



Metro/Religion

Husband, Father and Mentor Dies at 58

Rufus Thomas Fuller was born in Fortworth, Texas on Nov. 19, 1943 to Jeff Turner and Francis Scott. His stepfather Riley Scott Sr raised him.

He completed 3 years of military services. He married and moved to Portland in the early 60's. In 1969, he was hired as a bus operator for Rose City Bus Co. and served as the secretary/treasurer for local #757 from 1974-1982. He met Ernestine Green in 1983; they were married in 1985. Rufus served on the executive board at Center Street. He was a Royal Roserain, a member of the Black Caucus and attended the University of Portland.

Rufus loved fishing, boating, camping and golfing. He was well

known as a sweet, gentle person who treated everyone with respect and kindness. He was a good husband, and father. One thing about Rufus, he always gave good ad-

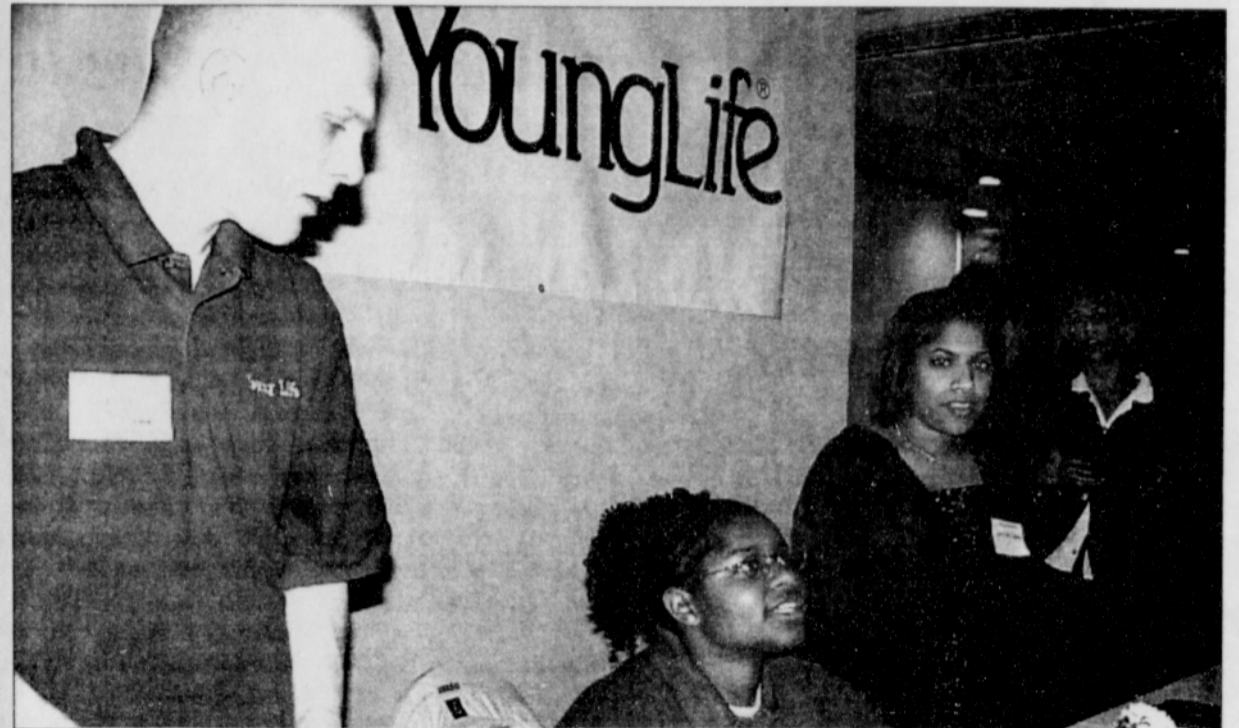


Rufus Thomas Fuller

vice whether you liked it or not.

Rufus was preceded in death by his father, his stepfather, his brother, J.C. Turner and grandson DeCarlo Taylor.

He leaves to cherish his memories, his wife Ernestine; his mother of New Orleans; a brother, Riley Scott of New Orleans; aunt Mary Campbell of New Orleans; a son, Steven Fuller of New York; four daughters, Brigitte, Adale, and Cynthia of Portland, and Debbie of Seattle; 11 grandchildren, Chanay, Davasate, Robert, Deion, Asys, Finesse, Carlos JR, Tre'Shawn, Adriawna, Deshiona and last but not least Poo-Poo (Charisma); 3 brothers-in-law; 7 sisters-in-law and host of nieces, nephews and friends.



Young Life - Volunteers greet participants in the 2001 Portland Central Young Life Banquet. The Saturday program included skits, music and discussion about Young Life and the role of Christ in daily life.

(PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/PORTLAND OBSERVER.)



Metro/Sports

Blazers Lose First Round in Sweep

BY LONDON HALL

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

It's difficult to believe that, at one time this season, the Los Angeles Lakers actually feared the Portland Trail Blazers.

Shaquille O'Neal had 25 points and 15 rebounds, and Kobe Bryant added 22 points as the Lakers completed a three-game sweep of the Trail Blazers with a 99-86 victory on Sunday.

The Lakers, who began their drive to repeat as champions by winning the final eight games of the regular season, will play the Sacramento-Phoenix winner in the second round.

Portland, meanwhile, lost for the sixth straight time and 17th time in 25 games. The team with the highest payroll in NBA history — \$89.7 million — faces an offseason of uncertainty. Coach Mike Dunleavy could be fired, some players could be traded, and even general manager Bob Whitsitt's job isn't safe.

"I felt like we had too many challenges, too many obstacles to overcome," said Scottie Pippen, whose goal of a seventh title was thwarted by jealousies, the departure of Shawn Kemp for drug rehabilitation and a season-ending injury to Bonzi Wells.

"This is the worst — the worst thing I have ever had to deal with throughout my career," Pippen added. "It just wasn't a fun season for us. The outcome of it was just a testament to what we had been dealing with all season."



The Los Angeles Lakers were too much for the Trail Blazers as they rolled to a 3-0 game victory to end the season for Portland.

Stoudamire and Steve Smith each scored 25 points for the Blazers, and Rasheed Wallace had 13 rebounds but was a major disappointment on offense, missing 15 of 19 shots.

The Lakers beat the Blazers the same way they did the first two games — by getting the ball to O'Neal, although he didn't see it much early on. O'Neal had just two shots in the first quarter — nine fewer than Bryant — and three rebounds.

O'Neal returned to dominance in the second half, however, and the Blazers — without suspended Dale Davis and Stacey Augmon — couldn't handle

him. A hook shot by Arvydas Sabonis a minute into the fourth quarter got Portland within 79-74, but O'Neal made two straight hooks to push the lead to nine. The Blazers missed six of their first seven shots and started to hear boos from the Rose Garden crowd.

Derek Fisher's 3-pointer made it 87-74 with 9:01 left. O'Neal, who in his recent biography said he "owns" the 7-foot-3 Sabonis, provided the icing with a dunk that bounced off Sabonis' head. Bryant added a playoff career-high nine assists, and Fisher had 17 points.

Davis was suspended for throwing an elbow at the Lakers' Robert Horry in Game 2, and Augmon was punished for coming off the bench during the altercation.

The Lakers kept Portland from reaching the NBA finals last year by rallying from a 15-point deficit in the fourth quarter to win Game 7 of the conference finals. But the Blazers took two of four games from L.A. in the regular season, and until their slump, Portland seemed a good match for the Lakers.

The Blazers led early Sunday, and Stoudamire scored eight points in the first 4 1/2 minutes of the second quarter to boost the Blazers' lead to six, but the Lakers started getting O'Neal the ball.

His first strong move came when he got the ball deep against Sabonis, spun away from Wallace's double-team and emphatically dunked over Sabonis.

Bryant hit three straight shots to ignite a 9-0 run, and two free throws by Fisher just before halftime gave the Lakers a 54-47 lead.

Portland got within 67-66 on an open 3-pointer by Smith, but the Lakers pulled away to take a seven-point lead into the fourth quarter.

As in Game 2, the Blazers built an early lead, only to give away the momentum on a last-second shot at the end of the first quarter.

Led by an unusually aggressive Smith, the Blazers attacked the basket, making 7-of-7 free throws in the period, compared with 1-of-2 for the Lakers.

After missing 10 of their first 15 shots, the Blazers made four of their next five. A 3-pointer and long jumper from Stoudamire put Portland ahead 26-20.

But with six-tenths of a second left, Brian Shaw inbounded to Devean George, who launched a 25-foot 3-pointer to cut the lead to three.

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High Schools To Square Off in Meet of Champions

The Oregon-Washington Meet of Champions, a match-up of the two states' best high school track and field athletes, has been added to the Adidas Oregon Track Classic weekend of activities. The Meet of Champions will be held on Saturday, June 2 starting at 5 p.m. at Mount Hood Community College in Gresham, Ore.

The Meet of Champions will feature four athletes from each state in each of 30 events. Athletes will be selected based on their season performances and placing at the Oregon and Washington state high school championship meets.

Tickets for the Oregon-Washington Meet of Champions are \$5 with children 12 & under admitted free when accompanied by ticket-holding adults. Tickets will be on sale at the stadium on meet day only.

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