

Thought I Had The Keys To The Universe: Wasn't Too Wrong!

By Prof. McKinley Burt

That is, I feel that most of the desirable doors were opened, though not as far as they should have been, given American culture. But the specific we wish to talk about, here, are the possible worlds that can be opened up by the selection "accounting" as a career. Like they say in siting a business, its a matter of "location-location-location!"

This little discourse was prompted by a number of inquiries from parents relative to career choices for their children, and in a particular case, "would I again select accounting as the ultimate end game?" In the first place, I didn't "select" accounting as the ideal means of livelihood,

it selected "me". That was the only class left open when I registered late at a Vancouver, Washington business school during the war yes (1943).

Not having finished high school (nor to ever do so) was no obstacle, any more than it was later in Oregon when I passed the entrance exam to law school with near the highest score in the state. / Again, I cite the curriculum of that southern ghetto highschool I mention so often.

All of this was not a predetermined route to gain a good education. Since the sixth grade and a chemistry club of neighborhood kids, I had wanted to be a chemical engineer and to carry on where the great black scientist, Dr. George Wash-

ington Carver left off. Working in the Pacific Northwest was just a holding pattern until the war ended and I could have a shot at entering the freshman class in chemistry at Northwestern University in Illinois. Students of my peer group always made a second career of "floor showing" on college entrance exams. Three years of high school at the time and place was equal to today's first year of college.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the university (parents should not always despair when their little darlings finds a few hooks and crooks in the road). Again not finishing a prescribed curriculum, -- when the war ended the company spon-

sored school followed suit within days -- I found myself with a whole new set of ambitions and aspirations. I was convinced that the field of accounting held those "Keys to the universe!" However, it would suffice if they would simply unlock doors to the trade secrets of how money was made in American's industries, financial institution and professions.

I moved across the river from Vancouver to Portland, hanging out my accounting shingle on the black business thorough fare, Williams Avenue. I shared offices with a Mr. William (Bill McClendon), then the owner and publisher of the "Portland Observer newspaper"; We split a size-

able rent of \$20 a month (1946). With all the confidence (and guts) in the world I rapidly built a clientele of both black and white businesses. If the type of enterprise was new to me (which was usually the case), I would retire to my "university", conveniently located in the basement of my rooming house.

Here, I would put together an integrated system of soup cartons and file boxes that represented the individual departments of functions of a specific business. Then, having written up a host of fictitious documents, invoices, checks and orders, I would initiate imaginary transactions to see if I could "balance the books". It helped, of course, to have gotten

'trade association' materials from organizations like the 'National Association of Retail Grocers', or an "Association of Finance Companies". These kind of organizations furnish standard accounting and billing systems, inventory forms, etc.

But it helps most of all to have attended the kind of high school I've boasted about the past few weeks -- if you can 'read', know the Latin and Greek prefixes and suffixes, scale and modality. Industry can take it from there if you haven't been subjected to one of those "dumbed down" curriculums. Yes, opposed to some of the "School Reform"! Continued next week

HAPPY GRADUATION DAY

to Roger, Merleen, Romy, Thanh, (also not pictured; Steve, David & Myrna). Congratulations on completing your training! Best wishes on starting your new career in the electronics industry through:



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A Meyer Memorial Trust grant will expand a mentoring program serving Northeast and Southeast Portland.

Friends Of the Children Awarded Grant

Friends of the Children, a private nonprofit organization, has been awarded a Meyer Memorial Trust grant to expand its mentoring program to the Lents and Marysville communities in southeast Portland. The program will continue to serve its three Northeast Portland communities: King, Vernon, and Boise-Eliot.

Michael Madden is the new Friend who will mentor at-risk second grade boys from the Lents and Marysville communities. He has previously worked with children through the YMCA, in day care programs and in before- and after-school child care programs.

Friends of the Children is a preventive program that works intensively with children, families, schools and social service agencies in an effort to break the cycle of failure among children at risk. The program's underlying belief is that a caring relationship with a positive adult role model is fundamental to a child's physical, emotional and spiritual well-being and that this one-to-one commitment will achieve long-term success with children at risk.

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Bicycle Helmet Drive Boosted

A \$750,000 grant has been awarded to the Oregon Health Division to increase the use of bicycle helmets among bicyclists and especially children in Oregon. Part of the funding is matched in-kind by Oregon Health Sciences University and the Oregon Department of Transportation.

A primary objective of the grant is to help communities provide bicycle helmets for low-income children over a three-year period.

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