

Portland
Observer
Opinion

Opinion articles do not necessarily reflect or represent the views of The Portland Observer

**The
Portland
Observer**

USPS 959-680
Established 1970

STAFF

EDITOR IN CHIEF,
PUBLISHER
Charles H. Washington

EDITOR
Larry J. Jackson, Sr.

BUSINESS MANAGER
Gary Ann Taylor

ASST. PUBLISHER
Michael Leighton

COPY EDITOR
Joy Ramos

CREATIVE DIRECTOR
Robert Parker

4747 NE Martin Luther King,
Jr. Blvd.
Portland, OR 97211
503-288-0033
Fax 503-288-0015

e-mail
news@portlandobserver.com
subscription@portlandobserver.com
ads@portlandobserver.com

POSTMASTER:
Send address changes to
Portland Observer
PO Box 3137
Portland, OR 97208

Periodical Postage
paid in Portland, OR

Subscriptions are
\$60.00 per year

DEADLINES
FOR ALL SUBMITTED MATERIALS:

ARTICLES:
Monday by 5 P.M.

ADS:
Friday by noon

The Portland Observer welcomes freelance submissions. Manuscripts and photographs should be clearly labeled and will be returned if accompanied by a self-addressed envelope. All created design display ads become the sole property of the newspaper and cannot be used in other publications or personal usage without the written consent of the general manager, unless the client has purchased the composition of such ad. © 1996 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED. REPRODUCTION IN WHOLE OR IN PART WITHOUT PERMISSION IS PROHIBITED.

The Portland Observer—Oregon's Oldest Multicultural Publication—is a member of the National Newspaper Association—Founded in 1885, and The National Advertising Representative Amalgamated Publishers, Inc., New York, NY, and The West Coast Black Publishers Association • Serving Portland and Vancouver.

Lifting Old Glory to Celebrate Freedom



Youth Ambassadors of Vancouver, a group sponsored by the Education Service District, proudly hold the stars and stripes during Flag Day ceremonies Thursday at the Fort Vancouver National Historic Reserve. The activities also included a special performance by the Heritage High School Band and a rousing rendition of "You're a Grand Old Flag."

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Support for Racial Profiling Bill

An Oregon senate bill involving racial profiling was considered dead just two short weeks ago. It never got out of committee. But the Portland Branch of the NAACP helped reverse those fortunes last Wednesday when the civil rights group became involved in the issue at the request of a few state legislators. "I am glad to announce that the Senate Bill 415 was passed today with "no opposition," Portland NAACP President Roy Jay said.

Jay, along with Portland NAACP Committee Chair Rev. Ronald Williams and the new incoming president of the Portland State University Chapter

of NAACP met with Sen. John Minnis in a closed door meeting to discuss the merits of the bill. Minnis, who is also a Portland police officer, listened carefully, Jay said. The results were that Minnis pioneered the bill through the senate floor. Sen. Avel Gordly, D-Portland, was extremely excited.

"Thank You NAACP for being there in such a professional manner," Gordly said. Jay added, "We want to also personally thank Senator Gordly, Senator Minnis and others for their leadership in passing this important bill. This is just the first step, but it will help in our quest for racial justice."

Somebody Ought To Say Something

By L. K. Bass

Doing The 'Write' Thing

There are many challenges to being a writer. Your words can provoke thought, incite action or influence others. They can hurt or help; clarify an issue or cloud it up. Consequently, every writer faces great responsibilities—especially if you're only one of a handful of Black columnists in the state.

Less than two months ago, such a columnist wrote two stories in a leading daily local paper, where the pot shots were heard around town and are still resonating—not favorably, particularly in the Black community.

There was a combined total of more than one thousand painful to read words, that didn't enlighten or help. It didn't even make for enjoyable reading, although much of the prose was a rose, it simply was too thorny. Both stories dealt with the current Oregon chapter of the NAACP, which was founded in 1909, making it the oldest chapter west of the Mississippi.

Now, as if reading about Big Pimpin', processed hair, "hymietown", "niglets", and scaring white folk weren't enough, there was the creative ruse of a low scale 'Orson Wells like e-mail' from the Rev. Jesse Jackson, that left some people actually questioning it's authenticity!?

I often wonder, when I read things like that, what are people thinking? What impressions do they really get? Why do they believe it? What purpose is being served in writing something like that? Is there something positive in it? And if there isn't, "Then why write it?" Especially given the climate of today and the ongoing declarations for cultural awareness and sensitivity.

This is not to slam the writer alone;

she simply submitted it. Why didn't someone stop and say: "Hold the presses." Didn't anyone see something wrong? And what about the people who, if even for a moment, believed the 'Jackson e-mail' was authentic? Now there's a commentary in that about people's long held, embedded stereotypes. That story simply fed and perpetuated more of the same.

When a leading weekly alternative newspaper, ran a cartoon of the Pope calling himself a "Rock and Roll 'N-g g-r'" last year, many people from different ethnic and religious backgrounds were incensed and said so. The African-American community is a little different when it comes to our own.

(Herein lies another story...) However, just because you aren't hearing our voices doesn't mean it was well received.

Now, the bigger concern to many is the issue of: Does that kind of a story by a Black journalist, somehow legitimize such preceding and succeeding stories? And if it does, then 'Somebody really Ought To Say Something' in view of the fact that it is far from okay.

Not many 'of us' are given opportunities in the media. When we are, we should not fail to accurately portray our community or slow any progress that we are making. Not to say that we shouldn't print the news, but should we print it in a fashion that gives people something to laugh at and makes us look like clowns? Maybe 'we' need to be a little more careful how we write about our people, because when others see us writing things like that, someone is bound to see it as a license to do likewise. As momma always said: "When all is said and done, it's not what you say, but how you say it that counts."



Lydia K. Bass

Looking for
an excellent
part time JOB?

What Part-time job will pay you
up to \$700.00 per month for
only two days worth of work?

Excellent Educational Assistance Program:

- Student Loan Repayment Program (up to \$20,000)
- Montgomery GI Bill (up to \$263.00 per month)
- Ask about our \$350.00 per month (tax free) Incentive Kicker
- Ask about our \$8,000.00 enlistment bonus

**Openings Now Available
in the Following Fields:**

- Aircraft maintenance & avionics
- General purpose mechanic & vehicle operations
- Computer maintenance & switching
- Information & inventory management



Contact your local Air National Guard Recruiter to determine eligibility

Fuel Your Future
Air National Guard

503.335.4040 800.392.1801

www.orport.ang.af.mil

"My mama loves me so much,
she protects me from colds,
ear infections, headaches,
asthma attacks and even cancer
without lifting a finger."



How? Josiah's mother doesn't smoke and doesn't allow secondhand smoke in her home. If you smoke, take it outside. Or better yet, consider quitting. For help, call the Tobacco Quit Line at 1-877-270-STOP or The African American Health Coalition at 503-413-1850.



A message from

Multnomah County Tobacco Prevention Coalition
African American Health Coalition

**EARN WHILE
YOU SAVE!**

Leading Edge Healthcare Savings
Program Needs Reps to Open Doors

- Save up to 80% on Doctors & Hospitals
- Savings on Dental and Vision
- Up to 40% on Prescriptions
- Includes Legal Services & Veterinary
- 60% Payout With Incentives and Bonuses!
- Company Profit Sharing for Top Producers
- No License Required. All Training Provided

Unlimited Growth Potential
Simple Compensation & Bonus Programs
Call (503) 288-1140 for Information