

Willner awarded for years of support

Don S. Willner honored for his hard work at Portland State University.



See Metro, inside.



Happy New Year!

WITH DAN FROOT
With special guest David Dorfman, Froot will dance his way in your hearts this coming January.



See Metro, inside.

The Portland Observer ^{25¢}

THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Kaczynski Won't Use Mental Defense

Theodore Kaczynski's lawyers abandoned plans for a psychiatric defense after the Unabomber suspect refused to be examined by government experts. The defense served notice that it will not call mental health experts as witnesses during the guilt-or-innocence phase of the trial, which begins next Monday. Without a psychiatric defense, the attorneys will be limited to challenging the validity of government evidence against him. He is accused of crafting bombs that killed two people in Sacramento and maimed two others. Kaczynski's lawyers could still make an issue of his mental state during the penalty phase if he is found guilty.

Witnesses Describe Bombing Scene

Witness after witness described the horror of the Oklahoma City bombing as prosecutors tried to get across the enormity of the crime and convince a skeptical jury that Terry Nichols is deserving of the death penalty. Jurors last week convicted Nichols of conspiracy and involuntary manslaughter, but not murder. Given the split verdict against Nichols, legal experts said it is extremely unlikely the jury will give him the death penalty. The jury will have to decide whether Nichols should die by injection, serve life in prison without parole or receive a lesser sentence to be determined by the judge.

Congressional Pensions Top \$100,000

Some Congressional lawmakers retire with annual pensions of roughly \$100,000, about five times the national average. So says the National Taxpayers Union, a conservative group that advocates less government spending. Reps. Joseph McDade, R-Pa., Lee Hamilton, D-Ind., and Sidney Yates, D-Ill., will be eligible for \$98,694 each, about three-fourths of their \$133,600 salary, when they leave office in 1999. According to a 1994 Labor Department study, a private sector employee earning \$50,000 or more was eligible for pension benefits averaging \$17,062.

Ebola Vaccine Shows Promise

Guinea pigs that were injected with genes from the Ebola virus gained protection against infection, a possible step toward creating an Ebola vaccine for people. The work is reported in the January issue of the journal Nature Medicine. No vaccine or specific treatment exists now for Ebola hemorrhagic fever, which kills its victims 50 percent to 90 percent of the time.

Kenyan Election Extended to 2nd Day

Election officials ordered a second day of voting to be held after voting was plagued with delays and confusion. The move fueled suspicions the election was being rigged to favor President Daniel arap Moi. Two people were killed in political violence, an election riot erupted in one town and observers reported blatant fraud, with some Kenyans' votes being bought for only \$1.50 each. Moi is seeking a fifth term in Kenya's third multiparty election since independence in 1963.

Ramadan To Begin

Clerics around the Islamic world spotted a new moon recently, signaling that Ramadan - the holy month of dusk-to-dawn fasting - will begin. Ramadan's starting date changes each year. It marks God's revelation of the Koran, Islam's holy book, to the Prophet Mohammed some 1,400 years ago.

Welfare Cases Down - Child Poverty Is Up

The holiday season is traditionally a time when we try to be sure to think about the less fortunate.

I do my best to think about those who are so-called "less fortunate" - and particularly our children -- all year round, and I wanted to share my recent thoughts with you.

We've heard a lot lately about welfare reform. Welfare reform has been, we hear, a spectacular success in Oregon. Welfare caseloads are down to 1970 levels.

But my primary concern, I have to tell you, isn't welfare; it's poverty. I don't think it's much of a success to move people off of welfare if we aren't moving people out of poverty.

And by that standard - in spite of our booming economy -- we aren't doing so well.

According to the Oregon Population Survey, the poverty rate in Oregon in 1996 was 11.8% -- actually up slightly from 11% in 1990, and 11.5% in 1969. (The Census has numbers for 1969, not 1970.) Since the population of the state has gone up, the number of people in poverty has clearly gone up - significantly since 1990, and dramatically since 1969-70.

In 1969, there were 234,000 Oregonians in poverty; today, there are 375,000 - a 60% increase. There might be the same number of people on welfare as in 1970 - but there are a lot more people in poverty.

Although the Survey doesn't provide a breakdown by age for 1996, we can expect that a disproportionate number of that 12% are children.

In recent years, the poverty rate



Senator Avel Gordly

among children has been significantly higher than that rate among adults - particularly in the most urban and the most rural areas. In 1993, for instance, according to the Oregon Employment Department, the poverty rate for children 5 to 17 was 17% in Baker County, over 17% in Multnomah County, and over 23% in Josephine County (Grants Pass).

We can change the name of the program - from "Aid to Dependent Children" to "Temporary Assistance to Needy Families" -- but it doesn't mean that there are fewer dependent children.

I've been giving you a lot of statistics. But when I think about these issues, I don't think statistically or dispassionately.

I remember what it was like to be on welfare with a child. Unfortunately, most of the people who make policy decisions which affect the lives of the poor don't have that kind of experience.

And that is why they thoughtlessly trumpet statistics about declines in welfare caseloads -- without bothering to find out whether there has been any actual improvement in people's lives.

Question about policies affecting the poor are usually framed in dollar terms: "how can we save the most money?" We could ask a different question - "how can we improve children's lives" -- but, shamefully, we do not.

Until we have a different set of decision makers with values that put children before dollars, we as a society will continue to devote too little attention to the well-being of the children who are being raised in poverty.

AIDS: A Silent Killer In Our Neighborhood

By MARIAN WRIGHT EDELMAN

If someone came into your neighborhood, threatening to kill your children, wouldn't you move heaven and earth to protect them? Wouldn't you do whatever it took to keep them safe?

Unfortunately, the killer is in your neighborhood. Its name is AIDS.

This is not somebody else's problem - we are all living with it. African Americans and Latino Americans bear a disproportionate brunt of this deadly epidemic, and the tragic reality is our children are no exception. Half of all people newly infected by HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, are under 25; one in four are teenagers. And of those young people, six in 10 are Black and Latino. Of the teenage girls infected, a shocking eight in 10 are Black and Latino.

In some communities of color, one in every 30 young men, ages 18 and 19, is already HIV infected. And AIDS does not discriminate by gender: more than half of infected Black teenagers are female.

But AIDS is about much more than numbers, it is about the simple truth that our children and youth are in serious danger. And until we expand our AIDS prevention efforts, how can any of us rest easily?

Fortunately, there are some promising developments. The rate of HIV transmission from mothers to infants declined 43 percent last year. And the arrival of promising new drugs has brought new hope to those people currently living with the virus.

But good drugs don't by themselves save people's lives. If we can't even immunize all

the children in our major cities, how can we hope to bring the expensive 40 pill-a-day AIDS drug regimen to everyone who needs it - particularly in low-income communities?

A cure is still far off the horizon, and we can't allow the hope of tomorrow to stop us from protecting our children today. Nor can we allow fear or homophobia to color our perception of the disease that is stealing so many of our children's dreams. AIDS is an equal opportunity threat, and AIDS prevention is a mission that demands our full attention and action now.

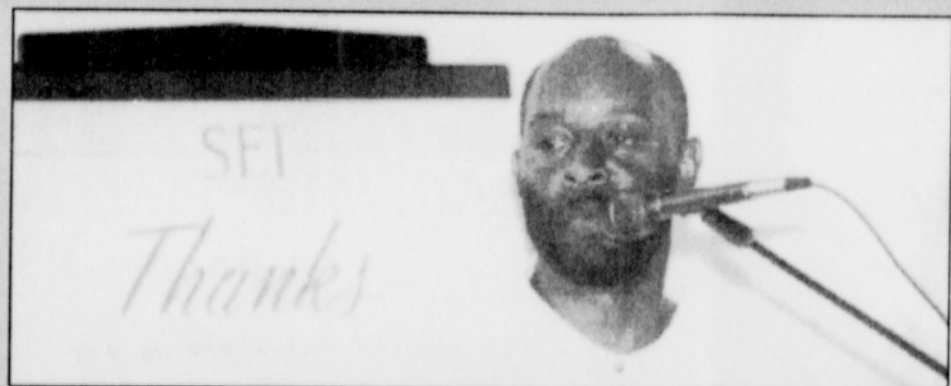
Time and time again, our churches, our extended families, and informal kinship has been there to meet our community's needs. Now it is time for those same institutions to take up the AIDS prevention banner. And it

is time for Black parents to fight that same fight on behalf of our children.

If you're a parent, start by educating yourself. Get the facts about AIDS from your doctor or from a local clinic or AIDS organization. Then educate your children. Tell them what you know...and listen carefully to what they tell you and to what they wish they could.

Remind your child that AIDS isn't someone else's problem. No one thinks they're going to get AIDS. Seventeen year old Angelica found out she was HIV positive when she went to get prenatal care in the latter months of her pregnancy. Ask 16 year-old Jesse who had been taught by society that he did not deserve to live because he is gay.

Hopson Addresses Local Area Students



Tony Hopson



The Students of The SEI Youth Summit work through issues of everyday life.

On December 13, 1997 SEI Pamplin Fellows positively influenced their peers at a one day conference called "Don't Believe the Hype." The morning keynote address was delivered by SEI President Tony Hopson. The 40 student leaders from Jefferson, Grant, and Benson high school are charged with planning and conducting community and school programs and events that address the issues inner-city Portland teenagers face daily.

The SEI Pamplin Project encourages and empowers young adults to use their natural skills of influence to persuade peers to make positive choices when confronted with teen pressures such as drugs, gangs and violence. Working with schools, families and community organizations, The SEI Pamplin Project teaches young people that life offers options, and with positive decision-making, teenagers can make a difference locally, regionally and nationally. The project is funded by Bob Pamplin, a Portland entrepreneur, who wants to make a positive difference in the lives of inner-city teens.

An Evening of Stars

"A Celebration of Educational Excellence"

The United Negro College Fund (The College Fund/UNCF) has named Louis Gossett Jr., Alfre Woodard and Debbie Allen to serve as co-hosts along with lead co-host Lou Rawls for their newly formatted annual broadcast "An Evening of Stars - A Celebration of Educational Excellence," scheduled to air on KPTV Channel 12 from 6:00 - 10:00 p.m. on Saturday, January 10, 1997.

To highlight the essential work UNCF does in providing minority scholarships to its member institutions, they are introducing an exciting new 4-hour format that will feature extended concert performances by some of the music industry's top artists.

The nationally syndicated television special will focus on the compelling success stories of UNCF students and inspiring messages about our nation's historically black colleges and universities.