

## Citizens Invited To Help Solve Traffic Problems

Neighbors and business people from North and Inner Northeast Portland are invited to take an active role in resolving Portland's traffic problems. Volunteers for the City's Community Traffic Safety Initiative: Reclaiming Our Streets will serve on working groups to write and implement a community-wide action plan to:

1. Reduce the speed and volume of traffic on local streets.
2. Increase bicycle and pedestrian safety and encourage bicycling and walking.
3. Reduce traffic accidents, injuries, and fatalities caused by drunk

driving and not wearing safety belts.

4. Promote alternative transportation (carpools, vanpools, transit, etc.)

The action plan Kick Off meeting will be held Thursday, January 2, 1992 6:45 - 9:00 p.m., Hearing Room C of the Portland Building, 1120 S.W. Fifth Avenue, Second Floor. Come early for refreshments. Free parking is available in the Portland Building garage (enter on fourth Avenue), and current Tri-Met receipts will be reimbursed.

The Kick Off meeting will provide orientation and background information for volunteers, as well as an opportunity to share ideas on issues, strate-

gies, and solutions for the goals of Reclaiming Our Streets.

Each working group will meet approximately twice a month from January through April, to write an action plan for one of the four goals. Target for completing the action plan is March 31, 1992. Plan implementation will begin immediately and will run through September 1992. Both the planning and implementation will be guided by a citizen Task Force comprised of representatives from all four working groups, and a few at-large members.

# perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

## Nostalgia: Don't Leave Home Without It; Conclusion

As we wrap up this trek along memory lane, it occurs to me (and others) that to a kid, living conditions described by sociologists as traumatic are often only *adventurous* to youth. From the age of twelve, I remember a series of moves, each deeper into the ghetto (whenever the rent became too far past due). But each time there was a new set of interesting playmates and schoolmates—each with its own distinctive approach to life, games and innovative economics.

It may sound like a "Theatre of the Absurd" as we recount these depression years, but, then you're aware of *our capacity to live it to the max*. I was able to introduce my new and rougher playmates to some scenarios learned from that past (richer?) life; like going out to the huge "Forest Park" in the center of the city with its free "St. Louis Municipal Opera." For 12 weeks each summer, this outdoor amphitheater featured productions that ranged from colorful operettas like "The Student Prince and New Moon" to "Show Boat" and other Broadway musicals. If one arrived early before curtain time (sunset), enough golf balls could be retrieved in an adjoining area to pay for all the popcorn and soda pop.

In turn I was introduced to startling plays from the ghetto "Commedia del Arte." One evening as we sat on the project steps facing the second floor offices of a juke box distributor, we could hear the older boys trying to hammer open the safe. Failing in this, they pushed it out the window onto the concrete driveway below. Miraculously it came open, spilling out what seemed like a million dollars in coins. For the next half hour an entire neighborhood of kids and housewives armed themselves with pots and pans and began *cleaning up the mess*.

Another time a front wheel came

off the bus on Olive Street and the axle dug up a half block of asphalt pavement—exposing a sub strata of creosote-soaked wooden paving blocks. The next morning the *St. Louis Post Dispatch* had a banner headline "CITY STREET STOLEN OVERNIGHT!" Again, the neighborhood had gone to work and every baby carriage and kids wagon had been pressed into service to gather up this *fuel from heaven* in the middle of a bitter winter.

In later years this area became the site for the "Wendell Fruit Project," the first of a series of disastrous experiments in building huge *highrise* apartments for the poor (Wendell as a high school classmate of mine who became famous in World War II was a flying ace with the 99th squadron from Tuskegee). You've probably seen this project a number of times on television as the entire six block complex was demolished in 30 seconds with carefully placed explosives.

The same Sumner High School, though a great *learning place*, was also the scene of many a ludicrous event. Like the time "McDunkin's" father died and somehow the 16-year-old student received the \$3000 cash from the insurance policy. Among other things he bought a new Ford and six suits which he kept in two adjacent lockers at school. He would change clothes before each class and before long "Pretty Mac" had everybody's *woman*. This is the same high school where, as I've mentioned before, the father of "Bobby McFerrin" sang in our choir. We knew he was Metropolitan Opera material even before a girl jumped out of the balcony when he sang "Goodnight My Love." Evelyn survived and went on to have six kids.

And at the same school in 1939, the Royal Canadian Air Force was soliciting those black youth (so good at

math) for service overseas in the "Battle of Britain." You got a huge salary for the times, 90 days of training in Newfoundland and an *opportunity* to ferry your own plane over to England. You had to be 18 and my mother would not sign off for me, but Carl Cable, my best friend, went and when I met him again in Los Angeles 20 years later, he recounted his adventures. Sitting in the tavern he owned at West Adams and Normandie, he said he still remembers *coming to himself* at 6000 feet over France in his Spitfire and atop all that high octane gasoline: "Mama, what am I doing here? Pray for your child."

The kaleidoscope of memory has too many images to record here. Mother had a shirt-tail relative who lived across the river in East St. Louis in the 1920's, "Josephine Baker," who had gone to Paris and "made good." When the famous entertainer was here in Portland I went backstage to visit and she asked about "Gladys" and my Aunt Marjorie. I can remember the early cumbersome braces that had for children's teeth. They had two tiny screws that held them in and because the kids at school called me "brass mouth" I would take them off when I left home and put them in my pocket. Predictably, I lost a screw one day and it took me to 11 p.m. to find it—so I got it anyway. Man, that woman was angry.

From 1939 to 1943, I must have accumulated a bale of Postal Money Order receipts from money sent home while working on various railroad "Extra Gangs" building and repairing tracks across the country: "Decatur, Illinois; Cheyenne, Wyoming; Denver, Colorado, Pocatello, Idaho, Riparia, Washington; Oakridge or Klamath Falls, Oregon; you name it, all interspersed with a myriad craft and labor jobs. A learning experience about people and folkways that cannot be duplicated.

## Help To Stop Violence: Volunteer Now

To the Editor:

Greetings from Bradley-Angle House! Since 1975 we have provided emergency shelter, information and referrals, legal advocacy, and counseling services for women and children escaping the cycle of fear and violence. Some 600 residents and 5,000 crisis callers a year receive support from our agency.

Volunteers are a vital resource to Bradley-Angle House. We staff a 24-hour crisis line with trained volunteers and are able to maintain a 24-hour intake policy into our shelter. Our services include one-on-one peer support for women and children, advocacy emergency food at the shelter, and out-of-

shelter support groups. All of this is provided in a safe and supportive atmosphere in which women are encouraged to explore their options and make decisions that are right for them.

Bradley-Angle House serves the highest number of people of color of any domestic violence shelter in the state. We are committed to anti-racism work and offer at least fifteen hours of staff in-services per year and three hours each of unlearning racism and internalized racism per tri-yearly volunteer training.

According to former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop, "domestic violence is the single most significant cause of injury to women in the United

States." A host of studies have found that at least one fourth of all women in hospital emergency rooms are there because of battering. Bradley-Angle constantly seeks volunteers and public support to assist us in bringing an end to the tragic cycle of violence.

We are searching for women to join our volunteer staff at Bradley-Angle House. We will match potential volunteers' skills and interest with our programs. Our next training will take place Monday and Thursday nights starting Feb. 3, 1992. Please call 281-3540 for more information.

Raz Mason  
Volunteer Recruitment Committee

## New Brochure Explains Mental Health Coverage

Consumers can get help understanding insurance coverage for mental health and chemical dependency services with a new brochure released today. The new publication, entitled Consumer Guide to Oregon Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Insurance Coverage, is a joint effort of the Oregon Chapter of the National Association of Social Workers (NASW) and the Oregon Department of Insurance and Finance.

"Families face a complicated choice in selecting the right insurance

plan to meet their needs for mental health services," said Marie Evans, Executive Director of the Oregon NASW.

"We want consumers to know their rights to this important coverage," said Insurance Commissioner Gary Weeks. "We're pleased to share the responsibility for this new informative publication."

The guide describes the minimum benefits for mental health and chemical dependency services in most group health insurance policies. It describes how Preferred Provider Organizations and

Health Maintenance Organizations may handle access to these benefits. It also lists questions for consumers to ask of an insurance company about benefits for mental health and chemical dependency service coverage.

The brochure also tells consumers what to do when a mental health or chemical dependency claim is denied.

To get a free copy of the Guide, send a self-addressed stamped envelope to "Mental Health and Chemical Dependency," 440 Labor & Industries Building, Salem, OR 97310.

## Employment Division Discontinues Placement Use Of Job Aptitude Test

A test measuring employment aptitudes will be discontinued as a job placement tool in Oregon according to the Oregon Employment Division. Administrator Pamela Mattson says the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB) used with race-norming is now prohibited by the Civil Rights Act of 1991 enacted by the U.S. Congress last session.

GATB was developed by the U.S. Department of Labor and is primarily used for job referrals and vocational counseling. The test is used by Oregon and approximately 35 other states and 800 field offices of public employment services nationwide. In Oregon, the bulk of use is in counseling.

Adjustments in test scores have been used since the early 1980s to remove cultural bias from the instrument. However, since its introduction, race-norming has been controversial accord-

ing to Mattson.

"As we put the mechanism in place to stop use of GATB for placement within the Employment Service, we began taking a critical look at our test utilization program. We now believe we need to develop a new and better tool for evaluating and assessing job skills," said Mattson. "Our hope is that through a partnership process, we can implement a replacement test that helps the Governor in achieving her workforce agenda, and provides a measurement tool for Oregon Benchmarks."

The Employment Division will be holding an informational hearing in January to address the issue of whether the GATB should continue to be used for vocational guidance and job counseling purposes. Mattson said the input received in those hearing

will help guide the development of a new testing program. Organizations currently holding contracts with the Employment Division for use of the GATB are encouraged to attend.

The hearings will be held Wednesday, January 29 from 1 to 5 p.m. in the Employment Division, 2510 Oakmont Way, Eugene, Room 9 and on Thursday, January 30 from 1 to 5 p.m. in the State Office Building, 1400 SW 5th. Portland, Room 26.

Written testimony will be accepted anytime before January 30 at the Employment Division Test Research Center, Room 205, 875 Union Street NE Salem, OR 97311. Questions concerning the public hearing should be directed to Brenda Kelly in Salem at 378-8290 or statewide at 1-800-237-3710, extension 8-8290.

Portland Observer encourages our readers to write letters to the editor in response to any articles we publish.

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## Reinvestments in the Community

### Albina Announces Transfer of Emergency Services Program

Albina Ministerial Alliance (AMA) Board of Directors announced the arrival of the Emergency Services Program for the North and Northeast Portland area, effective date was November 1, 1990.

AMA Emergency Services Program is designed to assist in meeting the needs of homeless families and predominantly low income persons residing in the service area of I-5 to NE 82nd, and Columbia Blvd. to E. Burnside. Helping to provide for basic life needs: rent, transportation, energy assistance, community resources and/or referral, and dental services, will be the primary focus of this program.

The press conference took place on Wednesday, November 21, at the main office of AMA, 1425 NE Dekum. Speakers for the event included Mr. Darryl Tukufu, President and CEO of the Urban League of Portland; Rev. Dr. JOe Hardie, President and Chair of Albina Ministerial Alliance; and Commissioner Gladys McCoy, County Chair.

Louise Burton, who has been the LIEAP Coordinator/Community Services Coordinator with Urban League since 1980, is now the Director of AMA Emergency Services Program.

The Director of AMA Emergency Services Program reports directly to Cornetta Smith, Chief Executive Director of AMA. Ms. Burton along with two case managers began their new jobs on November 1, 1990.

For more information on this or other Albina Ministerial Alliance Programs, contact Ken Ives at (503) 285-0493 or write to 1425 Northeast Dekum Street, Portland, Oregon 97211.

The President of AMA is Dr. Joe S. Hardie and can be reached at St. Mark Baptist Church in Portland.

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