

RELIGION

Where Is The Love, Beauty And Truth

Editor's Note: This is the second part of a series on the despair, loss and loneliness on the faces of life. In part one, Mary, a widow, found herself short of money and applying for food stamps.

By M. ISAACS

The field worker informed Mary that she qualified for food stamps and that the application would be placed on the computer, post haste. Mary's stamps would be mailed soon, no need to contact the office again. Home Mary went, feeling much better, hungry but satisfied help was on the way. A week passed and no food stamps; 11 days went by and no food stamps. Mary returned to the agency to inquire when she would receive the stamps. The original case worker had returned and informed Mary that she was not on the computer; no information or application for food stamps for Mary could be found. No

one can identify the field worker who took Mary's application, but the original caseworker informed Mary that her claim would be investigated and they would call her. Mary waited two more days and went into the agency again, very angry, but determined to get assistance without making a scene. As she arrived she spotted the field worker who had taken her information and promised to get her food stamps started post haste. The field worker denied ever having taken the application. Mary asked to see the supervisor, but is told that she is in a staff meeting and cannot be disturbed. Angry, but keeping her temper in check, Mary demands that the application given the field worker is found. The case worker looked through the field worker's files and finds Mary's name in the field worker's appointment book but no application could be found. The case worker asked Mary to file all information again in a new application and she would stay

late and get the information on the computer that night, post dating this application with the date the original application was filed. By this time a full month had passed. Mary is to look forward to receiving her food stamps on the eighth of the month in the mail. The story should have ended at this point, but... on the eighth day, Mary's mailman informed her that he could not leave her food stamps, because he had the wrong address on the envelope. Mary received her identification card but no food stamps. Mary thanked God for her friends, the church family and neighbors for their generous donations of food and transportation, but her pride had taken a severe beating and if she were not a Christian, her anger would have exploded over everyone in that agency. Begging another ride, she returned to the food stamp office and informed them of their latest error... entering her address incorrectly into the computer.

Apologies were offered, but Mary would have to wait two days and pick her stamps up at the agency on the 11th of November. Mary arrives on the 11th to find the office closed, a holiday. Mary is fundless, hungry, but refuses to ask anyone for food. She finally walks from Broadway to Killingsworth to the food stamp office on the 14th of November to get her food stamps that would have arrived in October. The food stamps for November were mailed again to the wrong address and would require two more days before Mary could pick them up. Mary returns home, thoroughly disgusted with the system. Her food stamp application had taken from the 29th of September through the 11th of November before Mary received food stamps. Nine or 10 visits to the agency were required; she was confronted with lies, lack of supervision of workers; processes requiring unnecessary use of her funds for transportation; aggra-

vation, stress, anger; loss of pride and dignity and hunger experienced by Mary because no one really cared. Is it any wonder people steal to eat? Is it any wonder our seniors choose to isolate themselves, starve themselves and become distrustful and suspicious of all people. We have taken away, from most of those in need, their ability to see the love, beauty and truth in living. It makes you wonder if senior housing, health treatments, especially hospital emergency treatments, food banks and etc. are not riddled with case studies such as this one. Errors can be corrected. Organization can be established, efficient help can be employed; But "caring attitudes" come from the heart and is a personal thing to be desired by all humans, especially those working in social, religious and health agencies.

All families in need, widows and widowers in need, seniors in need, and homeless people are not as

persistent as Mary; many would have given up and possibly ended up in emergency care or as a suicide statistic. How do we, as a caring, working public, whose money supports these social agencies, make sure that people in need are treated with dignity, handled efficiently and given the interim help needed until regular assistance begins? Talk with those in charge of funding for these social agencies, discuss safeguards against misuse of people, visit these agencies; talk with the recipients of food stamps, welfare, free bus transportation; review agencies funded by United Way and report any misuse of funds or lack of funds for certain ethnic groups. Get involved! It's your money! It's your homeless! It's your seniors! We're in this world together! We're in this country together! We're in this city together! Get involved!

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February 18, 1995

The 5th annual Prayer Breakfast of the Portland Section of the National Council of Negro Women will be held on Saturday, February 18, 1995 at Shenanigan's Restaurant, 4575 N. Channel Ave., Swan Island from 9:00 AM to 12:00 Noon. Breakfast will be served between 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. Tickets are \$15.00 and may be obtained by calling 282-2789.

St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church

8101 N. Fiske Avenue • Portland Oregon 97203
Church Phone: 289-0147 • Study Phone: 289-1911

Sunday Service 10:45
Sunday School 9:30
Bible Study 6:00
Evening Service 7:00pm

Pastor, Re. James C.E. Faulkner

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(503) 283-3558 • Church (503) 283-0169 • Home
Elder Tom Moore, Pastor

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YPWW 6:30 P.M.
Sunday Evening Worship 7:30 P.M.
Tuesday Prayer/Bible Band 7:30 P.M.
Friday Worship Service 7:00 P.M.

"Come Unto Me All Ye That Labor And Are Heavy Laden,
And I Will Give You Rest. Take My Yoke Upon You
And Learn Of Me." Matt. 11:28-29

We have a place for you. Come fellowship with us!

A Welcome Is Awaiting You!

Homecoming of Cora Lee Hunt

A homecoming for Mrs. Cora Lee Hunt, 63 who died Feb. 1, 1995, was held Tuesday, Feb. 7, at Bethesda Christian Church, Portland. Arrangements were made by Skyline Funeral Home. Interment followed at Skyline Memorial Gardens.

She was born Feb. 24, 1931, in Sweethome, Miss. the only daughter and third of four siblings to the late Mr. and Mrs. Charles Lee Bernard. Upon leaving Mississippi some 24 years ago, Portland has always been her home. She loved helping others and enjoyed working as a nurses aide. Her precious gift was the love she shared with those around her. She gave a lot of love and was loved by many.

She dedicated her entire life to her 17 children, five of whom preceded her in death, and to the very end maintained a strong faith in God. Survivors include her children Dillie Cary, Barbara Neyland, Kasia Bernard, Ernestine Stigler, Margaret Stigler, Harry Pankey Jr., Dorsey Jennings, James Pankey, Shirley Carr, Larry Pankey, Robert Pankey and Amos McLemore, all of Portland; her uncle Hamp Love of Mississippi; three brothers, Charles and Edward Bernard, both of Dayton, Ohio, and Willie L. Love of Mississippi; 40 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren.

The Portland Observer
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