

# United Way to Fund Scouts Despite Ban

The board of Oregon's largest United Way chapter decided Friday to continue funding the Boy Scouts, arguing that maintaining a neutral position on the ban of homosexual members and leaders was most beneficial to all sides.

However, the board said contributors to the United Way can designate

which programs they want their donation to support, giving contributors the option of not financially supporting the Scouts.

Members of the YWCA held a candlelight vigil outside the United Way building on Southwest 11th Avenue, urging board members to stop funding the scouts.

Two-thirds of the board members voted to continue funding; however, they also continue to "strongly urge" member agencies such as the Boy Scouts to adopt anti-discrimination policies that include sexual orientation.

"The board of the United Way decided to reaffirm its current poli-

cies with regards to discrimination, which means that the United Way organization itself has a nondiscriminatory policy. And it strongly urges all of its agencies to follow that policy," stated John King, United Way Board of Directors Chair.

In June, the Supreme Court upheld the Scouts' ban on gay Scout

leaders.

Denouncing that policy as discriminatory, numerous school boards, city councils, corporations and charities have halted or reduced support for the Scouts. Since the ruling, six of 1,400 United Way chapters — including groups in Providence, R.I., and Evanston, Ill. — have

adopted discrimination policies that effectively bar funding of the Scouts, according to the National United Way office.

At \$252,000 a year, the United Way is the biggest contributor to the Scout council's \$6.1 million annual budget. The council serves roughly 53,000 boys in Oregon and Southwest Washington.

# AT&T Considering Four Way Split

Communications giant would split into business service, wireless, consumer long distance, and Internet broadband

(AP) - Board members of AT&T Corp., the nation's largest long-distance telephone service and cable television provider, intend to consider dividing the company into four distinct businesses, according to reports.

The split would create separate companies specializing in business services, wireless, consumer long-distance, and "broadband" delivery of TV, Internet and phone services over cable lines. The New York Times

and The Wall Street Journal reported in Monday's editions. The board meets Monday.

The company's biggest and most profitable unit, the Business Services department, which caters to corporate customers, would become the new AT&T and would create branding and commercial agreements with the three other businesses.

AT&T officials declined to comment on the proposed plan. If the plan, called Project Grand Slam, is

approved, an announcement could be made as early as Wednesday. Other options the board were to consider include leaving AT&T intact or spinning off one or more new businesses.

Under the split-into-four proposal, AT&T's wireless and cable TV operations would become separate companies over the next one to two years. The company's more than 60 million telephone users would not feel much immediate impact from the plan.

The four split units would be able to concentrate on their own strategies and grow more quickly than they would while confined to the larger AT&T scheme.

AT&T's market valuation has dropped by about \$70 billion since January, partly because of falling prices in the long-distance industry. Its stock is trading at around half of what it was a year ago.

The proposed plan would represent the second time the company has been broken up since the federal government supervised the breakup of the Bell system in 1984. AT&T spun off Lucent Technologies and its NCR computer unit in 1996.

In morning trading on the New York Stock Exchange, AT&T was down 19 cents a share at \$26.81, less than half its peak value earlier this year.

# Self Enhancement Hosts Home Buying Fair

The first annual Home Buying Fair geared toward African Americans will be held Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Center for Self Enhancement, 3920 N. Kerby.

The event is a special effort to assist local residents in the home buying process and promote African American homeownership. It is free and open to the public.

There will be food, door prizes entertainment for the children, and easy-to-understand educational workshop such as "Working with a Realtor", "Understanding Your Credit" and "The ABC's of Home Buying."

Representatives from local lending institutions, real estate agencies, title and home insurance companies, for-profit and non-profit develop-

ers, government agencies and other will be on hand

While homeowners rate has risen steadily over the past eight years, African Americans still lag behind, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development reports. Factors that contribute to the disparity include a lack of experience in the home buying process, inability to secure loans, bad credit and difficulty maneuvering through the buying procedure.

"Buying a home is one of the smartest investments a family can make," said City Commissioner Erik Sten, a spokesman for the fair. "This is an event that's long overdue."

Fair organizers plan to offer the event twice a year, attracting hundreds of people.

# Social Security Benefits Going Up for 2001

Social Security and Supplement Security Income (SSI) benefits will increase 3.5 percent in 2001, Kenneth S. Apfel, Commissioner of Social Security announced last week.

"Today's news tells us that inflation continues to be low which is

certainly good news for everyone living on a fixed income," said Commissioner Apfel. "Inflation is one of the worst enemies of the elderly. The past eight years, which have seen low inflation rates and a strong economy, have been particularly

good for the elderly."

The 3.5 percent increase will begin with benefits that Social Security beneficiaries receive in January 2001. Increased payments to SSI recipients will begin on December 29.

For Social Security beneficiaries,

the average monthly benefits amount for all retired workers will rise from \$816 to \$845. The maximum federal SSI monthly payments to an individual will rise from \$512 to \$530. For a couple, the maximum, federal SSI payment will rise from \$769 to \$796.

# Asian Pacific Islander Law Conference

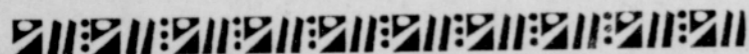
A first conference dealing with issues and concerns facing the Asian Pacific Islanders community in the areas of violence and child abuse. It will deepen the cross-cultural understanding and awareness of the needs of our community.

Presenters include judges, law enforcement officers, attorneys, district attorney representatives from Services for children and Families, mental health professional, and case-

workers.

This conference will help service providers and other to find culturally specific and ethnically appropriate outreach strategies as well as help develop ways to overcome cultural barriers.

Sponsors include the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon, The Immigrant Refugee Council of Oregon, The Multnomah Department of Community Justice and the Portland Police Bureau.



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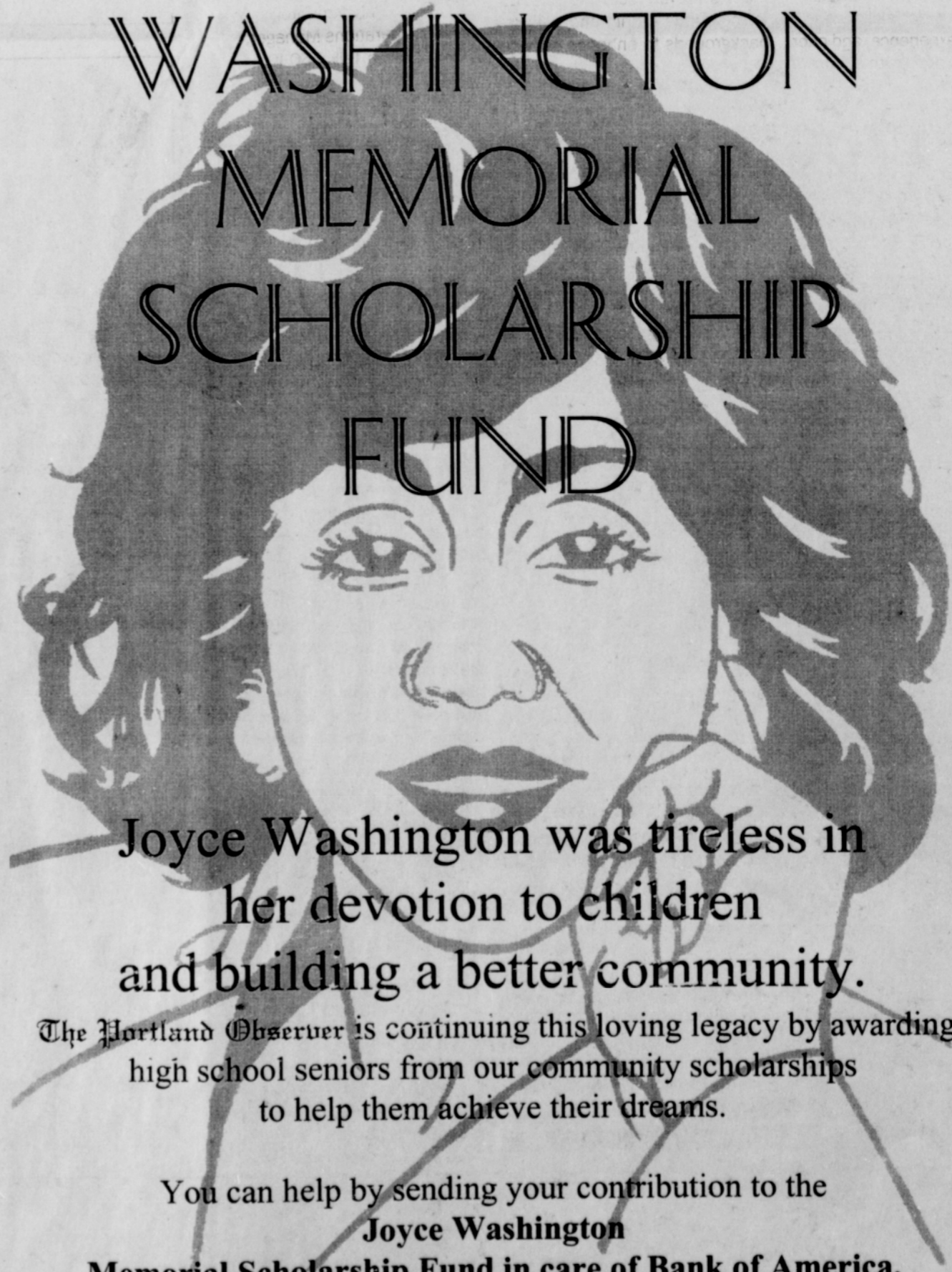
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