

Education Update: Golden Rule Days

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

"School days, School days good old golden rule days Readin' and writin' and rithmetic Taught to the tune of a hickory stick"

That little ditty is older than I am, and it was about this time of year that a seven year old McKinley and his school-mates would sing this verse which was literally true. Today, there seems not to be many rules, no hickory sticks and some insist, "not nearly enough reading, writing and arithmetic."

However, Norma Paulus, Oregon State Superintendent of Education, was happy to report that "The 1992 SAT test results underscore Oregon's best and brightest can't be beaten." The state placed first among the 23 states that widely use the College Entrance Examination. We hope that the scores mark the beginning of a trend and are not just a blip on the chart. And even more importantly, it is absolutely necessary that there be addressed those factors that have adversely affected the SAT scores of females and minorities.

I spoke directly to this problem in an SAT article several months ago. Readers who may have missed it may obtain a copy by enclosing a stamped, self addressed envelope with at request to the Portland Observer, 4747 NE Martin Luther King Blvd., Portland, 97211. Att. Prof. Burt,

Parents should be advised that nothing much has changed in respect to that threatening array of adverse conditions in our innercity educational systems. It

was in my June 24 "perspectives" column that I cited the "Voucher/Choice" movement as perhaps the most dangerous of all the sophisticated hustles designed to siphon off billions of dollars from the taxpayer supported public school systems. There is no way that private and church schools are going to furnish all of the special services that are mandated upon "public" schools by the federal government, i.e. the handicapped and other special needs students. But "Choice" advocates are as busy as ever.

A potentially disastrous situation we may be facing here in Oregon is the huge financial shortfall in the state's budget; a hundred million dollar reduction in educational resources is contemplated by Governor Roberts. This places her thinking in headlong collision with that of Norma Paulus, Oregon State Superintendent of Education. This controversy could very well end up in the state legislature, resulting in the kind of bitter standoff we have in California at present. That budget debate has paralyzed the state and many of its critical functions, with education facing a "hit" it may not survive.

Innovative Oregonians, individuals and organizations, are coming up with programs designed to counteract some of the economic traumas besieging the state. For instance, the U.S. Bank has designed a low interest finance plan for Oregon School districts call the "Flex-Fund" where by their loans are pooled, reducing costs and

interest rates. This loan pool is funded by the sale of "Certificates of Participation" to investors looking for tax-free income. In other words, these notes are similar to "Municipal Bonds" and are issued in \$5000 denominations. It occurs that perhaps this type of funding might be used to support some types of innovative "for profit" enterprise that could produce JOBS!

While drawing attention to problem areas in the schools, we should not fail to cite the return (?) of some old classroom issues. Whether the resurgence is real or just media and talk-show hype, increasing attention is being devoted to the "hyperactive" minority child who now is seen to have an "Attention Deficit Disorder." It is bad enough that "pharmacists" with a teaching certificate have been allocated to diagnose and administer drugs like "Ritalin" to children. That "eternal vigilance" I preach is to be maintained here in Portland as well as those big cities.

In the next segment, I will return to my usual theme of science, mathematics and technology and how it can be and should be integrated into an educational mode that is comprehensible to almost anyone. This is especially important these days as you will realize from my recent articles on Minority Business, inventions and patents and copyrights. This week, see my "Perspectives" article on page 2. Next week I will examine a very critical series on science and math education appearing in "Popular Science" magazine.

perspectives

by Professor McKinley Burt

REAL MINORITY BUSINESS; NOW OR NEVER III

When I clue you in on those "tools" for doing business that you'll find at the downtown public library, that's real. You will find these time-tested aids on the shelves of many a successful business, small or large. Using them effectively is quite another thing, so I will start off today with a prime example.

"Gales" Encyclopedia Of Associations provides a listing of almost every national organization in America, name, address, phone, fax and general contact information. There are master classifications such as business, social, education, medical, agricultural, federal, state, county, municipal, law enforcement, political, ethnic, etc.--all with the necessary cross-referencing to avoid repetition of detail.

Now, for the sake of space, I will confine today's exposition to the "business" classification where, depending upon your interest, you might be looking at "subclasses" like Retail (National Association of Convenience Stores--Supermarket organizations etc.), Service (Janitorial Associations, Printers, Quick Copy Association, Direct Mail Groups, Photographers, Cosmetic/Beauty Associations, Etc.). The other organizations in the "master classification" are equally useful listing for direct mail advertising or general information.

The importance of contacting these business organizations cannot be over emphasized. They collect and publish all types of relevant information on their particular type of enterprise, collecting these operating statistics from hundreds or thousands of members around the country. So, here, you have "real" not textbook guidance in respect to sales, purchasing, trends, equipment, supplies, personnel, taxes, financing,

accounting, start-up, forecasts, what ever. In addition many associations conduct regional workshops and seminars for both members and others. Be sure to ask for lists of publications.

While we are talking about "listings and classifications" here, let me touch on another vital subject. I have named it "commercial awareness," having noticed in teaching the business classes at the university and when a consultant to the Model Cities Minority Business Program, that minorities and women HAVE NO READY KNOWLEDGE OF THE VAST SPECTRUM OF THOUSANDS OF SMALL BUSINESSES. Profitable and accessible enterprises that can be operated by individuals or partnerships.

At the same library, they should "open their mind" by looking through the "Standard Industrial Classification Manual" which lists "all" of the forms of commercial enterprises in America. Also, they should take a "journey" through the pages of the "Dictionary of Occupational Titles" which lists all of the jobs, crafts and professions in America. All lend themselves to business operation. I employed another technique with my students to overcome this lack of "commercial awareness." Since Portland is relatively a "small town," I would direct them to look through the "Yellow Sections" of the Out-of-town phone directories to become aware of the many types of commercial enterprise not found here. Several people launched a successful new business after this input.

Last week I cited the "PHOTO FINISHING LABORATORY" as a most lucrative business one that you find few minorities engaged in--though, the "Black Market Men" (consumer

statistics) have always listed it as one that African Americans spend a disproportionately high amount of money on. I think we would do well to research this field in the resources I have listed here. Also, in relation to this field, consider the auxiliary services and sales items from retouching to photograph folders, mats, frames mountings, and other supplies--even books, guides, classes!

Now, while you're at that library in the business and periodical rooms, remember that just about everyone of those business enterprise classes publish a "trade journal" citing the "happenings" in that particular field; again there is "real" information on marketing, accounting, equipment, personnel, future, etc. Also, I have noticed through the years that many new in business have a great deal of trouble trying to figure out how to either display or package the item they produce, or how to ship it. Appearance and neatness are very important here. While there are books at the library, write the following for free catalogs.

**Send me your 1992 Catalog "Bags, packaging, Shipping Supplies Catalog" Consolidated Plastics Co. Inc., 1864 Enterprise Parkway, Twinsburg, Ohio 44087, Call 1-800-362-1000, Fax 216-425-3333.

**Send me your latest catalog; Moore Business Products Division, PO Box 5000, Vernon Hills, IL 60061, 1-800-323-6230.

**Same: Grayarc, Greenwoods Industrial Park, PO Box 2944, Hartford, CT 06104-2944, 1-800-243-5250.

**And if you go to Dalton's Bookstore pick up a copy of "Specialty Salesman" and "New Business Opportunities" more next week.

Minority Parents Get Involved!

I am the father of five children ranging in ages 3 through 12 years old. Having children, I feel it is important that I participate in the volunteer programs that exist in our Northeast Portland community. Furthermore, I feel that even single parents can be involved and afforded the opportunity to help in any volunteer programs that may exist in their community.

The reason why I feel that minority parents must get involved with volunteer programs, can best be explained by the problem that I am now having with one of the Northeast Portland Pop-Warner Football Programs.

For two years I volunteered as an assistant coach for the fifth and sixth grade Pop Warner Football. The head coach and I did have our differences about the way children should be disciplined in a football environment. May I add that learning cannot be accomplished without certain types of discipline. For discipline provides direction and I feel that this is essential if we are to create a fun and safe environment for our fifth and sixth grade football pro-

gram. This year the head coach decided to step down and take care of the administrative duties involved with the program. I admire this person for his commitment to the children in the Northeast area. I am disturbed by the way he justified the selection of coaches. As I mentioned previously, I have actively volunteered my time and coaching experience for the past two years with this program.

Furthermore, I found out through some of the other concerned parents that I was no longer a coach with the program. I asked the former head coach who is now the program administrator for his reason in excluding me from the program? His response: "I don't like your sideline demeanor which I felt embarrassed some of the parents that came to the game."

I couldn't ask all of the parents if his statement was true, but I did ask several parents about it and their answer was: "not in the least bit were we embarrassed by your sideline demeanor and as a matter of fact our kids enjoyed

the enthusiasm that you displayed on the sidelines." I feel that the administrator's answer was to distract my attention from the real reason he did not include me in the program. As I mentioned earlier, he and I did have our differences about discipline, but I didn't expect him to exclude me this season, now that he has moved into an administrative position.

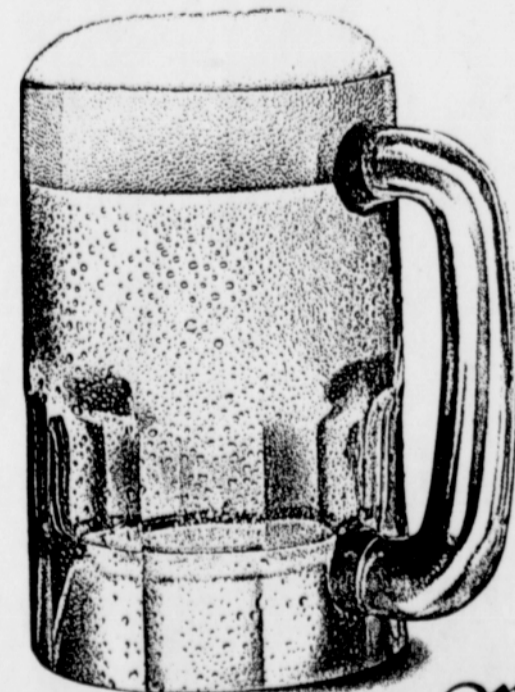
The percentage of minority participation in this program is 96 percent. My concern is, how can this administrator show his prejudice towards a coach who was the only minority who offered direction over the past two years to a team that is predominately children of color. It is this type of situation that has inspired me to write this letter. Minority parents must get involved in the volunteer programs that exist in our community, if we don't, our children will continue to be exploited by individuals that are out for personal recognition and not the development of our children's future self-esteem and personal growth.

Otis Burchfield

Labor Day is on the way!

P L A N A H E A D

It's brewed with care. Please handle it that way.



Don't let a good thing get out of hand. *Miller*

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