

Family Matters: The Way It Was

By Prof. McKinley Burt

We are all agreed that "it takes a village to raise a child", so let us take a further look at that fascinating inner city stage on which so many of our nations' children were raised.

Many times it is the minor traditions and social nuances that better describe a neighborhood than any behavioral study by "experts". This evening's raucous clamor of small children beneath my window takes me back to a quieter and more wondrous time, when a like assemblage of small children would be following the "lamp lighter" from block to block.

As late as the early 1930's, some cities still used gas to illuminate their city streets. We kids would follow (supervise) the man hired by the city to insert his long "igniter stick" into the clear glass globe atop each lamppost. We must have looked like the children who followed the "Pied Piper of Hamelin" in that old fairy tale.

A bevy of kids would follow a lamp lighter for about a mile, then "turn him over" to the team from the next neighborhood. This after a short conclave between the groups about the important "happenings" in each district.

School through K8 was a different place entirely before World War II (Though, given, that in some strange ways, all things change but remain the same). My aunt Marjorie was a teacher in the same John Marshall Elementary School that I attended, but I was never in a class of hers - thank the Lord! (Smiles).

In earlier articles I have cited the emphasis placed on grammati-

cal structure, beginning with the very early grades. Most of us were better prepared as freshmen than many high school graduates today, and I suppose this had something to do with our facility at reading. There was an unquenchable thirst for the printed word; books in every field, pulps, comic books, newspapers, encyclopedias, whatever.

Often there were riots when the "bookmobile" was pushed down the hall. As a reward for excellence, "superior" students were allowed to select "hot" new items to be read during an extra "reading period". One could be seriously injured in the ensuing rush for "goodies".

I have talk with many other members of my generation who had this early "ghetto learning experience." Some claimed that they became violently ill when they read "Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs To Know", E.D. Hirsch Jr., vintage 1988. This was because the book was an unparalleled criticism of today's educational climate and addressed a "general decline" - when 70 years ago that "Ghetto Learning Experience" of many cities incorporated the essential concepts of Hirsch's lexicon.

Most of our class of '35 would have had little trouble with "absolute zero, Alamo, Iago, Icarus Sea legs, Valhalla, Manna from Heaven, carpetbagger Waterloo, Battle of, lame duck, Homestead Act, Roco-Plato, Darwin, Feet-of-Clay, Coals-to-Newcastle, Etc."

And once our reading habits were ingrained, they extended far beyond school. In those days, the nearest drug store was a library in itself, that department taking up as much room as vitamins, today.

Instead of going all the way to a distant "public" library, you could "rent" books for three cents per day.

Then there were the magazine sections for every age, sex and taste. My allowance went for "Dare Devil Aces" (World War I), Doc Savage (Adventurer), Buck Rogers, Flash Gordon and The Shadow. "Sneak around to the back door and you could get "Spicy Western or Spicy Detective." At home, you had a subscription to "Boys Life". Grandpa got "Scientific American."

And, oh yes, a few other "things that change but remain the same." "Dirty old men" would hang out near the school and for a lunch money pool of fifty cents would sell a "sex book" based on comic strip characters. Rapidly flipping the pages would produce simulated motion and screams of delight from ten year-olds - often a dead give-away to a roaming teacher.

There was much else for African American small fry; the neighborhood music teacher of piano, violin or guitar, and there was the popular, "Mr's Lacey's School of Music And Dance" where I took my violin lessons (never lived that down, I wanted piano!).

The "colored YMCA and YWCA" provided year-round swimming and gymnastics, and summer camps. Fathers (my grandfather) took kids fishing, hunting, hiking, and to sporting events. Today, there is much role reversal and we "will" get to woman's role in this early scheme of things. Very, very important.

RELIGION

Orchestra, Gospel Quartet To Join Keillor In Concert

When Garrison Keillor takes the stage during the Oregon State Fair, he'll do it in style with a 34-piece orchestra and a gospel quartet. The Oregon State Fair Summer Orchestra was assembled solely for Keillor's September 1 appearance at the LB Day Amphitheater. The group is composed of members of the Oregon Symphony and the Portland Opera Orchestra, as well as other local musicians. Philip Brunelle, who works frequently with Keillor, is the Summer Orchestra's musical coordinator and conductor.

Audiences can look for-

ward to such classics as Mendelssohn's Midsummer Night's Dream. Keillor's show is sponsored by Oregon Public Broadcasting. In addition to Keillor's storytelling and the orchestra's performances,

the Hopeful Gospel Quartet will make an appearance. Those who listen to Keillor's radio show A Prairie Home Companion have likely heard this group, which includes Keillor, Robin Williams, Linda Williams and Kate McKenzie. The Hopeful Gospel Quartet recently released its second album, "Climbing Up on the Rough Side."

Tickets for the show are on sale now and are available at all Fred Meyer Fastixx outlet and Music Millennium. Portland area residents can charge by phone at 224-8499. Others can call toll free at 1-800-992-8499.

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Promise Keepers Returns To Eugene

'Promise Keepers' 'Live a Legacy' Men's Conference, Friday & Saturday, July 31 and August 1, 1998 at Autzen Stadium

For the first time, in 1998 there is no fee, but registration is strongly recommended to ensure seating. Bill McCartney, Promise Keepers Founder and CEO, announced the elimination of admission fees at Stand in the Gap, a Sacred Assembly of Men held on the Washington, DC Mall last October 4. "We want guys to be able to bring their friends to the men's conferences," said McCartney. "We're excited about sharing ways men can impact their world, their church, and their families. In 1998, no man should

miss out." Registration for the events can be done by calling 800-888-7596, for Spanish 800-203-1564 and for TYY 800-769-6855. Men are asked to register in order to ensure seating at conference sites, and to assist the ministry in planning. During the registration process, meals and worship tapes will be offered for sale. Promise Keepers is an international men's ministry that is dedicated to uniting men in vital relationships to become godly influences in their world.

OBITUARY



In Loving Memory of Mrs. Zora Johnson

Mrs. Zora Johnson was born in Little Rock, Arkansas in October 2, 1902, and moved to the Portland area in 1944. She was a charter member of the Mallory Avenue Church of Christ and a homemaker. She enjoyed cooking, sewing, and church activities. Mrs. Johnson is survived by: Mary Craven, Daughter of Los Angeles, California; Christine Austin, Daughter of Portland, Oregon

Observing Vancouver

Juvenile firesetters the focus of training

Juvenile firesetter assessment and intervention is the topic of an upcoming Vancouver Fire Department (VFD) training session on Wednesday, Aug. 12. The 8 hour session is designed for regional firefighters, mental health care providers, public safety professionals and juvenile authorities.

The program will describe effective juvenile firesetter interview skills, offer tips about how to assess individual risk levels, and teach pro-

viders how to help firesetter children and their families.

"Children at different ages start fires for different reasons," says Mark Katzenmeyer of the VFD Fire Prevention Bureau. "Under the age of seven, curiosity and fascination motivate them. As they get older, it can change from fascination to compulsion and even malicious destruction." Katzenmeyer stresses that it is important for community resources to be in place to address juvenile

firesetters. In the Southwest Washington area, young people are responsible for over half of all fires.

Don Porth, a nationally recognized expert on juvenile firesetters, will teach the session. Fee is \$30. Location is VFD Station 88, 6701 NE 147th Ave. Hours are 8:30 am-5:30 pm.

For more information, contact Katzenmeyer at the VFD Fire Prevention Bureau 360-696-8166.

Fire code amendment calls for 10 year smoke detector replacements

Effective immediately, smoke detectors in Vancouver rental properties that become defective must be replaced with a new 10-year battery model. The Vancouver City Council approved this local amendment to the 1997 Fire Code and Chapter 16 of the Vancouver Municipal Code at its July 6 meeting at the request of the Vancouver Fire Department (VFD).

"This doesn't mean that owners need to run and replace their smoke detectors," says Fire Marshal Rick Atkins. "However, the 10 year models are superior because the batteries cannot be removed and used elsewhere. This is an important, incremental step that landlords can take to enhance fire and life safety in the community."

The law presently requires smoke detectors in all rental dwellings. This

additional stipulation states, "Where battery operated smoke detectors are allowed or battery backups are required for hard wired smoke detectors, batteries shall be an approved minimum ten-year-life battery." Non compliance is a misdemeanor. In Oregon, the law is more stringent. It requires 10 year battery detectors to be placed wherever single station smoke detectors are required.

Second group of completed Neighborhood Action Plans to be introduced at July 16 event

Ten busy and active neighborhoods invite local residents to celebrate the completion of their Neighborhood Action Plans Thursday, July 16, from 7-9 pm at the Water Resources Education Center, 4600 SE Columbia Way.

The following neighborhoods will share their experiences with

the Vancouver City Council, Planning Commission and community as they unveil their Action Plans: Bagley Downs, Belle Vista, Dubois Park, Esther Short, Hudson's Bay, North Garrison Heights, Riverview, Shumway, Vancouver Heights, and West Minnehaha.

Other city neighborhood asso-

ciations interested in developing action plans are encouraged to attend and visit with celebrating neighborhoods and city officials. Light refreshments will be provided. For more information, contact the city's Growth Management Division at 696-8005 or Office of Neighborhoods at 696-8222.

Soroptimists give grant to Meals on Wheels

Soroptimist International of Vancouver has awarded the Meals on Wheels program of Clark County a \$1,500 grant. The money will be used to help defray the cost of mileage given to volunteers who deliver

meals to shut ins.

Approximately 41 volunteers deliver over 950 meals a week to homebound senior throughout Clark County. Each volunteer spends about two and one-half hours on a

route. Besides delivering meals, the volunteers spend a few minutes visiting with the seniors. Mileage reimbursement is the only money volunteers receive for these services.

Register now for spot at Holiday Bazaar

Registration for the popular Home for the Holidays bazaar at Luepke Center has been open since July 7th in the Marshall Center. People aged

50 and older can register in person for a table or space. A "take a number" registration system will be used. The bazaar will be November 21 and

22, from 9 am to 4 pm at Marshall Center, 1009 E. McLoughlin Blvd. Call Jana Wilson, 696-8202, for details.

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