



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Members of this Northeast Hollywood District YMCA are crying out against its closure, announced earlier this month.

YMCA Hangs in Balance

Since the YMCA of the Columbia-Willamette announced early this month its plans to close its 79-year-old Northeast Hollywood District facility, some of the club's members have cried out against the closure.

Some members have raised a reported \$20,000 in pledges to

keep the facility running. A Vancouver man has made an offer to buy the facility and keep it operating.

The YMCA announced its intention to close the center in January because the cost to renovate the building is too great. The center has been operating with an average

annual deficit of \$50,000 for the past 10 years.

Before accepting any offers or reversing its decision to close, the YMCA board chairman promised members it would take their proposed solutions into consideration. The board plans to meet again in January.

Economic Seed Wins Approval

Vanport Square to start with one block on MLK

BY LEE PERLMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Portland Development Commission has unanimously approved spending \$18 million on the first phase of Vanport Square, a future jobsite that includes a call center and ground floor retail space.

Plans call for renovating a former auto dealership building and constructing a new addition on a large block on the west side of Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard between Emerson and Sumner streets. The major employer and occupant would be Vesta Corpora-

tion, a 24-hour communication and technical operations call center that's currently housed downtown at 309 S.W. Sixth Ave. Developers argue that bringing Vista's 200 jobs to MLK will be a "catalyst" to future economic growth for inner northeast Portland.

Ray Leary, one of the project's principal development partners and a local African-American leader, laid out answers to many concerns during public meetings with area residents.

He said the development would be designed to place retail along the MLK street frontage; it would not be a blank wall disconnected to the community. Leary expects the company will live up to commitments to fill future jobs with local residents.

The PDC plans were also endorsed by Roy Jay of the African-American Chamber of Commerce, Sheila Holden of the North-Northeast Economic Development Alliance, Jenny Portis of the Northeast Workforce Center and Chad Debnun of the King Neighborhood Association.

Jennifer Jordee Borquist, one of the project's sharpest critics said "just moving Vesta to MLK is not a high enough goal." She questioned whether the company would serve as a catalyst to future development.

Vanport Square was originally conceived as several blocks of new economic development on MLK from Northeast Killingsworth to Alberta, a concept that remains alive.

Dear Deanna!

My heart was broken in my last relationship. The guy I trusted and loved turned out to be a drug dealer with drama, police and kids all over the place. He recently got busted for drugs and wants me to use my house to post his bail. I love him and don't want to see him go to jail but he's also hurt me and dragged me through a lot of mess. There were times he was good to me. Should I do this for him? —Sherry T.; San Diego, Calif.

Sherry:

Either you've lost your mind or have smoked up some of your boyfriend's profit. The red light was on before you got tangled up with a drug dealer. Everybody and their mamma know the lifestyle that comes with a Street Pharmacist. Consider yourself lucky that you're not in jail or dead. Don't lose your property behind this nonsense. Count your loss, hold on to your house and pray and wish the best of luck for your ex-boyfriend.

Dear Deanna!

I live with a man who claims to believe in God but won't worship, go to church or pay his tithes. He has proposed several times but I have said no. He has also tried to get me to be intimate with him but I won't violate my faith. My pastor and friends tell me I need to leave him but don't know if I should. —



Real People. Real Advice
An advice column known for its fearless approach to reality based subjects!

Dawn; Omaha, Neb.

Dear Dawn:

You know in your heart you shouldn't be shacking with this man. It's good you're not sinning by having pre-marital sex but you're on the way to being unequally yoked, which is a bad thing. As II Corinthians 2 Verse 6 says, don't be yoked together with unbelievers. However, you can still live apart from him and continue a friendship of love, faith and prayer for his soul and salvation. God works in mysterious ways and you may be his vessel of salvation through your life as a Godly woman.

Dear Deanna!

I'm at the point of strangling my

brother's kids. These kids are so rude and half-raised you would think they live in a barn. My brother is so wrapped up in his girlfriend that he doesn't consider their stealing, cursing and jumping on furniture as bad behavior. He believes everything they say and wants to fuss and fight if someone in the family spansks them. This is tearing our family apart and he needs to do something. What can we do? —Samantha; Hickory, N.C.

Dear Samantha:

Go to the nearest tree, grab two switches, twist them together and wear those kids out! They need a good spanking coupled with love, discipline and teaching and they'll be just fine. However, there's quite a difference between child abuse and spanking. You should have a family meeting with your brother to bring the situation to his attention and offer solutions that will help him and the kids. After that, he can keep his eyes shut, but they'll open wide if the police come to his house when his darlings commit a few crimes.

Ask Deanna is written by Deanna M. Write Ask Deanna! Email: askdeanna1@yahoo.com or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd. Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211. Website: www.askdeanna.com

Hams for the Holidays

For the third year, the African American Chamber and corporate partners Safeway and Hormel will provide "Hams for

the Holidays" to 81 needy households.

"We hope to make the holidays a little bit brighter for some families this year" says Roy Jay, president of the chamber.

The giveaway is from noon until 2 p.m. Monday, Dec. 20 at the Oregon Association of Mi-

nority Entrepreneurs, 4134 N. Vancouver Ave.

Senior citizens, single parent families and those that are unemployed or disabled are encouraged to attend. Hams are limited to one per household and will be distributed on a first come, first serve basis.

Grow Your Small Business

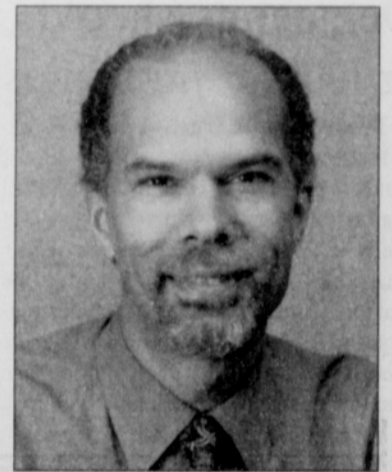
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The City of Portland is expanding contracting opportunities for small businesses in the Professional, Technical, and Expert Services Fields. These include areas such as architecture and engineering, information technology, training and meeting facilitation, marketing, outreach and graphic design, finance and insurance.

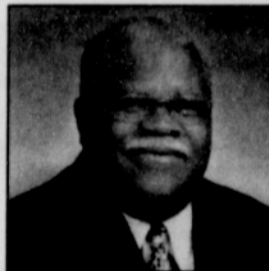
Minority, women and emerging small business owners are encouraged to contact us, as well as to certify their

To learn about small business contracting opportunities, contact: Gregory J. Wolley, Program Coordinator Professional Services



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Parents and Teachers: Making the Difference

By Reg Weaver, President, National Education Association

The end of the year is a time of reflection and renewal. For those of us who work in America's public schools — and work with the women and men who have dedicated their lives to helping students succeed in school and in life — it's a time to assess what we have accomplished and what we can do better.

Since 1857, the National Education Association has worked to make public schools great for every child. We support equity and adequacy in the distribution of resources that support those things that work in the classroom — qualified teachers, smaller classes, and up-to-date books, materials aligned with high standards and shared accountability.

We will continue to focus our energies on getting students what they need — with the support of parents, partners in the community, and policymakers. But, increasingly, we understand that teachers and education support professionals can't go it alone. Students spend about 9 percent of their time in school. For our young people to succeed, we also need to pay attention to the other 91 percent of their time.

Recent polling for *Phi Delta Kappan* magazine shows that parents and others understand instinctively what research confirms. Parental involvement and student motivation are key elements to whether or not a child succeeds in school. There's no time for philosophical discussions or squabbles about who should take responsibility for taking the first step. The key to helping students is communications — ongoing, frequent and respectful conversations between teachers and parents about student needs and progress — in good times and in bad.

I say respectful communications because both teachers and parents need to understand the unique role the other plays in students' growth and development. No teacher wants to usurp the role of parents. We look for a partnership role, working together to reinforce values like hard work, respect and personal responsibility. In the same way, parents should understand that teachers' knowledge and experience can be a resource for them. Teachers and education support professionals work with children every day, and they can provide useful insights in helping parents support and encourage their children.

In 2005, NEA members will be reaching out to parents more than ever before. Working together, I know we can help all students meet high standards — and the challenges that face our nation in the years ahead.



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