

Family Living

The Portland Observer

Drama Spotlights Alternatives To Youth Violence



◀ Judge John Creuzot plays an imprisoned man who admonishes his teenage son to stay out of trouble in *Peacemaker*, airing as part of public television's Act Against Violence campaign.

▶ The documentary-drama is based on the experiences of students at the Thomas A. Edison Learning Center in Dallas, Texas. Pictured: (clockwise from front) Delila Savala, Serkesia Price, Derrick West (with Ponsy Peoples on his shoulders) and Keona Franklin. Photos: Steve Foxall (April 1996, 1 hour)



The daily climate of potential violence faced by many urban teens, as well as some possible solutions to violence, are explored in "Peacemaker," a unique combination of drama and documentary, premiering on PBS in April (check local listings). The one-hour program, produced by KERA, Dallas/Fort Worth, is presented as part of public television's Act Against Violence campaign.

The documentary segments of "Peacemaker" focus on the daily lives of several students from

Thomas A. Edison Learning Center, an inner-city middle school in one of the poorest and most violent neighborhoods in Dallas, Texas. The Program follows the students as they prepare for their roles in a drama written--with their input--by Dallas screenwriter Victor San Miguel. The students, many of whom relate poignant and moving stories about their own experiences with violence, were all voluntary participants in an innovative, 11-

week anti-violence workshop conducted at the middle school.

The dramatic portion of "Peacemaker," taped on location in the neighborhood surrounding the school, illustrates how one person with a commitment to "increase the peace" can positively affect not only his or her own life, but also the lives of entire families, groups and communities.

"A lot of the debate about youth and violence focuses on young people as perpetrators, but young people

are affected by violence as much as anyone," said Rob Tranchin, the program's producer/director. "The documentary gives our students a chance to express themselves in their own voices about the extraordinary pressures young people are under today," he says. "In the drama, they've tried to imagine a better world."

Dallas State District Judge John Creuzot, in a cameo role, plays a teen's imprisoned father, who urges his son not to get mixed up with the wrong crowd.

TONY (ANTHONY) JACOBS

invites you to his
**"Sporty Forty"
Birthday Bash!**

9:00pm-2:00am
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Maxi's

Friday April 5

"See ya!"



Charlie Williams celebrates 109 years with two young friends and long time pal, Bea. A resident of Del's Care Center, Charlie enjoys listening to church music.

The Family Thing, Part II

James Earl Jones plays Ray Murdoch, an older Black man whose past walks up on him as Earl Pilcher (Robert Duvall) discovers that Ray is his half-brother.

"A Family Thing is about finding the truth", says Jones in a Sunday morning telephone interview promoting the film.

I wanted to talk about how "A Family Thing" focused on sex, race and class in America since Pilcher's father raped his character's mother. A very common experience for Black women in the Old South.

"That subject is best served in the classroom. It does not lend itself to



dramatic presentations. To me A Family Thing is about an identity crisis. A man trying to find out who he is. A man who lived as white all his life, all of a sudden discovers that he has Black blood" replied Jones.

Pilcher finds his new half-brother in urban Chicago, the place Murdoch ran to escape the rural Arkansas of racism and limited opportunities. However, the anger and hate of what happened to his mother remained inside him.

"My character is about forgiveness. Ray carried all that hate around with him. But through Earl he is able to get that off his chest. Earl is good therapy. Earl is also there to help Ray's son" added Jones.

In the movie Virgil Murdoch (Michael Beach), Ray's son listens to the Hillbilly wisdom of his new uncle, Earl.

For me the character who stole the movie was Aunt T. (Irma P. Hall). "She carries her weight in a beautiful way. Aunt T saved my character's life after the mother died in childbirth. Now, she saves the other boy's life."

Jones is currently living in New York. Our interview was brief and to the point. We ended our conversation with Jones saying how much he loved to work. And it is his work, both on the small screen and the big screen, that is a breath of fresh air coming out of Hollywood

Stubbs/Odom Reunion Set For San Francisco

The Stubbs/Odom Family Reunion for 1996 will be held in San Francisco, August 16th, 17th, and 18th at the Holiday Inn Golden Gateway, 1500 Van Ness Avenue.

For more than two decades, members of this family and their friends have gathered to celebrate family, faith, friendship and love.

Activities include Family Get

Acquainted Reception Friday Aug. 16th, Saturday Morning Breakfast Aug. 17th, Family Banquet Saturday Evening Aug. 17th, Sunday Morning Worship and Memorial Service Aug. 18th, and the Sunday Buffet Luncheon Cruise August 18th. Plus: many other surprises!

Dr. John W. Waters, Senior Minister at the Greater Solid Rock Baptist Church in

Riverdale Georgia. Dr Waters is a recipient of the Rockefeller Doctoral Fellowship in Religion will attend the event. Elie Stubbs, the lead singer for the rhythm and blues group The Four Tops will also attend.

This year's Reunion is organized and hosted by Ms. Vivian Wiley, business woman and community leader. Wiley has served as president of the San Francisco

Chapter of Cal-Pac and Vice President of the Golden Gate Chapter of the National Council of Negro Women. She was also member of the Democratic County Central Committee representing the 12th District of San Francisco.

For additional information contact Vivian Wiley at 236 Montana Street San Francisco CA 94112. (415) 584-8185.

Winner Named In Lyon's Coloring Contest

While the cooks cooked, Portland's seven-year-old Ester Chung colored and won a new bicycle in the Lyon's Restaurant coloring contest.

The contest was held to promote Lyon's kids-eat-free program and the character colored was Lyon's new mascot Roary. "Lyon's appreciates children's influence on family dining and is enhancing its appeal with expanded kids menus and more," says Matthew McRae, general manager of the Portland Lyon's located on Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

Now every Tuesday, up to three kids per party, ages 12 and under, are invited to eat free at Lyon's as long as one adult purchases a meal. And every day Lyon's greets kids with crayons and fun-themed place mats full of games.

Founded in 1962, Lyon's Restaurants has 84 units from Bakersfield, California to Portland, Oregon.

Family History Workshops

The Oregon Historical Society will hold two family history workshops this month. Both at the Oregon History Center, 1200 SW Park Avenue, in Portland.

An oral history workshop is offered Saturday, April 13 from 10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. as part of OHS' Shirley Tanzer Community History Program. It will focus on recording family histories. Prior experience is not necessary and time for

individual consultation will follow. There will be a break for lunch, and participants may bring their own.

A genealogy class is offered Sunday, April 14 from 1 to 3 p.m. The class will be conducted by the Genealogical Forum of Oregon.

For more information or to pre-register, please contact OHS oral historian Jim Strassmaier at 306-5246.

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