

Social Security: A Demographic Crisis

Neither President Clinton nor contender Bob Dole have addressed the unsustainability of unchecked entitlement spending for the existing social security structure.

At the root of the social security problem is demographics. In the past, there were enough workers in relation to recipients to allow generous benefit payments in comparison to actual contributions. But all of this is changing as the vast "baby boom generation" approaches retirement.

The number of workers per beneficiary fell from 4.0 to 1 in 1965 to 3.3 to 1 by 1995. By 2010, when the first wave of boomers retires, it is estimated that this ratio will decline to 2.9 to 1. In the subsequent 20 years, as the entire baby boom generation moves into retirement, this ratio will decline to 2.0 to 1 by 2030. It doesn't stop here, as growth of the work force slows due to lower birth rates that followed the baby boom years of 1946-1964.

In addition, life expectancies are expected to lengthen, meaning retirees will be collecting benefits for a longer period of time. Like it or not, there is a financial crisis brewing.



Social security is financed on a "pay as you go" basis. In other words, payroll taxes are collected from today's workers to pay benefits to today's retirees. Although that

ratio of workers to retirees has fallen, it is still high enough to result in an excess of taxes collected relative to benefits paid. The treasury borrows the surplus from social security to finance part of the overall federal budget deficit. This means that there is no reserve for the future and it is estimated that by 2012, benefits will start to exceed actual cash flowing into social security.

This means that the system will begin a process of insolvency, reaching unsustainable levels by 2029. At this time, social security will not have enough income to pay promised benefits.

This news should serve as a warning that people will increasingly need to establish their own retirement plans to supplement their social security. Legislation has been enacted encouraging and enabling us to save money in a tax advantageous manner. In future articles I will be discussing some of the methods that we can utilize to prepare ourselves for retirement.

Maurice Valdivieso can be reached at Merrill Lynch in Lake Oswego at (503) 699-7201 or (800) 667-9346. Se habla Español.

Community problem requires community response

OBSERVANDO

BY SEAN CRUZ, EDITOR
THE PORTLAND OBSERVADOR

Stories appearing last week in Oregon's largest daily newspaper and several other recent developments have brought me to make some last-minute changes in the content of this issue of the Observador. Some topics are not directly Hispanic, but nonetheless affect the Latino community.

Surely you are aware of the 13-year-old La Grande girl who was chained to a tree for two days by her mother as a ridiculous form of discipline. This poor child has suffered abuse and neglect at the hands of her adoptive parents for her entire life, and the child services safety net which we as a community rely upon to provide protection against situations such as this failed her too, repeatedly. She was—and is—one of those who fall through the cracks.

The parents don't have a clue
The problem is that stories such as this are all too common, and too many of them end in someone's serious injury or death, generally the child's. This story probably wouldn't have even made the news—certainly not the front page—if the girl's parents had used any of the dozens of more common forms of abuse in widespread practice throughout our community.

This is more a case of abuse by attempting to break a child's spirit and by denying her the opportunity to form a satisfactory relationship with her community than it is about abuse in the traditional sense—vicious beatings, scaldings and other forms of torture.

Malparenting
But this is exactly the sort of parenting—call it malparenting—that is the precursor for the increasingly violent behavior that exists in epidemic proportions in our society, and which leads us to an examination of the role of the media and the community in being less part of the problem and more part of the solution.

The headline topic for this week's Observando is drawn from a comment made recently by Lieutenant Derrick Foxworth of the Portland Police Bureau regarding the escalating violence that is—no question about it—destroying the quality of life in our neighborhoods.

Bureau officials are greatly concerned about the increasing frequency of homicides, the particular impact violence is having among people of color, and the nature of homicide and precursor violence, which is changing in ways that are far more threatening to the community than in the past.

An open and continuing public dialogue is needed

Portland Police Chief Charles Moose recently asked for a reciprocal commitment from the Observer/Observador regarding these issues. Chief Moose and his staff believe that no solution to the epidemic of violent crime is possible without an "open and continuing public dialogue in this area." (See accompanying story on page C1).

Reporting is not enough
Typically, the media will report on the results of violence—a necessary role of the media—

but the nature of the business pressures us to report "fresh" news, and we tend to move on quickly to another topic without offering solutions to the problems we describe in print or on the air. Occasional in-depth features are helpful in providing context and perspective, but do not go far enough in reaching for solutions.

The community must get involved....

The Portland Observer/Observador intends to support Chief Moose by offering in its pages space to develop and maintain a public forum on violence and its root causes, and to find solutions as a community.

....and stay involved

This is a long-term problem that can only be solved by a long-term and wide-ranging commitment from each of us. No one can afford to live in isolation any more.

Don't be isolated

Isolation is a large part of the problem. Become involved with a network of neighbors, and look after one another. We really are all in this together.

Post-mortem on Observador numero uno:

We, the overworked staff at Portland's oldest and largest minority-owned newspaper, are very happy to have heard so many wonderful things said about our new publication. We have made many new friends in just the past few weeks, and some of them have become subscribers. The concept of combining diverse cultures in the same pages looks good so far. *Muchas gracias.* Thanks for your support.

A-Boy Stores

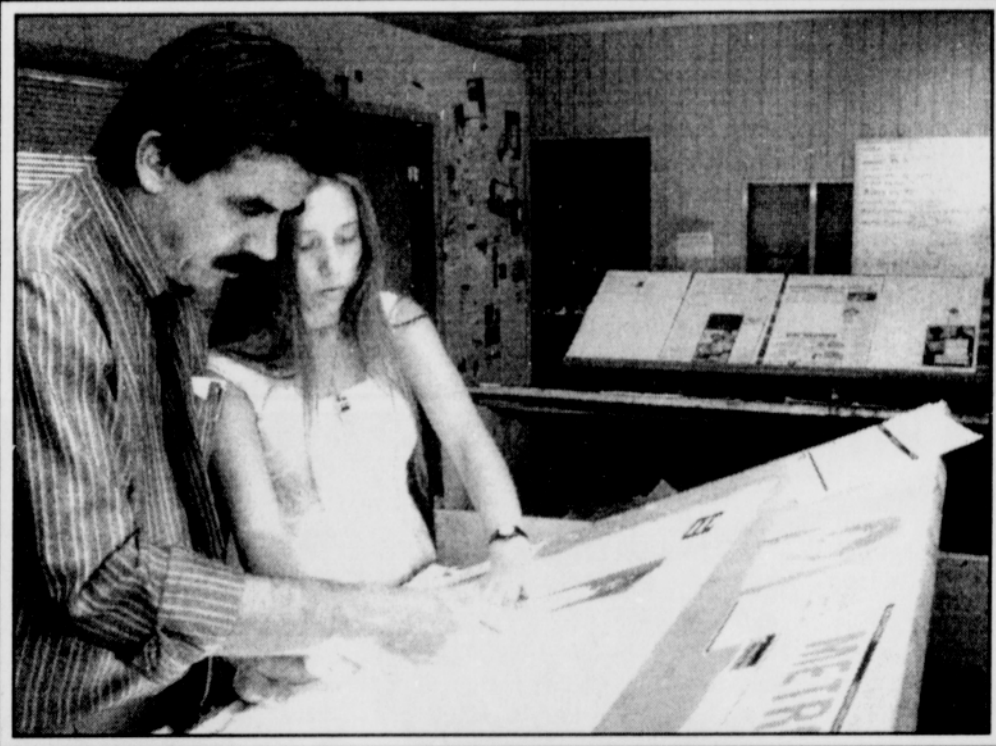
welcomes Spanish-speakers

A-Boy Stores, a Portland-based electrical, lighting and plumbing supply company, is recognizing Hispanic Heritage Month by implementing a marketing program that utilizes the language skills of its bilingual employees.

Dan Dolan, President of A-Boy Supply, recognizing the changing

demographics in the Greater Portland Metropolitan Area—where A-Boy operates nine stores—has taken steps to welcome Spanish-speaking customers and develop the lasting interpersonal relationships that are the hallmark of A-Boy's commitment to providing excellent service.

A-Boy's largest store, located at 7365 SW Barbur Blvd., is now staffed by three bilingual salespeople: Vatolino Bravo, Steve Hawks and Rodney Kent. In Hillsboro, Pete Perez will handle Spanish-language business, and Jessie Ramos will do the same at SE Foster Road in Portland.



Natalia Cruz helped produce the first edition of the Observador and wrote the accompanying story about Powell's Bookstore (below).

Photo by Timothy Collins

No burger flippers at Powell's

BY NATALIA CRUZ AND CORDELL STOTT

Youth guest writers Natalia Cruz and Cordell Stott, visiting the Rose City from Utah, recently took a behind-the-scenes tour of Portland's largest bookstore to learn about the book trade.

Residents of Portland, Oregon should be pleased to know that they have the "Bookstore of the Planet" here, referring to Powell's City of Books, known throughout the world for its size and selection of books. Employees believe it is the largest single bookstore in the nation, perhaps even in the world. With more than 650,000 titles, organized under 122 sections and 3,000 sub-sections, it is the breeding ground and shopping heaven for book lovers, collectors, and customers taking advantage of the cheaper prices used books offer. It also has a fairly large Hispanic section, which includes Spanish literature (some also translated into English) and children's books. Powell's rare books collection also includes some Latin American liter-

ature. Books in this section range from \$100 to \$8,300.

Powell's is also a leader in community events, sponsoring anywhere from 15 to 30 readings a month where well-known and local authors read from their works. They also sponsor musical events and art exhibitions, which sometimes highlight the talent of members of their staff. Workers at Powell's are not your everyday, run-of-the-mill burger flippers; many have Masters Degrees and are experts in various subjects, such as authorship, Vikings and lizards. One can usually find them hidden behind towers of books. The workers, not the Vikings and lizards.

Powell's believes they are the number one tourist attraction in the state of Oregon, with only the Tillamook Cheese Factory as competition, although the free cheese samples hardly compare with the gift of knowledge and literacy. Powell's also reaches out to the world through the Internet, and sends shiploads of books to schools in foreign countries.

Powell's helps communities by

promoting literacy and fighting censorship. It gives running donations to literacy groups, and helps schools around the world increase children's learning. Currently it is fighting ballot Measure 31, which they feel gives government too much power of censorship. The only books they do not carry are those promoting violent, supremacist or separatist behaviors.

As Matt Arnold, one of the aforementioned employees said, "we hope to be the Bookstore of the Planet", and for us it is. We have never seen a bookstore quite like Powell's books. Many other people seem to agree with us, as crowds of people filled the coffee shop and various rooms throughout the store. We feel that Powell's benefits the city of Portland and is very dedicated at becoming the biggest and the best bookstore on Earth.

"Like Pericles said, you can amass great wealth or be very powerful. But you ain't done nothin' until you've done somethin' for your city. And what this city needs is a great bookstore," said Walter Powell, founder of Powell's Bookstore.

The Oregon Hispanic community is growing at Four Times the State Average!

Do you have an effective strategy to win a share of the business this vital and resourceful population represents?

You can wait until they call you.... or call us now!
Quatra Research Group (503) 977-0358
Specialists in Marketing and Communications to the Hispanic Community

Se Habla Español At A-Boy Stores

SW Barbur Blvd. 245-0714

Hillsboro 648-4480

SE Foster Rd. 777-3877

THE BOLD LOOK OF KOHLER.

Fiberglass Showers & Tub/Showers 1-PIECE UNITS

Shower Stall 36"x36"x72" White finish \$188

Tub/Shower 60"x31"x72" White finish \$217

WE INSTALL WATER HEATERS

Champion 50 Gallon Electric Water Heater

- 5 year warranty
- Double elements
- Fast recovery
- R16.7 energy factor

129⁸⁸

Installed Price \$278.88

RSI Home Products Bath Vanities Oak & White 19" to 48" wide

SAVE up to 15% OFF reg. prices

Sale prices start at \$49

HEAT Vent-Light NuTone Combo BATH FAN

Big 70 CFM FAN. Holds 2 Heat Lamps or 1 Heat Lamp & 1 Flood Lamp

\$29⁸⁸

Drive Less... Save More!

A-BOY

The plumbing & electrical store!

200 AMP Breaker Box 46⁹⁵ w/pre-installed main breaker

- 20 spaces, or 40 circuits maximum

#TBB20(20-40)C

MON-FRI 9am-6pm SATURDAY 9am-6pm SUNDAY 10am-5pm

Expert Help at 9 Handy Locations. Locally owned & operated since 1960

ALBANY 17205 SW TV Hwy 948-8412 HANSON HOME CENTER 7305 S.W. Barbur Blvd. 245-0714 HILLSBORO 258 S.E. 2nd St. 648-4480
FOSTER RD S.E. Foster Rd. at 74th 777-3877 Main FRI 9-7, Sat & Sun 9-6 HILLSBORO 258 S.E. 2nd St. 648-4480
HOLLYWOOD N.E. SANDY AT 40TH ST. 257-8776 NORTHWEST 2912 N.W. Vaughn 228-1170 HEAVERTON S.W. Canyon Rd at 114th St 844-2131
VANCOUVER 800 N.E. Mississippi 883-2287 Main FRI 9-6, Sat 9-5, Closed Sunday

! Sale ends October 17, 1996

SUBSCRIPTION

Subscribe to the Observer and receive the Observador also!
Only \$30 for one year!

Suscribase al Observer y reciba el Observador también!
Solamente \$ 30 por un año!

Call (503) 288-0033 To Subscribe