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## Remembering John Lewis

*Civil rights hero galvanized opposition to racism*

See story, page 12

## EDUCATION & CAREERS

*Special Edition*



# The Portland Observer

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'City of Roses'

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Committed to Cultural Diversity



A group of moms stand arm-in-arm forming a human shield to protect protesters outside the federal building and Justice Center in downtown Portland on Saturday. The moms gained strength in numbers as protests continued the next day and Monday evening. (AP photo)

# Wall of Moms Enter Fray

## Grassroots actions defy Trump; escalate protests

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON  
PORTLAND OBSERVER EDITOR

A wall of moms forming a human shield to protect protesters is gaining strength in Portland in response to the show of force from President Trump and his dispatch of a

stealthy team of federal police to protect the U.S. Courthouse and other federal property.

The unidentified federal troops, who are dressed in camouflage and who have used unmarked vehicles to grab protestors off the street to make arrests, is cueing up a potential constitutional crisis as the enforcement is being done with the consent of local officials, including Mayor Ted Wheeler and Gov. Kate Brown.

State and local authorities are awaiting a ruling in a

lawsuit to put the brakes on the federal response. Oregon Attorney General Ellen Rosenblum said in court papers last week that masked federal officers have arrested people on the street, far from the courthouse, with no probable cause and whisked them away in unmarked cars.

The ACLU of Oregon has also sued in federal court over the agents' presence.

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## I-5 Project Moves Ahead Amid Outcry

### ODOT hires contractor, sets goals for diversity

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON  
PORTLAND OBSERVER EDITOR

The Oregon Department of Transportation has hired a construction manager and general contractor with the task to help make the proposed I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project one of the most fruitful in terms of benefiting minority

workers and disadvantaged business owners.

An announcement to award the construction contract to Hamilton Sundt A Joint Venture, in association with Raimore Construction, a Black-owned Portland firm, adds important partners to help design and build a project that is founded on community input and values, ODOT officials said.

The plans announced last week, however, leave out any immediate proposed changes to the project in response from Mayor Ted Wheeler, City Commissioner Chloe Eudaly and Albina Vision, a non-profit focusing on revitalizing the Al-

bina area to right historic wrongs, and who all recently announced they have withdrawn support for the project as currently outlined.

Short of formally withdrawing her support for the project, Gov. Kate Brown responded to the criticisms by saying she still wants the black community's support for the project to go forward and is committed to helping bring people back to the table.

Like Eudaly, Multnomah County Commissioner Vega Pederson, has stepped away from a community steering committee overseeing the project because of the controversy.

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# Black Leader Hired as Assistant Chief

Mike Leasure earns praise for community engagement

Portland Police Chief Chuck Lovell Wednesday promoted Mike Leasure, a black officer with command experience and a community volunteer who works closely with African American youth, to Assistant Chief of the Police Bureau's Operations Branch.

"Mike is known as a committed, collaborative and progressive leader," said Chief Lovell. "He has dedicated his career to community engagement and has been involved in mentoring and coaching youth and participating in community advisory groups, including the Diversity and Inclusion Council. I am looking forward to having him join our Executive Team with his wealth of experience and relationships in the community."

Leasure currently serves on the Jefferson High School Boys to Men Mentoring program. He has participated in the African-American Advisory Council, the Diver-



Mike Leasure

sity Inclusion Leadership Council, and as a basketball camp coordinator for the Portland Police Summer Camp. He has been honored with the Achievement Medal from the Community/Police Relations Committee and the George Weatheroy Police Volunteer of the Year award.

Leasure most recently served as commander of the Central Precinct. He began his Portland Police Bureau career in 2000. After

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# LOCAL NEWS



PHOTO BY INTISAR ABIOTO/COURTESY PORTLAND PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Billy Webb Elks Lodge's designation on the National Register of Historic places celebrates not only the history of one of Portland's most important Black fraternal institutions, but also a building that previously served as a "Colored" YWCA, African American USO center, and Portland branch headquarters of the NAACP.

## Black Historic Sites Approved Recognizing Portland's African American experience

The National Park Service has recognized the historic significance of Portland's African American experience through a pair of new listings on the National Register of Historic Places.

The first listing — African American Resources in Portland from 1851 to 1973 — is a 191-page document that elevates the eligibility of historic sites associated with Portland's Black history for listing in the

National Register. The second listing — the Billy Webb Elks Lodge — specifically recognizes the importance of the 1926 Williams Avenue YWCA building

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Under fire for massive delays, the Oregon Employment Department has launched a new informational website to help workers navigate unemployment benefits during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

## New Website to Help Job Claims

### Employment Department under fire for massive delays

The Oregon Employment Department has launched a new informational website aimed at improving customer service for the record number of Oregonians applying for and receiving unem-

ployment benefits.

The new site, unemployment.oregon.gov is designed to help Oregonians more easily find information on the new programs created by the CARES Act; whether they might qualify for unemployment benefits; how to apply; and what's different during the pandemic.

"We've heard the many Oregonians who've said we need to do a better job communicating about their benefits and the unemploy-

ment claims process," said David Gerstenfeld, acting director of the Oregon Employment Department. "Our goal with this new website is to provide clear information so people can file their claims, avoid unnecessary delays, and get their questions answered without having to call us," he said. "We know that ultimately Oregonians need their claims processed, but we also want to ease some of the commu-

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## Website to Help Job Claims

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

nication frustrations people have experienced.”

Over the next few days and weeks, the department will add even more content and features to the informational website, officials announced last week.

In March, high traffic to the Department's oregon.gov/employ site risked crashing all oregon.gov sites, so the Department's COVID-19 content was moved to a temporary website commonly used by agencies during crises. But limitations of the content

management system of the temporary website made information difficult to find.

As one of his first acts as acting director, Gerstenfeld initiated the development of a cleaner, simpler, more user-friendly website.

“I’ve made doing a better job of communicating with Oregonians a top priority,” said Gerstenfeld. “We believe this website is a much-needed step in the right direction, and we appreciate your patience as we continue to make this a better experience for you.”



The I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project moves ahead, despite objections it doesn't do enough to restore justice to the black community which was displaced by the freeway when it was constructed six decades ago.

## I-5 Project Moves Ahead Amid Outcry

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

Metro President Lynn Peterson says she is also opposed and has pledged her support for Albina Vision Trust.

Under plans approved by the Legislature, ODOT has authority to spend \$715 million to widen Interstate 5 near the Rose Quarter to fix a bottle neck and make improved neighborhood transportation links with freeway caps that provide new pedestrian and bike paths and green spaces.

ODOT has rejected the added expense to make the freeway caps adaptable to building structures, like new affordable housing and

commerce, estimated to increase the cost to \$1 billion and a step in the direction of making accommodations to a Black community still suffering from their displacement by Urban Renewal in the 1950s, 60s and 70s.

Albina Vision said ODOT's overall planning fails to redress the damage done to Portland's Black community by the initial construction of I-5 nearly six decades ago.

“We can no longer support the project,” said Winta Yohannes, managing director of Albina Vision Trust, in a June 30 email to the Governor's office and ODOT.

ODOT maintains the project meets its “values-based” priorities

for restorative justice to the black community because it will generate new wealth in the community by imposing contracting goals of 18 to 22% use of disadvantaged business enterprises; and workforce hiring to include a 20% goal for apprenticeships, 25% minority male hires and 14% female workers.

ODOT says the project will also continue to rely on community input to shape the project and the outcomes for the community.

“Having the Construction Management/General Contractor on board early in the design process is a key step toward those commitments, ODOT official said.



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## A Second Chance for a Career

### Grant supports restorative justice for young adults

The U.S. Department of Labor has awarded a Portland nonprofit a grant of \$3.9 million to help individuals transition from prison to meaningful employment, especially young adults needing career training and other services.

The Pathway Home grant was awarded this month to The Mental Health Association of Oregon for the Portland metro area as part of a federal program to provide a second chance to Americans who have served their time in the criminal justice system.

“These grants reflect this commitment to helping all Americans find jobs and participate meaningfully in the economy,” said Secretary of Labor Eugene Scalia, in a news release. “The assistance the grants provide to men and women transitioning

back into society will be especially valuable as we overcome the economic challenges posed by coronavirus,”

Research shows that early and frequent engagement prior to release from incarceration reduces the risk of recidivism, so these grants are vital to stopping the revolving door of prison from turning, officials said.

Overall, \$64 million was awarded in Pathway Home grants to 20 recipients serving 15 states to assist in the transition of justice-involved adults back to the workplace.

Grant recipients will offer individuals a variety of services designed to help ease their transition back to society, including education and training, job preparation, case management and needs assessments, career exploration and planning, legal assistance, counseling, and assistance connecting to other important social services.

## Black Assistant Chief

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

serving as a patrol officer and a Parkrose School Resource Officer, he was promoted to sergeant in 2010 and assigned to oversee patrol, as well as the Bike Patrol at Central Precinct. As a sergeant in the Personnel Division, he oversaw development and successful implementation of the diverse officer recruitment and hiring plan, which resulted in a 30% increase in the number of diverse candidates hired by the Police Bureau.

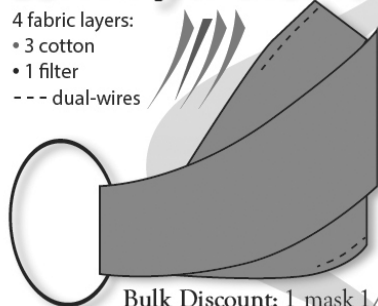
In 2016, he was promoted to lieutenant and assigned to Central

Precinct, to the Chief's Office as Adjutant Lieutenant, North Precinct and the Tactical Operations Division. He was promoted to Captain in 2019 and assigned to the Youth Services Division, which was responsible for providing police services to approximately 189 schools and approximately 77,000 students.

Leasure holds a Bachelor of Arts Degree in Sociology and Criminal Justice from Gonzaga University and attended the Organizational Management and Leadership Academy at the Department of Public Safety Standards and Training.

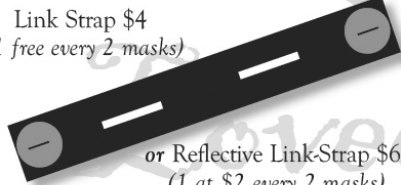
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# School Plans Disrupted by COVID-19

## Classroom sizes factor in plans for distancing

Oregon may have a harder time keeping students 6 feet apart than other states in the new school year under plans to keep students and school staff safe during the public health crises brought on by the coronavirus pandemic. This is because, according to data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Oregon has one of the largest average class sizes.

With COVID-19 already disrupting the last school year, almost every family is wondering how this next school year is going to go.

The virus is still preventing many from returning to work, but when it comes to children the conversation is a little more serious.

Many are worried that with such tight spaces, lots of schools won't have the option of following social distancing guidelines.

With that in mind, figures show Oregon is No. 5 in the states with the most crowded classrooms with an average of 25.6 students per class. Utah had



High School students work on advanced placement physics in this archive photo from AP. COVID-19 is disrupting plans for the new school year, and Oregon may have a harder time keep students 6 feet apart than other states because it has one of the largest average class sizes.

the most students per classroom at 26.6 students, Washington had 24 students for each class coming in at No. 8. The states with the lowest average class count were Vermont, North Dakota and Maine at 17.

While these numbers are averages, they do not necessarily represent every teacher or district's story. For high school teachers, class sizes can differ dramatically between periods. Others who teach music, gym, art, and other non-core classes typically have larger than average class sizes.

Similarly, these numbers are spread out across the state—some schools will have lower numbers, while others have larger roll lists. In addition, newly built schools typically have larger classrooms, while older schools were built with class sizes of the past in mind.

Ultimately, while this data provides a good big picture look, it doesn't speak to the unique challenges each school and district will face in returning to class.

Under state guidelines for playing it safe, Oregon school district may choose to continue remote learning in the fall or a combination of both classroom and out of classroom learning.

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  - Find a quiet, private space so you can talk freely. (Use a headset or headphones, if possible!)
  - Remember that video uses a lot of cell phone data, if you're not on Wi-Fi.

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- CareOregon website: [careoregon.org](https://careoregon.org)



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PHOTOS BY INTISAR ABIOTO/COURTESY PORTLAND PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

Dean's Beauty Salon and Barber Shop at 215 N.E. Hancock St. was established in 1954 by Mary Rose Dean and her husband Benjamin Dean.



E.D. Cannady and Beatrice Morrow Cannady, editors of the newspaper *The Advocate*, resided at this home at 2516 N.E. 26th Ave.

## Black Historic Sites Approved

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

as a historical black community resource.

The designations follow three years of coordinated research, documentation and writing by city staff, community members and cultural resource experts to recognize — not just the physical artifacts of Black history in Portland — but the cultural associations that make them important.

Particularly for Portland's Black population, which has endured displacement several times over, the significance of longstanding businesses, churches, fraternal organizations, and other cultural and community touchstones cannot be underestimated.

Stephanie Whitlock, executive director of the Architectural Heritage Center and contributor to the listings application said, "Many African American properties that could have been candidates for National Reg-

ister listing have already been demolished. Even more important buildings and other resources risk disappearance from the landscape and from our memory, unless we take steps right away to identify, designate, and protect them."

The Billy Webb Elks Lodge on the corner of North Williams Avenue and Tillamook Street is one such place, and marks the first listing to occur under the sites listed in the 191 page document. In addition to recognizing the importance of historic buildings and districts, listing in the National Register provides demolition protections and eligibility for financial incentives, such as grants and tax benefits.

Since its establishment in 1966, more than 700 Portland places have been listed in the National Register, ranging from iconic landmarks like the Bagdad Theater to unique areas like the Skidmore/Old Town District. But prior to the National Park Service's announcement this

week, only three of Portland's 700 National Register sites had been designated for their association with African American history.

The now-approved framework under which properties significantly associated with the Black experience in Portland can be listed in the National Register is based on their cultural — rather than architectural — significance, including business, journalism, religion, and civil rights.

"This is another step toward equity," said Historic Landmarks Commissioner Derek Spears. "We need to continue to identify and remove barriers, allowing all communities equal access to protect their presence as we continue to strive for justice."

The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability initiated the historic recognition project in 2017 following directives in the Portland African American Leadership Forum's People's

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12



The Dude Ranch at 240 N. Broadway was a popular African American nightclub in the 1940s. The venue was popular amongst both white and Black Portlanders during World War II and shortly thereafter.



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# Housing Advocate Remembered

*Alberta Simmons was devoted to helping people in need*

Funeral services were held Friday, July 17 for Alberta Mae Simmons, a longtime member of Portland's African American community who was known for helping people in need, including the creation of a nonprofit to build housing for seniors.

She was born on March 15, 1933 in Houston, Texas where she lived until her teenage years when she moved to Berkeley, Calif. and graduated from Berkeley High School. She met and married Solomon F. Simmons and to this union of 28 years, four children were born.

As a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend, she was always there to support anyone in need.

Alberta wore many hats throughout the years, whether it was volunteering to be a PTA president, Girl Scout leader or working in public schools in Oakland Calif. and King Elementary in northeast Portland.

A member of "The Magnificent Seven" and so many other organizations, she was a community activist who spoke her mind, a woman of strength who was always about helping others. She was a true role model who made a difference by not just talking about issues, but doing something about them.

One of the last activist hats she wore was as co-founder of Housing Our Families, an important nonprofit organization in the community where she will never be forgotten for enhancing the lives of others.

While she accomplished un-



Alberta Simmons

thinkable good, it was through the grace of God, her determination, and the will to succeed that the "Alberta Simmons" building will continue to house seniors in the community for years to come, honoring her vision for the elderly.

Alberta Simmons received her wings of gold on July 6, 2020; survived by her four children, Valerie Simmons, Frederic Simmons, John Simmons and Alicia Simmons; 11 grandchildren; four great grandchildren; and her brother Archie Harvey.

Services were held at Truevine Missionary Baptist Church, 4735 N. Commercial Ave. The arrangements entrusted by Cornerstone Funeral Home.



A senior housing complex in northeast Portland is named the Alberta Simmons Plaza in honor of Alberta Simmons, a longtime leader from Portland's African American community who co-founded Housing Our Families, a nonprofit community organization.

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Federal agents disperse Black Lives Matter protesters near the Mark O. Hatfield United States Courthouse on Monday. Officers used teargas and projectiles to move the crowd after some protesters tore down a fence fronting the courthouse. (AP Photo/Noah Berger)

# Wall of Moms Enter Fray

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"This is a democracy, not a dictatorship," Gov. Brown, a Democrat, said on Twitter. "We cannot have secret police abducting people in unmarked vehicles. I can't believe I have to say that to the President of the United States."

Multnomah County Commissioner Sharon Meieran says she joined a nonviolent group of protesters called a "Wall of Moms" on Saturday night and was tear-gassed by the federal police officers without warning. She returned to the protests on Sunday night, saying it was necessary to show her opposition to the "federal occupying force." The group of women wearing yellow shirts then grew more pronounced on Sunday and Monday.

Portland has seen nightly unrest since the killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis on Memorial Day. The death of Floyd, a Black man killed when a white police officer pressed his knee into Floyd's neck, have sparked massive protest around the country and a movement pushing for racial justice and changes to policing.

Constitutional law experts said the actions of federal officers in Portland are a "red flag" in what could become a test case of states' rights as the Trump administration expands federal policing.

"The idea that there's a threat to a federal courthouse and the federal authorities are going to swoop in and do whatever they want to do without any cooperation and coordination with state and local authorities is extraordinary outside the context of a civil war," said Michael Dorf, a professor of constitutional law at Cornell University.

"It is a standard move of authoritarians to use the pretext of quelling violence to bring in force, thereby prompting a violent response and then bootstrapping the initial use of force in the first place," Dorf said.

The Department of Homeland Security tweeted that federal agents were barricaded in Portland's U.S. courthouse at one point and had lasers pointed at their eyes in an attempt to blind them.

"Portland is rife with violent anarchists assaulting federal officers and federal buildings," the tweet said. "This isn't a peaceful crowd. These are federal crimes."

Top leaders in the U.S. House said Sunday that they were "alarmed" by the Trump administration's tactics in Portland and other cities. They have called on federal inspectors general to investigate.

Trump, who's called the protesters "anarchists and agitators," said the DHS and Justice Department agents are on hand to restore order at the courthouse and help Portland.

The Trump administration's actions run counter to the usual philosophies of American conservatives, who typically treat state and local rights with great sanctity and have long been deeply wary of the federal government — particularly its armed agents — interceding in most situations.

But Trump has shown that his actions don't always reflect traditional conservatism — particularly when politics, and in this case an impending election, are in play.

The protests have roiled Portland for more than seven weeks. Many rallies have attracted thousands and been largely peaceful. But smaller groups of up to several hundred people have focused on federal property and local law enforcement buildings, at times setting fires to police precincts, smashing windows and clashing violently with local police.

Portland police used tear gas on multiple occasions until a federal court order banned its officers from doing so without declaring a riot. Now, concern is growing that the tear gas is being used against demonstrators by federal officers

instead.

Anger at the federal presence escalated on July 11, when a protester was hospitalized with critical injuries after a U.S. Marshals Service officer struck him in the head with a less-lethal round. Video shows the man, identified as Donovan LaBella, standing across the street from the officers holding a speaker over his head when he was hit.

Court documents filed in cases against protesters show that federal officers have posted lookouts on the upper stories of the courthouse and have plainclothes officers circulating in the crowd. Court papers in a federal case against a man accused of shining a laser in the eyes of Federal Protective Service agents show that Portland police turned him over to U.S. authorities after federal officers identified him.

Mayor Wheeler, who's been under fire for his handling of the protests, said on national TV talk shows Sunday that the demonstrations were dwindling before federal officers engaged.

"Their presence here is actually leading to more violence and more vandalism," Wheeler said on CNN's "State of the Union."

Indeed, crowds of demonstrators had begun to dwindle a week ago, and several Black community leaders had begun to call for the violence to end.

But by the weekend, the presence of federal troops and Trump's repeated references to Portland as a hotbed of "anarchists" seemed to give a new life to the protests and attract a broader base.

On Sunday night, a crowd estimated at more than 500 people gathered outside the courthouse, including dozens of self-described "moms" who linked arms in front of a chain-link fence outside the courthouse.

The demonstrations continued into Monday night and grew to more than 1,000 people.

--Associated Press contributed to this article.





Bertony Faustin, the founder of Abbey Creek, Oregon's first Black-owned winery, grows his business with the opening of a wine tasting room at 912 S.W. Morrison, the first new tenant in revamped shopping plaza called the Shops at 10Y on the ground floor of the Portland SmartPark garage.

# Black-Owned Winery Grows Business

## Downtown tasting room paved by city support

Abbey Creek Winery, first Black-owned winery in Oregon, has opened a downtown tasting room, the first tenant in The Shops at 10Y, a revamped shopping plaza on the ground floor of the city-owned SmartPark garage at Southwest 10th and Yamhill.

The Abbey Creek Winery Tasting Room, also known as CrickPDX, is a play on the winery's North Plains location, The Crick. Owned by Bertony Faustin, Abbey Creek already operates vineyards in Multnomah County and a winery and tasting room in North Plains.

The new tasting room at 912 S.W. Morrison has opened initially by appointment only for tastings, small business happy hours, private events and pick up from 12 p.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday. Call 503-389-0619 to reserve space or for more information.

The parking garage renovation was a project between Prosper Portland, the city's eco-

economic development agency, and the Portland Bureau of Transportation. It involved a new physical space layout, tenant mix, and leasing, with a commitment to working with business owners who are local, women, and from communities of color that have historically not had access to the downtown market.

"Abbey Creek Winery brings a unique flavor to the downtown Portland retail experience," said Pros-

per Portland Executive Director Kimberly Branam. "We look forward to welcoming additional diverse businesses in the weeks and months ahead."

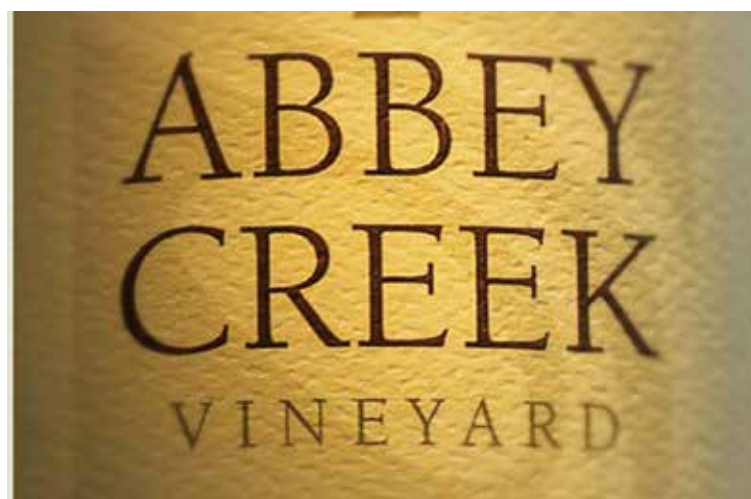
Faustin said he worked with Prosper Portland for more than a year to create the space.

"It's great that I'm the first, but it's more important that I'm not the last. I love the wine industry for where it's allowed me to go – and now that's downtown Portland," he said.

Four additional tenants are in the leasing and permitting process for tenant improvements at The Shops at 10Y, according to officials.

Portland Bureau of Transportation PBOT Director Chris Warner said PBOT has been using its resources to support local, Black, Indigenous and People of Color-owned businesses, and was eager to see how the renovated SmartPark space can also help them grow.

The Shops at 10Y are designed to lower the barriers to entry for emerging and small businesses, offering finished spaces that reduce the costs of tenant improvements. Contact Prosper Portland about leasing opportunities.





# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

## Book to Focus on Historical Jefferson Team

### Author reaches out for archival material

The author of a new book centered on the ground-breaking 1972 state champion Jefferson High men's basketball team is asking the public for their support in his research.

The historic re-telling of Jeff's 1971-72 season and its culmination with the title triumph over Baker High is set against the backdrop of Oregon's racial past and present. The book will include chapters on Portland's African American community, the Jefferson High Dancers, and the politics of 1972, such as the Model Cities program, Shirley Chisholm's historical run for President, and more.

As the first team comprised entirely of African Americans, playing an all-white team from Baker Oregon, the Jefferson team overcame myriad obstacles, Andrew Kaza, the author, told the Portland Observer.

"I'm hoping for some help on the research side in documenting that struggle - and the community pride that accompanied that accomplishment," Kaza said.

Anyone with first-hand memories, stories related to the subject matter and particularly any archival material from 1971-72 are urged to contact the author via e-mail at hgproject72@gmail.com. Film, photos, recordings, clippings or diary/journal notes from that time with relevance to the story are especially vital to capturing the history.



A city of Portland archive photo shows Jefferson High School basketball players during an all-star basketball game at Jefferson High School in 1972. A local author is reaching out for archival material for a book he is writing on team which won the 1971-72 state championship while comprised entirely of African American players against an all-white team from Baker City.



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Portland Trail Blazer CJ McCollum will rejoin teammates for the restart of the regular season with televised scrimmages beginning this week in Orlando, Fla.

## Scrimmages Open NBA Restart

Three televised scrimmages involving the Portland Trail Blazers will take place over the next few days as the NBA begins its restart of the regular season from Orlando, Fla.

The games will be broadcast on NBC Sports Northwest, the official network of the Portland Trail Blazers and also aired on AM-620, the Deschutes Brewery Trail Blazers Radio Network, and streamed on NBCsportsnorthwest.com and MyTeams App.

The scrimmages will take place on Thursday, July 23 at 12:30 p.m.

vs. the Indiana Pacers, Sunday, July 26 at 3 p.m. vs. the Toronto Raptors, and Tuesday, July 28 at 3 p.m. vs. the Oklahoma City Thunder. Broadcast team of play-by-play announcer Jordan Kent, analyst Lamar Hurd and Courtside Reporter Brooke Olzendam will be broadcasting the action on TV, with Travis Demers and Michael Holton on the radio.

The restart of the regular season for the Blazers in Orlando begins on Friday, July 31 vs. Memphis Grizzlies at 1 p.m. on NBCSNW and the Trail Blazers Network.



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# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



Portland Youth Philharmonic, the nation's first and oldest youth orchestra, is accepting online applications and video auditions from local, young creatives interested in participating in the organization's 97th season.

## Youth Orchestra Recruits for Season Need based financial aid available

Portland Youth Philharmonic, the nation's first and oldest youth orchestra, is accepting online applications and video auditions from local, young creatives interested in participating in the organization's 97th season. Need-based financial aid is available to every musician who passes the audition.

The philharmonic's music director David Hattner says the orchestra has a plan to operate under COVID-19 restrictions with online learning in the fall and in-person rehearsals and concerts beginning in January.

"We are currently in the process of commissioning new music for our musicians to play," Hattner said. "We are asking incredible composers to create new works specifically designed for remote performance. In other words, they will be rehearsed from our musicians' homes and recorded in parts for assembly."

He said the new works will be composed primar-

ily by women and musicians of color. Composers include Efrain Amaya, Laura Brackney, Giancarlo Castro D'Addona, Darrell Grant, Jessica Meyer, Polina Nazaykinskaya, Jim Stephenson and more.

Interested musicians should visit [portlandyouthphil.org/audition](http://portlandyouthphil.org/audition) to first submit an online application. Each application requires a \$30 non-refundable fee. Once an application has been submitted, musicians may start working on their audition videos. The deadline to submit a video audition is Monday, Aug. 24 by 5 p.m.

The Portland Youth Philharmonic strongly believes that great music education should be accessible to every child. In 2019-2020, the orchestra said 24% of its enrolled musicians received nearly \$43,000 in scholarships, financial aid, sibling discounts and private lesson scholarships.

When a musician passes their audition, they receive an enrollment packet that includes a financial aid application form. Learn more about PYP's tuition fees and tuition assistance at [portlandyouthphil.org/financialaid](http://portlandyouthphil.org/financialaid).




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U.S. Rep. John Lewis, D-Ga., is pictured last December before an event with fellow Democrats before passing the Voting Rights Advancement Act to eliminate state and local voter suppression laws. Lewis died Friday at the age of 80.

# Remembering John Lewis

## Civil rights hero galvanized opposition to racism

(AP) — John Lewis, a lion of the civil rights movement whose bloody beating by Alabama state troopers in 1965 helped galvanize opposition to racial segregation, and who went on to a long and celebrated career in Congress, died Friday. He was 80. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi called him “one of the greatest heroes of American history.” Senate Majority Leader Mitch McCo-

nnell said Lewis was “a pioneering civil rights leader who put his life on the line to fight racism, promote equal rights, and bring our nation into greater alignment with its founding principles.” Lewis announced in late December that he had been diagnosed with advanced pancreatic cancer. The announcement of his death came just hours after the passing of the Rev. C.T. Vivian, another civil rights leader who died early Friday at 95. Lewis was the youngest and last survivor of the Big Six civil rights activists, a group led by the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. that had the greatest impact on the movement. He was best known for leading some 600 protesters in the Bloody Sunday march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma. At age 25 — walking at the head of the march with his hands tucked in the pockets of his tan overcoat — Lewis was knocked to the ground and beaten by police. His skull was fractured, and nationally televised images of the brutality forced the country’s attention on racial oppression in the South. Within days, King led more marches in the state, and President Lyndon Johnson soon was pressing Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act. The bill became law later that year, removing barriers that had barred Blacks from voting. Lewis joined King and four other civil rights leaders in organizing the 1963 March on Washington. He spoke to the vast crowd just before King delivered his epochal “I Have a Dream” speech. A 23-year-old firebrand, Lewis toned down his intended remarks at the insistence of others, dropping a reference to a “scorched earth” march through the South and scaling back criticisms of President John Kennedy. It was a potent speech nonetheless, in which he vowed: “By the forces of our demands, our determination and our numbers, we shall splinter the segregated South into a thousand pieces and put them together in an image of God and democracy.” It was almost immediately, and forever, overshadowed by the words of King, the man who had inspired him to activism. Lewis was born on Feb. 21, 1940, outside the town of Troy, in Pike County, Alabama. He grew up on his family’s farm and attended segregated public schools. As a boy, he wanted to be a minister, and practiced his oratory on the family chickens. Denied a library card because of the color of his skin, he became an avid reader, and could cite obscure historical dates and details even in his later years. He was a teenager when he first heard King preaching on the radio. They met when Lewis was seeking support to become the first Black student at Alabama’s segregated Troy State University. Lewis turned to politics in 1981, when he was elected to the Atlanta City Council. He won his seat in Congress in 1986 and spent much of his career in the minority. After Democrats won control of the House in 2006, Lewis became his party’s senior deputy whip, a behind-the-scenes leadership post in which he helped keep the party unified.

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# OPINION

## An Immoral War that Wasn't Ours

### Spike Lee's Da 5 Bloods set me off

By OSCAR H. BLAYTON

I get an ache in my heart every time someone who learns that I am a Vietnam veteran, says "Thank you for your service."

Even before I returned to the United States from my combat tour in Vietnam, I had decided that we were fighting an unjust war. More than 50 years later, watching Spike Lee's "Da 5 Bloods" set off my internal alarm bells, warning against African Americans blindly participating in U.S. foreign policy.

Lee's latest movie is an excellent commentary on some of the complexities of the Vietnam war for African Americans, which he boils down to a single line spoken by a central character: "We fought in an immoral war that wasn't ours... for rights that wasn't ours."

I am a big fan of Spike Lee, and Da 5 Bloods is among his best work, but the film points out how Black folk were victims of America's foreign policy while understating our complicity in it. I do not fault Lee for this because this war was too broad in its social and political ramifications to fit into a single movie. But it omits two lessons Black folk should have learned from this painful bloodbath.

First, the American War in Vietnam was an attempt to maintain white supremacy in Southeast Asia. U.S. involvement in that part of the world did not ramp up until after the Vietnamese had forced out their former colonial masters – the French.

Having abandoned Vietnam to Japanese invaders during World War II, France returned at the end of that war and demanded – with an outrageous sense of entitlement borne of white supremacy – that it be allowed to continue its rule. The bloodied and proud Vietnamese, who had engineered their own resistance to the Japanese, were having none of it.

After the Vietnamese rid themselves of the French in 1954 at the cost of many more lives, the United States – in its role as the Chicken Little of anti-communism – raised the alarm that the sky was falling. Self-proclaimed "foreign policy experts" in the United States warned that Southeast Asian countries would fall like dominoes if communists were allowed to gain control of all of Vietnam. North Korea had secure-

ly established itself as a communist nation a decade earlier and foreign policy advisors in Washington reasoned that preventing the spread of communism was in America's national interest.

When we make a critical examination of Vietnam today, we see a trading partner of the United States and a respected member of the global community. We see economic and social progress under a communist government that exposes the lies of American demagogues who, foaming-at-the-mouth, protested the rise of communism.

In the late 1950s and early 1960, with Blacks being murdered with impunity and denied basic constitutional rights in America, the U.S. government chose instead to focus on the "rights" of people half a world away. But "freedom" was not what Washington was seeking to establish in Southeast Asia; it was "compliance." The U. S. wanted to bend that part of the world to its will – a world order based upon white supremacy.

If one ignores the rhetoric and examines America's actions towards Africa, Asia and South America, the evidence is clear that white supremacy has driven U.S. foreign pol-

icy throughout its post-World War II history.

Secondly, African Americans have been complicit in U.S. aggressions towards people of color around the world. Handcapped by the blindfold of anti-communist rhetoric, Black folk have too often been enablers in America's efforts to keep whiteness perched upon its global pedestal. Even those of us who knew that Washington's anti-Communist zeal made no sense, particularly as it related to Africa and South America, did not make the connection between U.S. foreign policy and white supremacy.

It was not the rise of communism that these demagogues feared; it was the loss of white privilege around the world. In the 1960s, the newly emergent African nations were being successfully oppressed by a network of political, economic and military resources that put a lid on any threat to white supremacy from the "Dark Continent." But with the rise of the People's Republic of China and the defeat of the French in Vietnam, the white supremacy lid was coming off of Asia.

Revisiting the American War in Vietnam, we see one aspect of America's attempt to

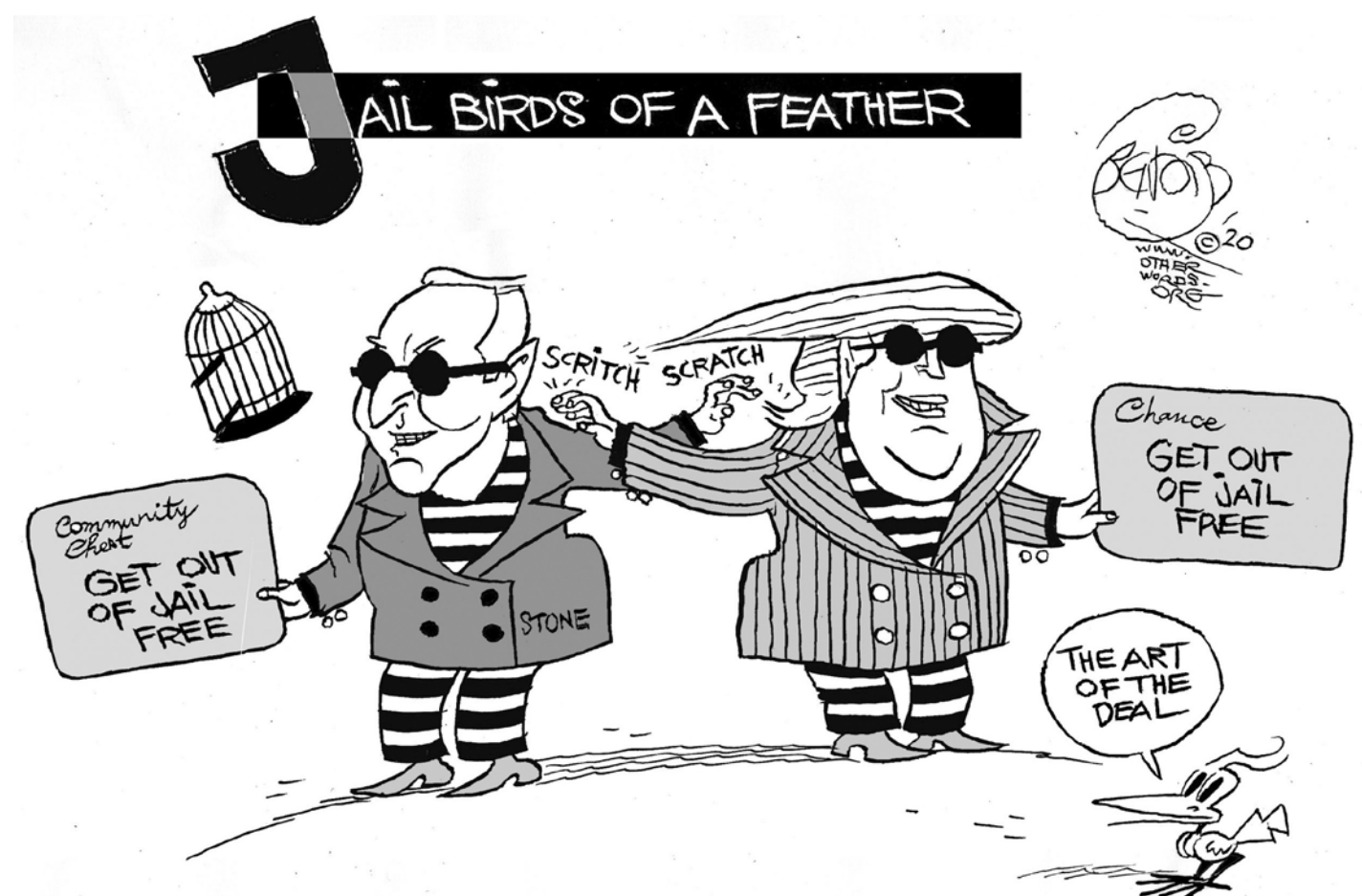
maintain global domination by white supremacy and we see our complicity in this effort. It is not enough for Black folk to plead innocence as draftees just trying to make it back to the "World" alive. We must own our part in the oppression of others.

Attempts to deny our complicity in spreading misery around the globe in support of white supremacy is not unlike Confederate sympathizers refusing to acknowledge that the underlying cause of the Civil War was the preservation of slavery, not the noble South.

As Confederate statues finally come tumbling down, African Americans are asking, "Why has it taken so long? There was no just cause. There was no noble South." By that same measure, we must ask ourselves, "What was the true cause and where was the nobility of America's involvement in Vietnam?"

Not only must we ask ourselves these questions about Vietnam, we must continue to ask these types of questions about all of America's foreign policies.

Oscar H. Blayton is a former Marine Corps combat pilot and human rights activist who practices law in Virginia.



### Letter to the Editor

I share and support the outrage expressed by recent Portland demonstrations, but I am urgently moved to implore demonstrators to follow a discipline of non-violence. A first and foremost obligation of non-violent discipline is to prevent, control, and oppose activities that violate non-violent discipline.

While the spontaneity of early demon-

strations may have made non-violent discipline difficult, continuing violence is now increasingly troubling. The persistent violent outbursts, captured so well by social media and the press are inciting a backlash among deeply racist and right-wing elements and are weakening and dividing supporters.

The violence we are witnessing on the streets at night – however apologized and

justified – does nothing positive for the purposes of the demonstrations and is wholly contradictory to any standard of non-violent discipline. It's time for a conversation on methods and discipline of demonstration. If the purpose is to maximize disruption, as some have said, we won't have much conversation. But if the purpose has anything to do with winning hearts and minds, let's

talk. We should all talk.

The violence must stop. But the first ones who should stop the violence are the demonstrators themselves.

Non-violence cannot be passive bystander to violence.

Ross Danielson, northeast Portland resident, and alumnus of Clarksdale, Mississippi Jail, April 1963

### Violence Hurts Cause



# CLASSIFIED/BIDS

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### PR 36R1 -

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**BID DATE & TIME:** August 13, 2020 @ 2:00pm PST

**Scope of work includes steel and canopy glazing only. All other scopes of work have previously been awarded.**  
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**HSW Contact:** Aaron Braun brauna@hswc.com (503) 757-0366.

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**Bids Due: August 7th, 2020 at 5:00pm**

Lease Crutcher Lewis, LLC, serving as the General Contractor for the new PCC Sylvania Health Technology Project, is soliciting proposals from qualified Mechanical, Plumbing, and Electrical (including low voltage scopes). The total building construction cost is projected to be approximately \$43 Million. The MEP scope of work is currently at a schematic development level, without fully defined costs. The project consists of the renovation of the east side (Sector A) of the Health Technology Building on the PCC Sylvania Campus. The scope of Sector A includes extensive non-structural demolition with new building systems. The west side (Sector B) will remain functional and operational during the renovation. The east side (Sector A) will be unoccupied during the renovation.

Contract Documents and the Invitation to Bid may be reviewed at the following locations: The entire RFP Package (including all project documents attached as exhibits) can be viewed via Lewis' website at: [www.lewisbuilds.com](http://www.lewisbuilds.com)

Click "Contact" and then "Bid Opportunities" under Portland.



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## SUB BIDS REQUESTED

### Treasury Office Building

**Pence Construction is requesting bids by:**

**July 30th, 2020 at 2:00 PM**

Refer to the documents for complete list of included trades.

The following scopes have already bid out:

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Pence intends to provide all site services and misc. rough carpentry for the project.

**Pence is currently negotiating and intends to execute a project labor agreement (PLA) for this project. All proposers must agree to accept the terms of the PLA via an assent document without modification. ALL sub-tiers of proposer regardless of amount of labor provided on site must similarly execute the PLA.**

Proposal documents can be accessed at <https://www.pence.net>

Click on "Subcontractor's" link then scroll down to see the list of available public projects. Documents are also available at the following locations:

Salem Contractor's Exchange; Oregon Contractor Plan Center; SW Washington Contractor's Association; Daily Journal of Commerce

Proposers shall comply with State of Oregon Bureau of Labor & Industries prevailing wage rates, please refer to the specs for additional information.

Subcontractor can find current BOLI wage rates dated 10/01/2019 by following: <https://www.oregon.gov/boli/WHDL/PWR/Pages/PWRRate-Publications--2019.aspx>

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# Black Historic Sites Approved

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

Plan, which called on the city of Portland to “recognize cultural significance as a necessary component of assessing historic preservation targets.”

In addition to building on the previous scholarship of African American historians and the venerated 1998 report Cornerstones of Community, the expansive research, documentation, and writing was made possible by the dedicated efforts of historians Kimberly Moreland, the late Cathy Galbraith, Raymond Burell III, Kerrie Franey, Matthew Davis, Caitlyn Ewers, and many others.

The individual listing of the Billy Webb Elks Lodge stemmed from a request received from Lodge members.

The Billy Webb Elks Lodge designation celebrates not only the history of one of Portland’s most important Black fraternal institutions, but also a building that previously served as a “Colored” YWCA, African American USO center, and Portland branch headquarters of the NAACP.

Built in 1926 at 6 N. Tillamook St. when Portland’s Black population was just over 2,000, the Elks Lodge remains owned, operated, and occupied by the African American fraternal society to this day.

Said Lodge Exalted Ruler Louis McLemore, “The awarding of this historical designation will mean a lot to the Billy Webb Elks Lodge membership for their hard work and efforts to keep the past in mind while looking toward the future of this community and the Lodge.”

The Lodge intends to leverage their recent listing in the National Register of Historic Places to secure additional funding for physical improvements to the building and relief from lost rental income due to the coronavirus pandemic.

“It’s great to see the National Park Service approve the long-deserved historic designation of the iconic Billy Webb Elks Lodge,” Mayor Ted Wheeler said of the decision to list the Lodge in the National Register. “The honoring of Black history by our public institutions is long overdue.”



PHOTOS BY INTISAR ABIOTO/COURTESY PORTLAND PLANNING AND SUSTAINABILITY

*The Golden West Hotel at 707 N.W. Everett St. was established by African American entrepreneur William D. Allen in 1906 and provided short and long-term lodging to Black clientele who were otherwise denied accommodations at the city’s white-owned hotels.*

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