



Annual Wellness Walk

Corliss McKeever of the African American Health Coalition (left) and local activist Joyce Harris join Mayor Tom Potter at the 4th Annual Wellness Walk Saturday at Dawson Park in north Portland. Potter not only lent his support to the walk, but gave credit to the coalition for work that recently has narrowed a healthcare disparity gap for black residents of the city.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Economic Progress Promised On Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard

BY LEE PERLMAN
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

To paraphrase a Muslim expression, the mountain came to North-east Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

The Portland Development Commission, the federal Small Business Administration and the North-Northeast Business Association conducted a walking tour of small businesses in the heart of Portland's African American community on Aug. 16.

The stops included minority owned firms like Reflections Books and Coffee, J.P.'s Custom Framing and Geneva's Sheer Perfection Barber and Beauty Shop; and Dew Angie's Bargain Place.

Mayor Tom Potter joined the group at Billy Reed's Restaurant and accompanied them for many of the tour locations.

"I'd never met the mayor before and I didn't know what to say to him," admitted Greg Gruzynski, owner of Bardy Trophy, one of the small businesses.

The tour ended with a public open house at the Irvington Village senior apartments on MLK. There,

amid refreshments supplied by local restaurants, tour participants and others exchanged information on help available to existing and new business enterprises, and engage in informal discussion.

Joice Taylor, NNEBA chair, told the Portland Observer that the tour highlighted the strengths of the business climate on the boulevard. Its weaknesses, she said, are a lack of knowledge of the resources available by existing and would-be entrepreneurs, and fear of investing in new ventures.

PDC staffer Fred Wearn promised to provide financial resources to make things happen economically, despite the 2008 expiration of future monies from Oregon Convention Center Urban Renewal District.

With most remaining monies already committed to existing projects, Wearn pledged to "find new resources."

The tour was an opportunity to both showcase the businesses that are on the street and discuss the strengths of the boulevard, the resources that are available to new businesses, and the issues that remain to be overcome.

Dear Deanna!

I'm very opinionated and outspoken and people can't seem to handle it. I stand up for what I believe and refuse to let anyone talk down to me or take advantage of me. I got passed over for an open position and my boss told me that I'm qualified but I lack grace to deal with people. I was insulted because the person that got the job was my assistant. I feel like quitting but now I don't know what to do. --Tanya; Greensboro, N.C.

Dear Tanya:

While you were busy running your mouth, your assistant was brushing up on her skills trying to better herself. It's okay to be outspoken but not every situation requires an outburst. Now that you see the error of your ways, you don't have anyone to crawl to because your big mouth has isolated you. You should take this experience as a lesson learned and humble yourself, change your ways and work hard for the next promotion.

Dear Deanna!

I share custody of my son and I want to move forward with legal custody. My ex-wife smokes cigarettes, plays loud music and always has a house full of people. I want my son to be healthy, have a good example and this bothers me. I've tried to talk with her and also asked her for full custody but she says no. Now I've decided to take her to court and she has refused to let me see my son. Should I drop this or press forward? --Shawn; Detroit

Dear Shawn:

No matter how good or bad a mother may be; they all turn into lions when it comes to their kids. Other than what you see, you don't know what goes on in your ex-wife's home and your assumptions may cause things to get worse. You borrowed trouble by threatening to go to court and now, she's calling your bluff. In order for you and your wife to be on the same page, continue your



Ask Deanna!

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plans and let a judge decide what's best.

Dear Deanna!

I'm in love with a guy I know isn't good for me but I'm still attracted to him. He drinks, has no college education and basically meets the stereotype of a player. I know he's bad news and I should stay away but his energy makes me want to be with him and just be reckless. The problem is my parents. I'm a college student living at home and they're making me choose between him or living in their house. How do I make a decision? --Jackie; Denver

Dear Jackie:

This is a no-brainer and the thought shouldn't enter your mind to toss your parents to the wind for a loser. You know in advance that you're setting yourself up for abuse, pain, infidelity and who knows what else. Spare yourself the misery and make a mature decision and listen to your parents. As a matter of fact, you don't have much input if you're in college living on their dime anyway. Again, listen to your parents and keep it moving.

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