

# On Your Feet for Better Health

Surgeon general encourages biking, walking

U. S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona met with kids at Boise-Eliot Elementary School in north Portland Friday to encourage school-age children to walk and bike to school as a means of being physically fit and active.

In a partnership with the Bicycle Transportation Alliance and the Willamette Pedestrian Coalition, Carmona urged area residents to support Oregon Walk + Bike to School Day on Oct. 6 in order to raise awareness, promote active, healthy lifestyles for children and make streets safer and friendlier for students walking and biking to school. This year's event coincides with International Walk to School Day.

The two organizations also announced that they received a \$25,000 grant from NikeGO to expand the event to Portland's suburban school districts, Eugene and Ashland. NikeGo is Nike public service program committed to getting kids mov-



ing for better health and giving them the means to do it.

"The number of children who are overweight in this country is at an all-time high and continues to grow. It's important for all of us — parents, educators, companies, government, and non-profit organizations — to work together to address this public health crisis," said Carmona.

U. S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona promotes health by taking a stroll through the Boise-Eliot neighborhood with students Ali Ruiz (from left), Rodney Manuel and Michael Quintero.

PHOTO COURTESY OF STEVE DIPAOLA



## COURAGEOUS Cold Case Reopened

AFRICAN AMERICANS

BY RON WEBER FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

With renewed interest in prosecuting the white racist killers of Emmett Till, we must look closer at this somewhat unknown hero of the Civil Rights era.

Till was a black school boy from the North who died at the hands of a group of crazed angry whites on a hot August 1955 night in Money, Miss. While two primary suspects in the egregious murder died unpunished, others who participated in this terrible act a half a century ago are still out there. Hopefully, with new trials in the case, they will

face their due justice before they leave this earth.

Emmett Till did not spend decades fighting for the rights and freedom of our nation's black citizens like Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass or Martin Luther King Jr., but he paid the same ultimate price that Crispus Attucks did at the beginning of the Revolutionary War. For that matter, he paid the same price as Audrey Murphy in World War II or any soldier who has died in Iraq.

As an eight grader from Chi-



Emmett Till

cago, where African Americans had rights that Southern blacks only dreamed of, Till did not know what

he was in for when he asked to join a relative on a trip to visit relatives in the South.

On a lazy summer afternoon, the young black man who always had "a suitcase full of jokes," performed a simple gesture he had done many times in Chicago. He simply whistled at a girl. However, this girl was white and Emmett was on a trip through the South.

No one told him that black boys did not whistle at white girls in the South. Three days later he was grabbed from his bed in the middle of the night, drug from the house, mercilessly beaten, and shot in the head.


Three days later, his body would be found in a water grave known as the Tallahatchie River in Mississippi. We can only imagine the terror that went through Emmett's mind as he was awoken to a broken down front door, shouts and pummeling fists that night. His face was beaten raw by a host of angry white bigots.

He died an innocent victim of a racist white mob. Although two leaders of the group were charged with Till's murder, they were found not guilty. Later they admitted that they killed him and bragged about it, but could not be tried again. While their conduct and the fact

that they got away "Scott free" bothers me a great deal, I now have solace knowing where I feel they are at this moment.

While Emmett is resting in heaven with the rest of his family, I believe the ones who brutally and unfairly took his life are burning in a place I hope I never see. I also have good faith that the upcoming trials will bring a better verdict. Emmett Till and his family deserve a guilty verdict and God willing they will finally get it.

Ron Weber is a regular speaker on African American history and a frequent contributor to the Portland Observer.



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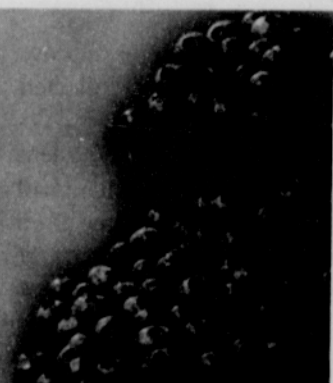
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