



Business

Man Battles to Keep Opportunity Alive

By GIDEON LANTZ,
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Demond Harris first got into trouble in 1995, when he and two other guys decided to participate in a string of armed robberies.

"I was 22 years old and it was more or less like a thrill thing. No one was on drugs or anything," Harris said.

His 11-day crime spree with two other guys robbing flower shops and other businesses landed him in the Oregon State Prison. He was sentenced to five years and five months. He was let out four months early for good behavior.

While he was in prison, he received a letter from Bobby Joe Moore, owner of Bobby's Barber and Beauty Shop on Northeast 24th and Alberta.

"He knew my grandparents and asked me to come to work with him," Harris said.

He obtained his barber's license and began working with



Barber Desmond Harris, a former OSP inmate, is putting his life back together, giving credit to his barbershop's late owner for giving him second chance. (PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/PORTLAND OBSERVER)

Moore in January, 2000. On Aug. 28, Moore died of a stomach aneurism. Harris wants to keep his legacy alive and honor the fact he was given a second chance.

"Bobby Joe Moore was a real nice guy with a big heart.

He always treated you fairly and was a real down to earth person," Harris recalled.

Others Moore gave a chance didn't do right by him. They showed up late to work and left early. Not Harris.

"He told me, 'All you have

to do is just keep coming to work, keep coming to work' I did."

"He gave me a chance to become a nice man," Harris said. "I would love for him to still be here. I'm going to keep his legacy going. I'm not going to stop cutting hair."

This month he will go back to OSP to talk to inmates about making the transition to the real world after prison. Would he have been able to do it without Bobby Joe Moore's help?

"I believe there could have been some difficulties, but I believe I could have overcome those difficulties," Harris said. Firms such as Freightliner employ ex-cons regularly to get tax write offs.

What would he say to another inmate like himself who needed a chance?

"If there was a guy in there who had a barber's license and was worried about getting

clientele, I would say, take it one day at a time," Harris said.

Starting out with no clients, Harris acquired customers by word of mouth. Now many of his customers are people from correctional facilities who want to help him.

A person from an African-American Parole Program also meets with former inmates like

Harris and helps them keep their lives on track.

Now Harris is married to his 28-year-old wife Demenica, who is at home with a 3 month old boy, Devon, and his 9-year-old brother Demon. It's a far cry from prison.

If you want to help Harris succeed, stop by his barbershop at 2535 N.E. Alberta or call (503) 331-0712.

PacifiCorp Files for 24 Percent Rate Increase

Opposing Consumer Advocates Request Cost Adjustments

(AP)—PacifiCorp has asked the Oregon Public Utility Commission to approve a 24 percent rate increase to set off soaring wholesale power prices and a grim outlook for hydropower in coming months.

Customers would begin pay-

ing the \$42.7 million increase over three months beginning May 2. Most households would pay an average 20.3 percent more on their monthly bill, while rates for industrial customers would be about 32.6 higher, the company said.

The hike reflects what PacifiCorp expects to pay during that period. The changes would remain in effect until Aug. 1, when the company expects new price adjustments as a result of rate negotiations that began last year.

Consumer advocates criticized the proposed 24 percent increase and the request for power-cost adjustments.

Bob Jenks, executive director of the Citizens' Utility Board, said the PUC should deny both requests.

Tips For Last Minute Tax Filers

This year on April 16th, don't get caught by news camera crews who want to capture procrastinators in the act of filing their taxes at the last minute.

Completing a tax form can be an assignment that even the most responsible individual would want to delay.

If you are among the thousands of Americans yet to send off your tax form, here are a few tips and recommendations from the Better Business Bureau:

Gather all relevant information such as receipts, financial records, W-2 forms and copies of the past year's tax return.

Make sure you have all the documentation you need for the deductions you claim.

If you are going to fill out your own return, utilize free help. The IRS conducts "tax clinics" in most major cities, and you can call a toll free helpline at 1-800-829-1040. For more information, contact the

AARP at 1-888-227-7669.

Educate yourself about the latest tax information. You may not be aware of changes in tax law that could represent a tax savings. If you decide to have someone prepare your taxes for you, there are a variety of options.

To determine the tax preparer that may be best for you, take a look at the complexity of your return and if you have had major events in the last year, such as retirement, death of a spouse, marriage, divorce, inheritance, or a change in your number of dependents.

If your return is complex, you may want to engage the services of Certified Public Accountant (CPA), Tax Attorney or an Enrolled Agent. Enrolled Agents are approved to represent taxpayers before the IRS and can assist people with especially complex tax cases and multiple forms.

If you do not have a com-

plex return, you may want to choose a local or nationally franchised tax preparation service. When selecting a service, be wary of any service that "guarantees" a refund. Some services offer a quick payment on your anticipated refund; remember that this is a loan and read and understand the terms carefully before signing.

Make sure that you are able to contact the service year round in the event of an audit, or if your taxes need to be amended. When selecting a tax preparation service, check their reliability report with the Better Business Bureau.

You can request a copy of the BBB's free brochure "Tips on Tax Preparers" by BBB on the consumer hotline in Oregon at 503-226-3981, and in Western Washington at 206-431-2222, or on the web at www.thebbb.org. You can access the IRS on line at www.irs.gov

Suppose a tree fell through your garage tonight...
WHO WOULD COME THROUGH FOR YOU TOMORROW?



You're inside your house, safe from the big storm. When, **boom!** Lightning strikes. Next thing you know, there's a tree all the way through your garage roof. Taking care of claims like this is what American Family Insurance is all about. Over 70 years of experience means fast, efficient service and home protection you can trust. Life is unpredictable. That's why it's good to have a homeowners insurance policy you can count on. If a storm should put a tree through your garage tonight, it's comforting to know you can depend on Family to come through for you tomorrow. Call one of our knowledgeable, friendly agents today. Or visit our website at www.amfam.com.

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Workshop Focuses on Job Skills

Area residents are invited to participate in Portland Community College's first annual Employment Showcase Workshops on Monday, April 16 and Tuesday, April 17. This will be two-day event, with each workshop scheduled from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Cascade Campus Center.

The workshops will consist of training in the areas of speaking effectively,

dressings for success, and using appropriate presentation techniques. Participants may also utilize power point or podium to present their skills and abilities. The goal is to enhance your strong points and upgrade your potential talents. Following the workshops, participants will join employers at the First Annual Employment showcase to be held at the Skills Center, On

April 18. There, you will be able to present your newfound skills and reveal your area of expertise for employment opportunities. You will also have a chance to interact with over thirty employers who are looking for reliable and suitable professionals.

There is no charge for this event and seating is limited. For further information call 503-978-5341

Portland Pays Homeowners to Build "Green"

Portland homeowners planning to remodel or build a new home can receive a cash incentive from the city's Office of Sustainable Development. To support environmentally friendly homes, the city will pay \$3,000 to homeowners willing to build "green" and share their experience with the community. Up to 40 qualified projects will be selected. A qualifying a

homeowner must meet a basic set of requirements that include solar water heaters, daylighting, on-sight stormwater management, resource-efficient appliances, non-toxic paint and much more. A review panel will base the awards on a desired mix of remodel and new homes, building types, locations, measures and project costs. "We'd like to show how

green building ideas, which make homes more comfortable, durable, healthier and more environmentally friendly, can be applied to any home—large or small, new or remodeled," says Susan Anderson, the city's sustainable development director. For more information, contact Mike O'Brien or Jill Kolek at 503-823-7725 or visit www.green-rated.org.