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They stated that all the universe, the earth as well as our bodies pulsate with particular sounds which resonate at particular frequencies. Those who receive meditation initiation from a master, will be given a personal mantra which resonates at frequencies suitable for that meditator's body. During meditation imagine (in your mind's eye) the sound of the mantra. Don't say it out loud or imagine the mantra's spelling or pronunciation. Just hear its sound internally and flow inward riding the mantra. As your mind rides the mantra, it will experience moments of complete thoughtlessness or stillness. Each time you repeat the mantra in your mind, you will feel yourself diving deeper into the Self. You will eventually reach moments of complete thoughtlessness where you are fully awake but detached from mind, body, and senses. This is the blissful state of transcendence. Here, you are in touch with boundless intuition and bliss. Then after a few seconds, thoughts will arise again. When you notice thoughts, gently and lovingly put

your mind back on the mantra. Don't get angry or force the mind to be quiet—the mind is like a stubborn child and will only retaliate if you pick on it. Just practice the simple procedure of noticing when you are off the mantra, then very gently and lovingly put the mind back on the mantra again. Practice your meditation with the universal mantra Om (pronounced Aumm).

Because the mantra has no meaning to your intellect, it is best to concentrate on your inner-Self while hearing the mantra Om in your mind. This inner-Self is that Witness who is watching the parade of thoughts, and emotions without becoming absorbed in their meaning. This may sound complicated but it's not. When you are sitting in meditation, you are simply observing thoughts and emotions without acting on them. While riding the mantra Om, focus on that observer or witness who is quietly observing the passing thoughts and emotions. If one of you is doing the thinking, then who is the witness or observer? The witness is none other than your soul or inner-self. While

riding your mantra, merge with the Witness, your true essence.

For certain students it may be easier to ride the breath rather than a mantra. Try this simple breath-meditation: sit in the same comfortable meditative position with your head, neck, and spine in alignment. You can do this on the floor or sitting on a chair. After settling down, imagine the sound Sa on the in-breath, and the sound Ham on the out-breath. Breathe smoothly so that the in and out-breaths melt into each other, producing the silent chant Sa Ham, Sa Ham, Sa Ham. Let the breath take you where it wants to. As you become absorbed in the primordial sound of Sa Ham, your breathing will become so thread-like that it won't even fog a mirror placed directly under your nostrils. The slow, deep, steady, and feeble breath is a natural result of the deep meditative state. Whether you the mantra or the breath, meditate with a sincerity, faith, and a strong desire to merge with your inner-God. May your meditations be filled with love, bliss, and grace.

The Historic Columbia River Highway Celebration

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

This July, a significant and spectacular part of American history comes alive again when two long-closed sections of one of the world's most renowned and scenic roadways are reopened to the public – the Historic Columbia River Highway State Trail.

Begun in 1913 and completed nine years later, the highway was an architectural feat built with brawn to connect Portland to The Dalles. Gently weaving amid waterfalls, towering trees, abundant wildlife and stunning views, the highway spanned more than 75 miles and was promptly dubbed "The King of Roads." The highway quickly became a major route for early 20th century travelers and visitors to explore the amazing natural beauty of the Columbia River Gorge, later designated in 1986 as the first and only National Scenic Area in the United States.

Significant portions of this historic highway have unfortunately been closed to the public for decades as Interstate 84 replaced the historic highway with a faster and more direct route. For the past ten years however, intensive and innovative restoration efforts have been underway to restore abandoned segments of roadway. This summer, those efforts pay off. On July 23, official dedication ceremonies will reopen them to the public.

In July 2000, a major section of this highway from Hood River to Mosier through to the restored "Mosier Twin Tunnels" will reopen for the first time in almost 50 years. The new section will join sections now open from Cascade Locks to Tanner Creek. Abandoned for the convenience and safety of the newer, faster Interstate 84, these segments of road were all but forgotten by the public, or so it seemed. In addition to the restoration, modern improvements have been made to insure the safety of all those who travel the historic highway. Part of the renovations includes a state-of-the-art "catchment" structure designed to catch falling rock (a major problem of the gorge) just west of the Mosier section of the trail, open for hiking and biking and occasionally to antique automobiles.

Congratulations to our local scholars!

Ricky Booker, Jr. of Ockley Green Middle School recently became a National Award Winner through the United States Achievement Academy. He was chosen as one of America's best students for excelling in Mathematics. Very few are selected nationwide to receive this high honor. He is exceptional for his age and grade level, especially since the Academy recognizes mostly high school students doing well in one or more of 18 academic disciplines ranging from Agriculture to Science. Ricky received national recognition after his nomination from his teacher, Mr. Chad Wolyn for his mastery in Mathematics and serving as a math tutor at Ockley Green. Other noteworthy achievements include competing in a statewide chess tournament sponsored by OMSI in 1998. A hobby of his is using his computer to design web pages for friends. Besides his high academic achievement, Ricky was chosen on many other considerations: interest and aptitude, leadership qualities, responsibility, enthusiasm, motivation to learn and improve, citizenship, attitude and cooperative spirit, and dependability.

As an added bonus provided by USAA, Ricky's

biography will be featured in the Academy's "All-American Scholar Directory" among other scholastic achievers. And, he will be qualified to compete for grants awarded by the Academy. Every year, the organization makes available \$500,000 in scholarships to students on the high school and collegiate level. Another academic scholar within the Booker family is Ricky's sister, Ebony Booker. Ebony is an 18 year old Benson graduate who will be attending Linnfield College as a Nursing major this fall. Through her involvement with HOSA (Health Occupations Students of America) at school, she has competed at several HOSA Leadership Conferences and a nationals competition since 1998 - winning medals every year. Her interests include musical instruments, science, medicine, children, exercising, doing hair, and art. Both of these students credit their parents, Ricky and Margie Booker for their support and spiritual guidance for doing well in school. The children were reared through the discipline of their faith as Jehovah's Witnesses since early childhood to gain skills in reading and public speaking. It has enabled them to become effective tutors and mentors to their peers.

The Jefferson High School Class of 1970

will be celebrating their 30 year reunion on August 25, 26 and 27, 2000. Memorabilia night will be on Friday, August 25 with a dinner and dance at the Red Lion Thunderbird on Saturday, August 26. On Sunday, August 27, there will be a picnic at Oaks Park. If you are a classmate interested in attending, please call Ralph at 249-1720 X290 before July 1, 2000. We are planning a fun event. We hope to hear from you soon!!

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