

her husband, William, became long-time Richland residents. Lois Rocquemore was the first black hired at the Bon Marche in 1964 when it was located in Richland. She worked as a stock clerk, buyer and manager of China and Housewares. The Rocquemore's still reside in Richland following her retirement from Westinghouse and Mr. Rocquemore's retirement from Battelle after 33 1/2 years at Hanford.

Al Young, Fred and Laverne Baker, Primer Brown, the Wealthy Wallace family and the Mitchells were also among Richland's earliest black residents.

## The Mitchells

C.J. Mitchell came to the Tri-Cities first in 1947 following his graduation from high school. He left after two years and returned to Pasco in 1952 as a construction worker on the Blue Bridge, and at McNary Dam. C.J. and his wife Bernice moved their family to Richland after he was employed by General Electric, Hanford's prime contractor in the mid-fifties. The Mitchells have raised six children who have distinguished themselves athletically and academically.

C.J. Mitchell was the first black to serve on the Board of Directors of Columbia Basin College and is a respected Pacific Coast referee and umpire.

The Mitchells continue to live in Richland as solid contributors to the community.



*The Mitchell Family*  
Photo courtesy of *The Tri-City Herald*