

**College Students Going To Ghana**

These students will work for three months as interns at Cape Coast University in Ghana.



See Education, page A4.

**It's "Good In The Hood"**

Family and friends of all ages gather every year at "Good In The Hood"



See Metro, page B1.

**Erick Serron, Insomnia**

This project was put together by Erick's long desire to own a record label in the recording industry.



See Entertainment, page B3.

# The Portland Observer 25¢

**THE WEEK IN REVIEW**

**Carter's Name On Witness List**

Former President Jimmy Carter may be called to testify against the tobacco industry. Documents show Carter may make an appearance in court when Mississippi's lawsuit against cigarette makers reaches trial. Carter's name appears on a list of possible witnesses. The list also includes scientists and industry employees. The state of Mississippi is suing major cigarette makers to recoup Medicaid funds spent to treat people suffering from tobacco-related illnesses. Other states have also launched similar legal action.

**Fires Blacken Thousands Of Acres**

Wildfires have ravaged thousands of acres of desert land in Arizona and Nevada. In western Nevada, a 4,000-acre fire is threatening the community of Genoa near Lake Tahoe. So far several hundred residents have been forced from their homes. In eastern Arizona, a 2,000-acre fire is bearing down on the town of Pinedale, forcing more than 200 people to flee their homes. Drought conditions have created tinder-box conditions throughout the West, raising fears that year's fire season could be one of the worst on record.

**Mrs. Clinton Responds To Book**

First lady Hillary Rodham Clinton is on the defensive over a new book that reveals she had imaginary conversations with former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt. In a statement today, she acknowledged holding the conversations but said it was an intellectual exercise, not a spiritual event. In the book, "The Choice," by Bob Woodward of The Washington Post, Mrs. Clinton was also depicted having an imaginary dialogue with the late Indian leader Mahatma Gandhi. But she declined an invitation to commune with Jesus Christ.

**Another Suspicious Fire In South**

There has been another suspicious church-related fire in the South. A building that apparently was to have served as a sanctuary in a predominantly black neighborhood in Shreveport, La., was heavily damaged by fire this morning. More than 30 fires have been reported at black and other churches throughout the South since January 1995. Investigators have determined some to be arson and have labeled others as suspicious. This weekend, President Clinton urged the U.S. Conference of Mayors to denounce racially motivated church burnings.

**GOP Fights Separate Jails For Juveniles**

Republicans in congress are moving to overturn what has been a fundamental principle of the American justice system for more than 150 years. The strict separation of youth offenders from hardened adult criminals. Rep Bill McCollum, R. Fla., the chairman of the House Judiciary Sub Committee on crime, has introduced a bill that would mostly end federal mandates requiring states to segregate juvenile from adults in jails and prisons.

## Burning Puts Portland On Racist Map

BY PROMISE KING

Portland couldn't escape the inexplicable arson that has blazoned many black churches around the nation.

Last week thursday's fire that sent torrents through the inner hall of Free Methodist Church denotes strong signals that the city is not immune from racial-driven arson.

Local residents are still reeling over the incident many described as tragic. This recent church fire has ignited concerns in Oregon over racial divisions, judging from the national coverage it received. Though at press time, authorities are yet to say categorically, whether or not race has anything to do with the burnings.

"Yes, I am surprised for this is Oregon, and not surprised, for if this is hate crime, we learn once again, evil has no boundaries," laments Margaret Cater who represents District 18.

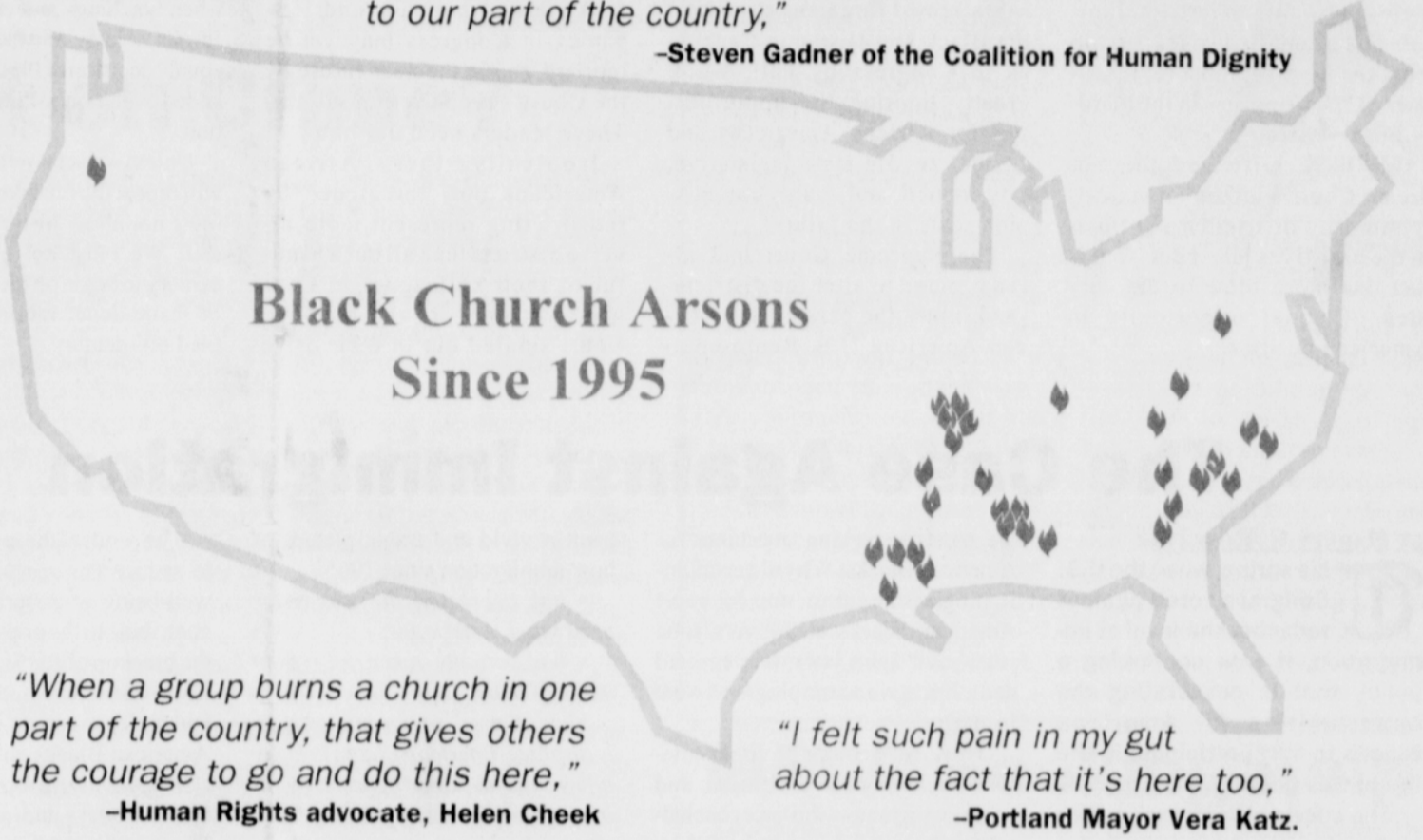
"This act cuts at the core of the African-American community, at our values of first, family, community and spirituality, all are intertwined into one, part of our correctiveness".

The incident also saddened the urban

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"Over the past 15 years a good bit of racism has migrated to our part of the country,"

-Steven Gadner of the Coalition for Human Dignity



"When a group burns a church in one part of the country, that gives others the courage to go and do this here,"

-Human Rights advocate, Helen Cheek

"I felt such pain in my gut about the fact that it's here too,"

-Portland Mayor Vera Katz.

## Congress Takes Action Against Church Arsons

Congress is acting to put an end to the rash of church burnings and bring the criminals responsible to justice.

The House Judiciary committee passed the "Church Arson Prevention Act of 1996" by voice vote. The act was introduced last month by U.S. Rep. Henry Hyde (6th Dist.-Ill.) and would make destruction or desecration of religious property a federally prosecutable hate crime. The legislation also would eliminate the damage threshold that must be

met before such crimes can be federally prosecuted. Under current law, the destruction must reach a value of more than \$10,000.

"I have become convinced that a minimum dollar amount is not necessary to justify federal involvement in these types of cases," Hyde said. "They are clearly hate crimes and implicitly interfere with the First Amendment rights or civil rights of the victims. Spray painted swastikas on synagogues or gunshots fired through church windows may not reflect large dollar losses, but they

are nevertheless assaults on religious freedom."

U.S. Rep. Jim Lightfoot (3rd Dist.-Iowa) also announced today he will introduce legislation that gives the federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms (ATF) \$12 million in additional resources to be used specifically to investigate and stop church arsons.

The ATF has jurisdiction over federal arson investigations. Lightfoot chairs the subcommittee responsible for appropriating

funds for the ATF.

"We will not tolerate these crimes and will do everything in our power to stop them," Lightfoot said. "We will begin by making sure that the agents in the field have enough money to do their job."

The new money would give ATF more resources, such as overtime, equipment and reward money, to help ATF agents in the field investigate and solve these crimes.

The funds would be available immediately upon passage and signing of the bill.

## Computer Illiteracy

Hazel Dukes, President, New York State Conference of NAACP Branches, told delegates to the National Association of Market Developers 44th Annual conference that Blacks and Latinos must take pains not to be left behind on the "information superhighway."

"We must recognize the economic, social and educational implication of current and future advancements in technology," said Dukes. "Reports tell us that approximately 70 percent of all future jobs will be computer-related, and those who remain computer illiterate will earn one-quarter less income than others."

Citing a one-time publication called B.E.S.T (Blacks in Engineering, Science And Technology), published by the Washington, D.C.-based magazine, "American Visions," Dukes said that many poor Blacks and Latinos have been unable to take full advantage of the advances in computer technology in recent years. She called for those who are involved in providing Internet access to consider ways to redress the situation.

Additionally, she noted that computers are now commonly used to manage subways, assist in banking and supermarket transactions, and virtually eliminate the need for

face-to-face contact in some educational and medical settings.

"We cannot afford to raise a generation of children who have neither access to nor an appreciation of computers and advanced communications devices," warned Dukes. "Not only is it unfair and immoral, it is simply not good business."

One onlooker who was impressed by Ms. Dukes' message was Mark Monteverdi, Manager, Public Programs, Philip Morris Companies Inc., a representative of one of the conference's principal sponsors.

Monteverdi said: "Ms. Dukes' warning is both timely and on point in today's increasingly computer-oriented world. We applauded her for addressing an issue that too many others have ignored, and for sounding an important warning to an organization whose membership is in a position to help expand computer literacy in the minority community."

Born in Montgomery, Alabama, Dukes has long been an active force in the realms of civil rights and political justice. She is a former president of both the National Board of Directors of The NAACP and the New York City Off-Track Betting Corporation. Today she serves on a number of boards and commissions and in a variety of professional organizations.



\$900 Million in Minority Business! - Fred Canady, second from right, Director, Minority Business Enterprise Development, Pepsi-Coal Company, accepts the NAACP's Corporate Award for his company's commitment to minority business purchasing. Joining him at the NAACP's Fair Share Awards Luncheon in New York City were, from left: Leonard F. Springs II, Chairman, Special Contributions Fund, NAACP; Kweisi Mfume, President and CEO, NAACP, and Hazel Dukes, President, New York State Conference of NAACP Branches. Since 1982, Pepsi-Cola has spent more than \$900 million on goods and services from minority-owned companies. The NAACP Operation Fair Share Program, initiated in 1981, seeks to establish business linkages between Corporate America and minority Entrepreneurs.

## Heery International To Manage Public School Programs

Heery International has been selected by the Portland Public Schools to manage its building program, announced Hal Bahls, manager of the firm's Portland office.

The building program is a result of the \$197 million bond referendum. Starting in 1996, the building program is scheduled for completion by the end of 2002.

"Our selection of Heery International was based upon not only their strong track-record in Portland, but also their national reputation for excellence in managing school building programs," commented Reg Martinson, Director of Physical Plant for the Portland Public Schools.

"We are excited about working with the Portland Public Schools and their fine facili-

ty staff to deliver quality schools to the citizens of Portland," Bahls commented.

With the average of Portland schools at 60 years old, the majority of construction will entail remodeling and renovation work with the exception of a new elementary schools, a storage facility and small additions to a select number of schools.

Overall, the work will range in scope from

major seismic upgrades to code compliance issues such as ADA, fire and life safety modifications to improved water and indoor air quality issues to deferred maintenance takes.

Heery International is a 750-person design and construction management firm with more than 30 offices throughout the United States and Canada including the Portland office which employs 14 professionals.