dr. Maulana Ron Karenga, an African American Professor of history, founded the observance in Los Angeles. Each year these holidays gain increasing support from the black communities and their social and professional organizations.

There follows a listing and description of the meaning and purpose of the festival days of Kwanzaa:

Celebration Of Life
1. Umojo [pronounced oo-MOI-jah] (Unity): Achieve unity in the family,

the community and in the world diaspora.

2. Kujichagulia [pronounced Koo-gee-cha-goo-lee-ah] (Self-determination): Define, name, structure and speak of ourselves.

3. Ujima [pronounced oo-GEE-mah] (Collective work and responsibility): Work and build together a community that will serve our needs.

4. Ujamaa [pronounced oo-jah-Mah] (Cooperative economics): Finance and build our own commercial enterprises to serve our needs.

5. Nia [pronounced Nee-ah] (Purpose): A commitment to a collective vocation of developing and restoring our community and people to traditional greatness.

6. Kuumba [pronounced kooj-OOM-bah] (Creativity): A single-minded determination to use our proven innovative skills to render our community a better place than we found it.

7. Imani [pronounced ee-MAH-nee] (Faith): An unshakable belief in our people, parents, teachers and leaders, and ultimate victory in our struggle.

It is to be noted that the seven days of the observance are much more than

just a temporary retreat from the stress and trauma of an unfair political and economic structure. Rather, they are an annual regrouping of the clan, a hiatus that permits a reinforcement of purpose and a resurgence of vision. There are days of fasting where only after sunset does the congregation gather for meals of fruits vegetables and nuts. Typically all functions are in the African style of ancestors, including the taking of meals and nonalcoholic drinks. Children, the fruit and seed of the parent are everywhere--parents commit then to goodness and ethical conduct in the coming year.

It should not be surprising that Dr. Karenga, like Alex Haley, has turned us toward our ROOTS. And a magnificent heritage it is, for we note that nearly all other races of the earth have turned to the CONTINENT OF LIGHT for the foundations and inspirations that were structured into their late-blooming forms of worship: Greeks, Romans, Mesopotamians, and wandering Israelites. The African roots, already formed thousands of years B.C., sprouted not only in Egypt, Ethiopia, Nubia and the adjacent Arabian Peninsulas but through-

out WEST AFRICA where many of the traditions remain intact today. We are indebted to Anta Cheik Diop, the great African historian and scientist for the following.

"Now, Plutarch the renowned ancient historian tells us that 'Osiris,' the African god of vegetation, was born on the 26th of December, the 361st day of the year (commonly depicted as the Jolly Green Giant; and Anglo Saxon advertising image of food products). But the National Geographic Magazine always shown him as the original African figurine which was colored green to represent vegetation). Ancient paintings show Osiris at his annual December 26th birthday festival accompanied by a symbolic tree cut to represent the resurrection of plant life--very similar to our Christmas tree. We note that it was Pope Julius (fourth century) who fixed December 25th as the birthday of Christ."

The Africans, documented as great astronomers, correctly aligning the Pyramids with the stars, were able to correlate the great annual cycles and precessions of the heavens with the corresponding cycles of vegetation

below. They accurately predicted the rise and fall of the great rivers and therefore the proper times for allocating labor for planting and harvest. Beautiful and intricate festivals and ceremonies were developed over thousands of years to reinforce their practices of honoring nature's annual cycle of death and resurrection of her bounty.


Further correlations of the cons-old African harvest celebrations to the religions of other cultures that developed much later may be documented within the context of my early research. (We may well understand how an able historian like Dr. Karenga could be inspired to create a social structure of such magnificence). My observations follow:

A treasure trove of wisdom and spirituality that comes forth in a documented wellspring of seminal contribution--the festivals, the sacraments, the consecrations, the ceremonies of rebirth and resurrection. For the following I draw upon the religion section of my library, scores of historical texts, Bibles, and concordances with the original African history--purchased here and abroad over a period of thirty years

(Diop, Budge, Ramy, Breasted, Smith, Soper, Asimov, Spencer, Butz and many others). It is to be kept in mind that much of the structure and sacrament of the early church was designed by Greek-speaking African church fathers-whose culture without question evolved from Ethiopian and Egyptian roots. (The New Testamane was first written in Greek and J.A. Rogers listed three Black Popes from 189 A.D. to 496 A.D.: Victor, Melchisedes and St. Gelasius).

The religious holiday of Pentecost was originally named "The feast of the First Fruits" (Num. 22:26). Developed many, many thousands of years ago in Ethiopia, Nubia and along the Upper Nile, the celebration began as a harvest festival (still practiced), and was incorporated into the Christian church by the early Black Popes whom we have mentioned. Now the custom was restated to symbolize God's spiritual harvest of souls. The Jews retained the African agricultural concept; Pentecost is the 50th day from Passover presented before God the first sheaf of the harvest, departed to their homes to gather it in" (Smith, Dictionary of the Bible, 1865). KWANZAA IS REAL!

Perspectives



Nostalgia: Don't Leave Home Without It, Conclusion
by McKinley Burt
Page 2

News

Urban League Announces New Program For Youth
Page 3

Sports

When Alaa Gives An Autograph, Fans Get More Than A Signature
by Bill Barber
Page 4

Religion

The Bible Speaks On Humanity, Creation And The Environment
by Michael Lindsey
Page 6

EDITORIAL	NEWS	SPORTS	ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGION	CLASSIFIEDS
2	2	4	5	6	8