

A Black Mayor For Eugene

BY ED JOSEPH AND NANCY GLINES

To date, only Mary Burrows and Ruth Baaascom have officially entered the mayoral contest, but as the March 10th deadline approaches there seems to be three minority candidates that are emerging as possible candidates in the run for the Mayor's office in the city of Eugene. Greg Evans, former president of the local NAACP chapter, is one of those. In an interview with him he declined to make it official that a decision has been reached on which candidate to run. The object would be to present the best possible candidate to the voters. When asked if he thought that the community of Eugene is ready to accept a Black Mayor, Mr. Evans said "Yes, I believe that any of these people mentioned have a good chance of being elected because the community is ready for a definitive change in leadership and they are going to change from what the public perceives as the same old faces to new ones." The platform that one of these candidates would possibly run on would be an economic revitalization of the community to get the area back on track. There is a great need to begin getting new business in the community to provide jobs; there is a need to begin getting new business in the community to provide jobs; there is a need to address the housing and homeless program; and basically getting Eugene out of the doldrums and moving forward as a progressive mid size American city.

The resistance to growth in the community could be addressed by beginning to build consensus and find some common ground in that matter. There is a lot of common ground on both sides of the equation -- the "pro growth" and the "anti growth" contingency -- There needs to be a person or persons who are able to

bring together both sides to a table and sit down and look at the growth question in a progressive fashion. An important issue that a minority mayor would look at is improving the number of people of color being hired by the City of Eugene. This could put into effect through putting pressure on the office of the City Manager to begin that process. That would signal an improvement in minority relations all the way around. There is a long way to go in that respect and the community is not doing the kind of a job that is needed to enhance the position of minorities now and into the next century.

When questioned about whether the racial incident at Sheldon High School was indicative of the times, Mr. Evans said, "I think that the undercurrents of racism have always been there. They are not just in the school system but are also in our local government and are pervasive throughout the community and this appears to be just the tip of the iceberg."

As a mayoral candidate or mayor, a minority leader would need to go through a long process of developing a sense of community. There is a need to build some relationships that aren't there, such as connecting the business community much more with the minority community, more interaction and interplay in a variety of institutions and people. The presence of an individuals color changes the equation quite a bit.

Mr. Evans was asked if the minority community leaders can present to the school board ways to educate the students on issues of racism and he deferred to Marvin Revoal, the local president of the NAACP. Mr. Revoal is working on some programs in the area of what is going on within the school systems. He has addressed those issues and has the knowl-



Greg Evans

edge to speak on this process.

When asked about future political aspirations Mr. Evans would only say that there were a variety of things that could happen and at this point he couldn't give a definitive answer at this time. In the event

that a minority leader does not run Mr. Evans was asked which candidate would be backed by the minority community. He said that at this time until all the names of the candidates running are listed there could be no decision on that matter.

Fact Finding Regarding Job Training Partnership Act Completed

The fact finding initiated by the Governor's Affirmative Action Office regarding the hiring process for the Job Training Partnership Act, Manager position has been completed. The final report finds that the Oregon Economic Development Department conducted the hiring process for the JTPA manager position in a fair and open manner.

"The agency made special efforts to recruit affirmatively. The agency also included women and minorities on the interview panels. The final selection was based upon job related criteria. The hiring decision was made by the OEDD Director after all the interviews were concluded," the report conclusion reads.

The fact finding was initiated in response to two complaints that alleged irregularities in the hiring process. The fact finding was conducted by Donny Adair, and Assistant Director for the Department of Human Resources, a former investiga-

tor for the Bureau of Labor, Civil Rights Division. He conducted the fact finding at the request of Jeannette Pai, Director of the Governor's Affirmative Action Office.

"No information was revealed through the fact finding process that substantiates complaints made regarding the hiring process or that warrants the state to take corrective action. The state can only take corrective action where there is evidence to support allegations of unfair and/or discriminatory hiring practices. Based on the information received through the fact finding the selection process was found to have been consistent with the approved recruitment plan and was conducted in a fair manner," states Jeannette Pai, Director of Affirmative Action.

Ms. Pai further states that, "We remain committed to taking corrective action when evidence is revealed which validates complaints regarding the hiring process or employment in state government."

Secretary Of State Keisling Reports That The Motor Voter Program Is Succeeding

Secretary of State Phil Keisling has released data indicating that Oregon's New "Motor Voter" program is producing a significant number of new registered voters. The Motor Vehicles Division reports that it forwarded 26,216 voter registration cards to county clerks in October and November, the first two months the program was in effect.

"It's exciting to see such positive results so early," said Keisling. "Motor voter is designed to make voter registration easy, convenient and available to as many Oregonians as possible, and it is working."

Motor voter -- a cooperative effort between the Motor Vehicles Division (DMV), the Secretary of State's Elections Division, and county clerk offices statewide -- is a program by which Oregon residents can register or re-register to vote while applying for or renewing driver licenses and state identification cards.

DMV estimates that as many as 115,000 Oregonians will take advantage of motor voter registration through their field offices each year. Based on reports to date, the program may exceed DMV's projections.



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