

# The Portland Observer 25¢



Roy Jay

## POVA & Roy Jay Headed to Court

The Portland Oregon Visitors Association recently filed suit against Black business entrepreneur, Roy Jay claiming unfair trade practices. Jay, who has been a member of the visitors association since 1982 and on their board since 1988 was not the least bit surprised by the recent legal action taken against one of his many business entities. The non-profit, taxpayer funded visitors association, better known as POVA, has filed a complaint on August 5th in Multnomah County Circuit Court and has also requested approval for a preliminary injunction prohibiting the use of a similar trade name, which was approved by the State of Oregon and is exclusively owned by one of Jay's business operations.

The 45 year old Portland business entrepreneur simply stated "this is the Olympics of the visitor industry and we're going for the gold on this one". Jay who has master minded a business and marketing strategy which has generated millions of dollars in potential convention leads and referrals to Portland area hotels, tour operators, meeting planners and small businesses over the past two years has been continually applauded for his efforts. "In a time when tax funding is short, it would appear that this type of industry should be grateful for any additional help instead of wanting to put them out of business" said a local business owner.

Those closer to the situation, realize that the matters have been brewing for nearly 3 years. It is believed that conflicts started when Roy was told... "we allow no niggers here" as he entered a board meeting. The POVA board nor staff refused to reprimand the board member that made the comment in the presence of city, county and business officials. Jay has been considered by many one

of the most positive changes within the association. The ironic part of this situation is that this is the same Roy Jay that was just given the POVA "President's Award" at their annual appreciation breakfast held at the Oregon Convention Center about one month ago. POVA applauded and recognized him for his business efforts and participation in the presence of nearly 1000 governmental and business representatives. So what seems to be the problem? - One of Jay's operations has a registered business name similar to POVA's and they feel that he is infringing on their name. Jay indicated that such is not the real issue and the underline reasons are that they want to make every attempt to put him out of business due to the continuing success of his operation which is primarily supported by business membership and in fact by some of the same businesses that were formerly members of POVA, but never realized any economic benefits or other opportunities.

Jay who is represented by prominent Portland attorneys Curtis Kinsley and Patrick Butler will be filing an answer to POVA's complaint soon as well as an undisclosed counter suit against the organization and others involved. In a surprise move only a few days after the suit was filed, POVA's Executive Director, Charles Ahlers abruptly resigned on Monday just days after the lawsuit was filed and is headed to Southern California to take a top position in the convention and visitors bureau in Anaheim, starting in October.

"It is unfortunate that the situation has got to this point, said Jay, however some of these people that run POVA have shown little if any respect for African Americans at any level. I have been a victim of racism, criticism and just about any other "ism" that you can imagine. It is

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## Alcohol Use Kills One In Twenty Oregonians

### Adolescents Have Highest Alcohol-Related Death Rate

More than 1,300 Oregonians die each year as a result of alcohol use, accounting for 1 in 20 of all deaths in the state, according to a report released recently by the Oregon Health Division. This estimate, based on methods used by the National Center for Health Statistics, is four times greater than previously estimated, said David Fleming, M.D., state epidemiologist.

"Alcohol is a contributing factor in more deaths than we previously thought," said Dr. Fleming. "Alcohol use is especially significant in deaths due to motor vehicle accidents, chronic illnesses, suicides and homicides."

Oregonians drink themselves to death in many ways. The most frequent causes of alcohol-related deaths included chronic alcoholism, alcoholic cirrhosis of the liver and motor vehicle accidents involving alcohol, although the absolute number of alcohol-related deaths increases with age, the proportion of deaths due to alcohol use is highest for adolescents. For example, almost half of the 49 males between 15

and 20 years of age killed in motor vehicle accidents during 1989 had been drinking, though none was of legal drinking age, said Dr. Fleming.

Premature deaths, serious injuries and costly illnesses in Oregon occurred as a result of several common patterns of alcohol use: chronic heavy drinking, acute heavy drinking, engaging in high risk behavior while under the influence of alcohol, and drinking during pregnancy. Each month, more than 300,000 Oregonians consume at least five alcoholic drinks on a single occasion. More than half of Oregon women of childbearing age use alcohol at least occasionally. One analysis in the report showed that a baby was more than three times as likely to have a low birthweight if its mother reported drinking four or more alcoholic drinks per week than if she reported abstaining from alcohol use during pregnancy, according to Dr. Fleming.

The report revealed that at least 1105 Oregonians died in 1989 from a recognized drug overdose -- a rate of

two deaths per week. Two-thirds of these deaths were suicides, most of which involved prescription drugs. During the same year, 37 deaths occurred as a result of an unintentional overdose of illicit drugs, according to the report.

On the positive side, 88 percent of Oregonians reported either not drinking alcoholic beverages or using them in moderation. The Oregon Benchmarks, a series of measurable objectives adopted by the 1991 Oregon Legislature, call for increasing percentage of Oregonians who report drinking in moderation to 90 percent by the year 2000 and 95 percent by the year 2010.

The report, "Alcohol and Drugs in Oregon: 1989" used information from 1989 birth and death certificates and other information sources, including telephone surveys of Oregon residents, Dr. Fleming said. In most cases the report provides only minimal estimates because sources tend to underestimate the prevalence of alcohol or other drug involvement in disease and injuries.

## Clothing Drive At Saturday Market To Benefit Low-Income Children

A children's clothing drive sponsored by Low Income Family Emergencies (LIFE) Center will be held at Saturday Market Saturday and Sunday, August 22 and 23.

People are encouraged to bring children's clothing and usable school supplies Saturday from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. and Sunday from 11 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. Saturday Market is located under the Burnside Bridge between First and Front streets.

LIFE will give donated clothing and supplies to children of low-income families at the center's back-to-school giveaway at Peninsula Park on August 20.

LIFE Center, a United Way agency, has provided Portland's low-income families with emergency aid for 25 years.

## NAMCO To Hold Its Monthly General Meeting

The National Association Of Minority Contractors Of Oregon (NAMCO) will hold its monthly general meeting on Thursday, August 20, 1992. Special guest will include Phyllis Gaines of Key Bank, and Dave Kish, Mayor's Office. Tod O'Donnell, Representing Pacific Aircraft Maintenance Corporation, and Dave Brenneman and Gail Wilstrom of Donald M. Drake Company, are also special guests.

An array of topics will be discussed during this two hour affair beginning at 6:00 P.M., The annex, located at 1625 N. E. Alberta St.

Gaines, head of the newly created community services department for Key Bank, will speak on two programs the bank has established under the Community Reinvestment Act, which will make loans avail-

able for home repairs and improvements in targeted areas of the city.

O'Donnell of PAMCO and Brenneman of Donald M. Drake, will both speak on opportunities available to small subcontractors on the \$50 million PAMCO Facility which recently broke ground at Portland International Airport, and the 19,000-seat sports arena that will be built near Memorial Coliseum.

David Kish, Aide to Portland Mayor Bud Clark, will provide information on the remodeling of the Walnut Park Fred Meyer building. He will also comment on the new Oregon Arena and the city's First Source Hiring Program. Bruce Watts, CH2A and Associates, are also scheduled to make brief presentations. Call 282-1190, for more information.

## Labor Day is on the way Plan Ahead

# The Black Mainstream: Fact or Fiction

BY JAMES L. POSEY

There are a number of other Black solutions that we will discuss in later articles. However today I feel the need to look at the notion of the Black mainstream as promoted by liberals and conservatives alike. It never ceases to amaze me to what lengths some people will go to rationalize this corporate dysfunctional behavior in America called "racism." I'm talking about this movement, this wave after wave of pseudo sociologist/economist Black and White who try to convince themselves and the rest of the world that Blacks in America have arrived. Everything is better or getting better is the theme. And those of us who are not convinced are labeled at best obstructionist and at worst reverse racist. They even go so far as to say "Yaw gotta ghetto mentally which is the real reason why you have rats and roaches and can't pay the light bill." These are some serious "mind tripping games" being played on Black people to create an illusion that has about as much believability as the tales of "Roger Rabbit."

The one article in the Oregonian a couple of weeks go told the wonderful story of how two thirds of all Blacks are now considered in the mainstream. The writer went on to prove his point using a crafty definition of mainstream. He used such nebulous terms as substantial numbers of white and blue collar workers as indicators of Black progress. He also referenced statistical gains in edu-

cation. Another indicator essentially boiled down to increased political power through exercising the right to vote and electing officials -- things that white people take for granted like breathing air. The only economic indicator he was obliged to use was the following: In 1940, 93 percent of Blacks and 65 percent of whites were in poverty; in 1990 the rates were 31 percent and 10 percent respectively. There is some validity in his numbers because the Urban League's annually State of Black America clearly indicates that Blacks are three times likely to be in poverty as Whites. Somehow these ratios don't do anything to reinforce my sense of Black progress. He also said in 1940 the median number of years of education was seven for Blacks, and 10.7 for Whites; in 1990 12.4 and 12.7 respectively. What he didn't say is that a Black man with a collage education typically earns less than the average white man with 8th grade education. Additionally, recent information suggest that Black earning capacity is 62 cents to every Whites persons \$1.00. I never have been very good with numbers, but you tell me -- does that means Blacks can buy, save, invest, recreate, send their kids to college, afford health care, seek higher education, and yes leverage themselves out of the ghetto 1/3 less than Whites? As in slavery when Blacks constitutionally were considered only two thirds of a human being; in 1992 does the 62 cents earning comparison

mean that Blacks are only two thirds as good as Whites? Despite reference to Black successes such as Bill Cosby and Collin Powell, high rates of Blacks in jail or prison, children in poverty, homelessness, income disparity and etc., don't give me a sense that the masses of Blacks are in the mainstream, more like in the downstream.

However, I think the argument can be made that there is danger of Blacks perceiving themselves as helpless and dependent on the system. But one can hardly presume as the writer does, Blacks are waddling in their underclass situation and using it as a crutch to maintain a victimized status. Pardon me, I just don't believe Blacks are that stupid.

Next, the writer went on a raging attack against Blacks who claim their African heritage. He contends that it's divisive and distracts from the fulfillment of the "Common Destiny" and melting pot theory of multi-culturalism promoted by many in America. I wonder if a persons is really intellectually honest when they write this kind of stuff. The reason being, is surely he knows that it was not Blacks who put of signs over the water fountains "Colored Only" and sent vicious dogs to prevent Blacks from eating in public accommodations. Blacks have only been separatist out of the need to survive physically and mentally after decades of rejection and exclusion. Sadly, he quotes William Raspberry --- "The

need is not to reach back to some culture we never knew, but to lay claim to the culture in which we exist." I don't know where Williams been, but it ain't as if Blacks have not gone to extremes trying assimilate or acculturate (trying to be like the majority culture.) For example, torturing their hair with lye to get the straight look, or ever in creating episodes of jungle fever, and on and on and on. But for some reason Blacks ain't melting. The truth is many White people don't want to be in the same pot with Black people. That's why Black people need their own pot. Raspberry would be more correct if he said "reaching forward to a culture we should have known in order to live in culture that generally refused to admit we exist."

The sad irony is that despite ugly oppression and exploitation in America, Blacks are as at least if not more patriotic and committed to democratic American ideals in principle and in practice then any other segments of American society. It is not Blacks who need to acknowledge that we have a "Common Destiny." Whites should understand that Blacks ain't going back to Africa or any other place. We've paid our dues with blood and sweat like many other Americans. We gonna be here.

Hence, it is a bold faced lie and unscrupulous to use the tactic of blaming the victims, inciting factionalism (pitting the success of West Indian Blacks against Non-West Indian

Blacks,) did South Africa's De Clerk learn it from America. And it just won't work to paint Blacks as un-American for insisting that America live up to all it's ideals for all its citizens. It is also insidiously devious to try to impose a guilt trip on Blacks for a problems in that is largely the creation of selfish values --- a culture unrelenting, unwilling to share the America with Americans. Much of this is manifested by the Reagan/Bush philosophy -- Be an elitist and semi-racist, but put a nice face on it and call it American tradition. What's scary is that the Democrats are picking up on it and incorporating into it's philosophical model to appease threaten whites voters.

Portland as well as the rest of America would do well to be about the business of accomplishing real inclusion, but not at the expense of cultural identity and diversity. It may be of interest to some readers to know that Mayor Bud Clark some months ago initiated a process called Portland Future Focus. It was to be a citizen planning process used to visualize the progress that Portlanders wanted to see in the future and put an action plan in place to make it happen. Its hard say where that process is now however a major objective in the plan was to achieve citywide diversity. One strategy I encouraged was to institute and publish a diversity index. The index would quantify and qualify employment and contracting accomplishments across the board. The



idea was to let the world know what companies and organizations were making the most progress in diversifying their work force and contract relationships. Conversely, it would point the finger at organizations who were slow to include minorities and women in the work force and provide contracting opportunities. I'm almost sure that most African Americans did not know about the plan even though the African American community theoretically stands to gain if the plan is implemented. We need to take advantage of every opportunity to remind the majority culture that we live in a unequal racist society and that their own quality of living is jeopardized by this every present shame. More than that, we persistently need to work together with all right minded people to change the inequalities now. And programs designed to encourage minority participation in business and employment is a good place to start. When we achieve some reasonable parity in these areas maybe we can agree that Blacks have entered the mainstream.