

# Family Living

## Wacky Fun Helps Children

**What do Silly String, Play Doh, balloon hats, water pistols and an eight-foot birthday cake have to do with neglected children?**

You'll find the first five in a benefit for abused and neglected children at Morrison Center's 1997 Evening as a Child fundraiser and party, on Friday, May 16, 1997 at the Portland Marriott. This zany party is designed to raise money for the at-risk children in Morrison Center's treatment programs and to celebrate Morrison Center's 50th Anniversary.

But why such a silly party for such a serious cause? According to Karen Winder, Development & Community Relations Director for Morrison Center, "The children in our programs have not experienced joy in their early years. We strive to help them heal so that they can finally feel safe, happy and loved. The purpose of Evening as a Child is to help our guests celebrate the magic of childhood while raising money for children

who have been deprived of that magic due to abuse and neglect." She adds, "This is the most fun you can have while helping at-risk children."

The Portland Marriott Ballroom will be transformed into a giant playground for adults, featuring the Velcro Obstacle Course, Mechanical Calf-Roping, Snowboard and Surfboard Simulators and much more. The event will also include a silent auction with over 40 exciting packages and a raffle for a trip for two to Sedona, Arizona.

Tickets are available for \$75 each or \$750 for a table of 10 by calling Jeni Martinez at 503-233-4356. Dinner and fun are included.

Corporate sponsors for this year's event include Fred Meyer, Jubitz Corp., Milne Construction, Nabisco, PacificCorp, US Bank, and US West.

All proceeds from Evening as a Child will support the children in Morrison Center's programs, including severely abused and neglected preschool children; infants and toddlers prenatally exposed to drugs; and adolescents struggling with problems involving substance abuse and violence.

Currently operating with a staff of 150 employees in eight area treatment programs, Morrison Center provides service to 2,500 at-risk children and their families each year.

## Adoption Information Seminar

Holt International Children's Services will conduct an Adoption Information Seminar in Portland on Thursday, April 24.

The seminar takes place from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm at West Hills Covenant Church, located near Raleigh Hills at 5815 SW Gillerest Court.

Portland area social workers will provide information about Holt International, the programs it offers, and the basic procedure for adoption.

The seminar is open to anyone interested in adoption and is free of charge. A reservation is not mandatory but would be appreciated. For more information or to make a reservation call Tami Kraske at (503) 848-3133.

## Waiting Children

*The Blessings of A Mother*



Blanca and Oyuki

Having a mother to love and take care of you is a blessing most of us take for granted. Except for sweet Riley, age 2, who is battling Klinefelter's Syndrome. Or the adorable and tender sisters Blanca, age 6, and Oyuki, age 4. Even the warm and loving pair of Esteban, age 6 and Nancy, age 4. These dear children are each missing a devoted mother to hug after school, wave goodbye or kiss goodnight. Because they are among the 350 Oregon children waiting to be adopted by someone special. If you are a loving and stable adult, this Mother's Day please consider adopting Oregon's waiting children. Both Moms and/or Dads are encouraged to inquire. Oregon adoption agencies waive or reduce fees for persons applying to adopt older children. For more information, write or call The Special Needs Adoption Coalition at 018 SW Boundary Ct., Portland, OR 97201 (503) 222-9661. Toll free outside of Portland, 1-800-342-6688.



Esteban and Nancy

## Tightening The Bond That Binds:

### Saving The Young, Our Families, And The World

"It is the family that gives us a deep private sense of belonging. Here we first begin to have our self defined for us."

Howard Thurman, "Disciplines of the Spirit"

The soul of America is in trouble. The family that weathered the worst, most turbulent storms of any ethnic group in America's history is finally displaying ominous signs of unraveling, of losing its very soul; a soul that for centuries gave light to the country and to the world.

For centuries, Africa's seed on the North American continent braved calamities and assaults that by all rules of mortal endurance and logic should have destroyed it.

America's dark and beautiful offspring managed, by the grace of God, to emerge from slavery, lynchings, Jim Crow, duplicitous court rulings, hostile government decisions, whole town burnings, and strikes on individual and group esteem, morally unscathed and intact. Or at least that is what we thought 25 or 30 years ago.

Today, at the end of the 20th century, a different portrait of the African-American family is being painted by the purveyors of truth and the caretakers of our race.

At the heart of much of the disintegration is the breakdown of familial ties and family rituals but, most importantly, of the communication of love and genuine concern among the generations.

It appears that character - the outward manifestation of human behavior that reflects an inner spirit that has been disciplined and directed by patience, affection and firmness - is a shrinking commodity in our fast-paced, materialistic and self-absorbed society.

We see the young doing the unthinkable, saying the unrepeatable, worshipping the ungodly, and exhibiting a towering ingratitude for all that they receive by someone else's efforts; and all we adults do is throw our hands in the air in a collective gesture of hopelessness and frustration.

It is time to stop the finger-pointing and scapegoating! To reassure our share of the responsibility for the charterless course on which too many in the younger generation have embarked. It is time to engage in this battle being waged for control over the minds of our young.

Like it or not, our children and their values are mirror reflections of us. How they manifest their worship of things may be different from ours, but its a difference without distinction. Their incessant pleasure-seeking is a carbon copy of our own.

By Michael A. Grant, J.D.

They worship our gods. Their rebelliousness is our own returned in a new form. Their disrespect for the sanctity of human life and the sacredness of human personality was born when we abdicated our role of nurturing them and providing wise counsel. Instead, alternatives such as television have bombarded their vulnerable and impressionable young minds with a ceaseless orgy of sex, violence, and conspicuous consumption.

We verbally nail our offspring to the cross for their slavish worship of peer opinion, using acrimony instead of honestly taking responsibility for our role in the matter.

If we would slow down our vitriolic attacks on our children, we would clearly see that their bonds with their cohorts are relatively superficial. For while they are connected with those in their age group by mere style, form or fashion, they are connected far deeper to their parents by blood and emo-

tion. In their moments of utter desperation, or when their sense of self is shattered, it is their parents' comforting presence that the young cry out for. One only has to visit any of the countless prisons that houses hundreds of thousands of the country's most hardened inmates, to witness the periodic unraveling of layers that shield an almost infant-like longing for the comfort and reassurance of a parent.

We cannot give up on our young. The next generation craves -- beyond their rebelliousness -- our love, our understanding, and our non-judgmental support. They need us to believe in them. They need us to help them construct a panoramic view of what is possible for their lives.

Our young can be saved. It is our moral imperative to move post haste to do so. Any talk of hopelessness must be challenged. For, our young people carry the seed of our promise for brighter tomorrows.



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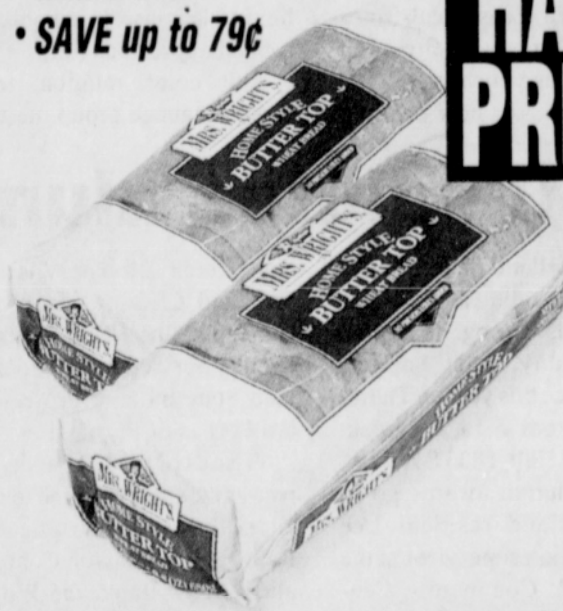
- Economy Pack • First 3
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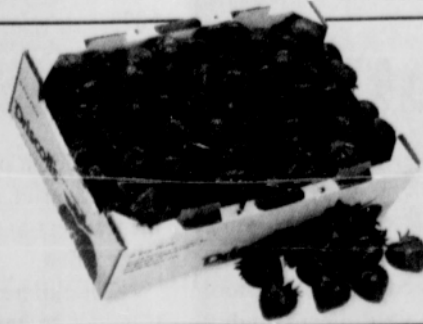
- 22.5-oz. • Mrs. Wright's
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### Birth Announcements

A girl, **Alexis Senclair Whitney**, was born April 10, 1997 to Alonda Patton and Senclair Whitney of Portland. Alexis weighed 6 1/2 lbs. and is 18 1/2 in. long.

A boy, **LaMarcus Demont Jackson**, was born April 9, 1997 to Viola Jackson of Portland. LaMarcus weighed 8 lbs. 7 oz. and is 21 1/2 in. long.