



Black History Month



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The Portland Observer

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'City of Roses'

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Committed to Cultural Diversity

I-5 Scar of Displacement Revisited

ODOT takes another look at Rose Quarter project

BY BEVERLY CORBELL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

In June of last year, the nonprofit Albina Vision Trust sent an email to the Oregon Department of Transportation withdrawing support for its proposed I-5 Rose Quarter Improvement Project, which would reconfigure a 1.8-mile stretch of I-5 between the Interstate 84 and Interstate 405 interchanges.

According to Winta Yohannes, Albina Vision's managing director, the proposal didn't go far enough to mitigate the harm done to the Black community in the Albina neighborhood when hundreds, maybe thousands, of homes and businesses were bulldozed and the land was sold to make way for I-5, Legacy Emanuel Medical Center, Veterans Memorial Coliseum and other urban renewal projects.

"Despite our good faith efforts, we do not see our engagement resulting in meaningful changes to the project of its anticipated outcomes," Yohannes wrote.

At particular issue was the potential, encouraged by Albina Vision, for buildable caps, or covers, to be placed over certain portions of I-5 that would allow construction of apartments and businesses. At the time ODOT was projecting a cost of \$795 million, but said the cost would be significantly higher if the covers allowed buildable construction.

Pushback was swift, not only from Albina Vision Trust,



A swath Portland centered at Broadway and Weidler is cleared for construction of the I-5 freeway in this 1962 photo from the Eliot Neighborhood Association. Even many of the homes still standing were later lost to demolition as the historic African American neighborhood was decimated over the 1960s and early 1970s, not only for I-5, but to make room for the Memorial Coliseum, its parking lots, the Portland Public School's Blanchard Building, I-405 ramps, and Emanuel Hospital's expansion.

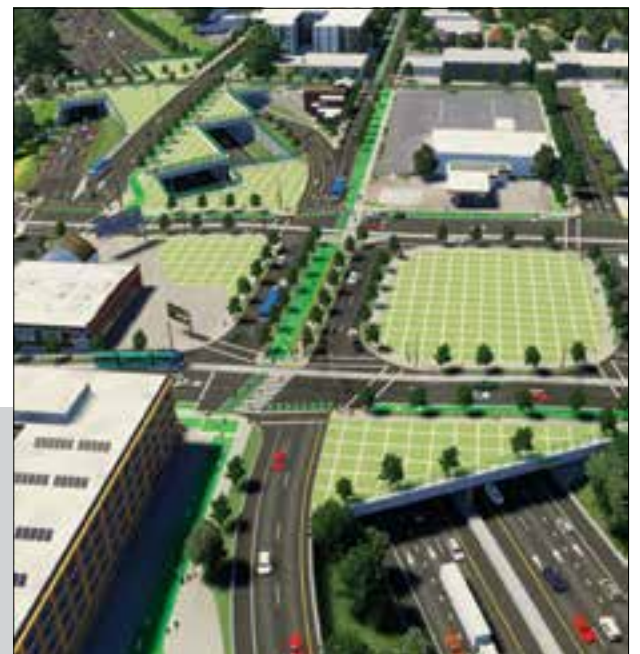
the grassroots effort that began in 2017 to remake the Rose Quarter district into a fully functioning neighborhood, embracing its diverse past and re-creating a landscape that can accommodate much more than its two sports and entertainment venues, but with several officials, including Mayor Ted Wheeler, also dropping support for the project.

The state transportation agency, however, listened, said ODOT project manager Megan Channell, and now is doing things very differently.

"This was a direct response to the community input we

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

When ODOT offered the possibility of open outdoor plazas as caps over I-5 at the Rose Quarter in a new plan to increase the lanes of travel on the freeway, the proposal drew wide opposition for not addressing the economic development needs of the historic African American community which was first displaced by the freeway nearly 50 years ago.



Decorated Trimet Bus Honors Black History



TriMet honors Black History Month with a newly painted bus featuring local and national leaders who have helped lead the march toward racial justice. The individuals include Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, the late Portland pastor Rev. T. Allen Bethel, Oregon's first Black woman legislator, Margaret Carter, and Portland's first Black woman City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty. The bus will be rolling throughout the Portland metro area for the next nine months.

Named Youth of the Year

TreNisha Shearer honored for giving back

TreNisha Shearer, a senior at De LaSalle North Catholic High School and a youth volunteer at the Boys & Girls Club in New Columbia, has been named 2021 Youth of the Year for the organization's Portland metro area.

Shearer has been a member of the Regence Portland Boys & Girls Club in north Portland for 12 years.

She shared her motivation

to give back to the community upon being presented the award in late January.

"I have witnessed the connection that can be formed between club members and staff. Seeing these connections and knowing how big of an impact the club has on people such as myself," Shearer said.

Over the course of the teenager's time at the club, she has traveled to Atlanta for a leader-

ship program, participated in a club internship in partnership with the Portland Timbers, and created a short film, Black 'Till It's Backwards.

Along with the title, Shearer received a \$1,000 scholarship and will represent the Portland Metro Clubs at the Oregon State Boys & Girls Clubs Youth of the Year competition in April. She has plans to attend Georgia State University and study business



TreNisha Shearer, a senior at De LaSalle North Catholic High School, has been named 2021 Youth of the Year by the Boys & Girls Clubs of Portland Metro area.

management after graduation.

Six other outstanding club members in the Portland area

were runners-up to the Youth of the Year title and each received \$500 scholarships.

Rethink Police Panel Forms

Group forms to shape oversight

The Portland City Council is now accepting applications for Rethink Police Accountability, a volunteer group that will shape the framework and structure of a new police oversight committee approved by 82% of voters last November.

The process will be community driven and members of the group will be composed of community justice organizations, small businesses impacted by community safety issues, and people from over-policed communities, such as Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrants, refugees, people living with low-income, experiencing homelessness, and/or mental health or substance use, officials said.

Membership on the panel is an opportunity for people who want to have an impact on future policies and practices related to police reform. Potential members who are innovative, collaborative, and equity-focused or who like the idea of building something from scratch are encouraged to apply. Those selected should also plan for a committed minimum of four hours a month and to meet monthly on Zoom for 18 months, officials added.

"We have a lot of work and community conversations that



Jo Ann Hardesty must happen as we rethink community safety in Portland," said City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty. "An important piece of building trust in our police bureau will be a system of oversight and accountability with a structure that centers the community the police are sworn to protect and serve."

Mayor Ted Wheeler said its clear Portland wants a new and improved police oversight system and that they want regular Portlanders involved in making it happen.

"The city is responding to that clear demand," he said. I encourage people who are innovative and dedicated to equity to apply to help us construct a new evolution of community safety rooted in improved trust, transparency, and accountability."

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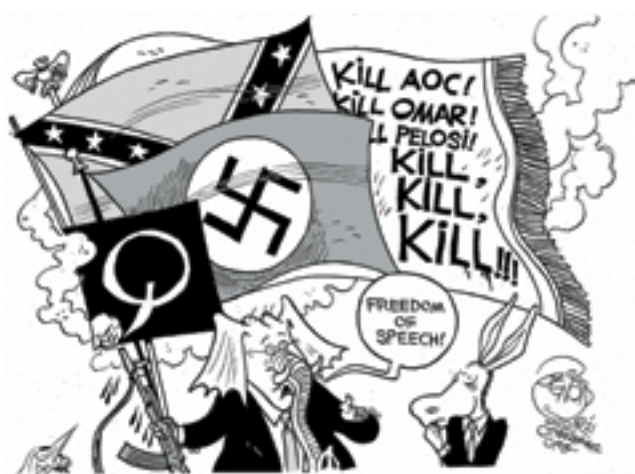
COVID-19 Vaccine in Oregon : Oregon Health Authority. (n.d.). Retrieved January 19, 2021, from <https://covidvaccine.oregon.gov/>

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LOCAL NEWS



The Portland Street Response team doing outreach in the Lents neighborhood of southeast Portland.

Street Team Dispatched

First calls taken for non-police crisis unit

The pilot Portland Street Response team, an innovative non-police dispatch to assist people experiencing homelessness or a behavioral/mental health crisis, has hit the streets for the first time. It happened last week as soon as the team started taking calls dispatched from 911.

The team includes a program manager, a firefighter/paramedic, a mental health crisis clinician, and two community health workers. Each member trained for the past month to prepare for calls. The team has been walking the Lents neighborhood since the beginning of the year, the pilot location, to introduce themselves to business owners and community members.

Lents was designated as the

pilot location because it is not supported with as many existing resources and services. Additionally, the volume of mental and behavioral health calls in Lents is outpacing the growth of similar calls in other parts of the city.

"We all agree we need new and better responses to people suffering mental health crises. Portland Street Response embodies and implements that agreement," said Mayor Ted Wheeler. "People in crisis and people who call 911 will be better served by this new option. Every call the Street Response team answers allows Police to respond to other high priority calls. The launch of Portland Street Response is a win for Portland," he said.

Commissioner Jo Ann Hard-

esty, Portland's fire commissioner and an early champion of the Portland Street Response concept, said "The community asked for a non-police response to calls that don't require an armed police officer on site and we're delivering. I couldn't be more excited to see this team in action and to learn from this pilot period about how to make this program the best it can be."

Hardesty added, "It's rare in modern times for a new branch of a public safety system to be created from scratch. It's rarer still for a city department to be built by the people who will be beneficiaries of the program. After many months of methodical outreach,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Taking Aim at Gun Law Loophole

Charleston survivor testifies before Oregon panel

So many people are buying guns in Oregon these days that the state police are often unable to complete background checks in time, allowing the sales to proceed if the deadline isn't met.

A handful of Democratic lawmakers have now put forward a bill in the Oregon Legislature that would close this loophole. It's often called the Charleston loophole because Dylann Roof was able to buy a gun that way, and then murder nine Black people at the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, South Carolina, in 2015.

"You have the power to prevent a similar act of violence here in Oregon," Sharon Risher, whose



Sharon Risher

mother and two cousins were killed in the church, said in virtual testimony Thursday before the Oregon House Judiciary Committee.

In Oregon, it's up to the state police to do a background check. And they are warning that they are overwhelmed.

In 2019, the Oregon State Police completed 276,912 background checks, said Maj. Tom Worthy of the state troopers. In 2020, that total rose by 51% to 418,061.

"We saw exponential growth that we've never seen before," Worthy told a committee of the Oregon Legislature on Thursday. "I can tell you that the unit is not staffed for that volume, and it would be impossible for us to stay current based on our current em-

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The Week in Review

Ice Storm Wreaks Havoc

Members of the Oregon National Guard delivered supplies to people without power in Clackamas County and other areas near Portland over the past few days as problems lingered from an ice storm the wreaked havoc on the electrical grid. Portland saw almost 10 inches of snow that had mostly melted as the week began.



Dumped Food Leads to Conflict

About a dozen police officers guarded dumpsters filled with perishable food after being called to the Hollywood Fred Meyer store last week as people attempted to take the items that were discarded when the store lost power. Images on social media showed piles of packaged meat, cheese and juice in the store's dumpsters. The store said the food was thrown away to prevent food borne illnesses "out of an abundance of caution."

Dive Team Finds Driver

A dive team last week found and recovered the body of a 57-year-old Portland man whose vehicle ran off the Glenn Jackson Bridge on Feb. 12 during a snowstorm. The man was identified as Antonia Amaro-Lopez.



No Charges in Wrongful Arrest

The U.S. Department of Justice will not pursue criminal charges in the 2017 wrongful arrest of a Michael Fesser, a Black man from Portland who was targeted by West Linn police after he complained about his towing company's racially hostile work environment. The FBI and federal prosecutors found they could not prove that the officers acted with the specific intent to violate the law.

Oregon's Struggle for Racial Equity



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. visits Portland in 1961 where he met with leaders of the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church. (Oregon Historical Society collection photo)

Black leaders who made a difference

As we honor and celebrate Black History Month in February, the Oregon Historical Society encourages everyone to learn more about the remarkable Black individuals who have advanced Oregon's on-going struggle for racial equity. Here's a brief summary about some of these Black leaders, and you can learn much more about them online through the OHS Oregon Encyclopedia page at oregonencyclopedia.org and hear from

some the leaders themselves through oral histories in OHS Digital Collections, digitalcollections.ohs.org.

Mary Laurinda Jane Smith Beatty (1834-1899)

Mary Beatty, one of the first Black women west of the Mississippi to advocate publicly for woman suffrage, attempted to vote in the 1872 presidential election and a year later addressed the organizing convention of the Oregon State Woman Suffrage Association. Known as "Mrs. Beatty

(colored)," her full name and identity were unrecognized until recently.

Kathryn Hall Bogle (1906-2003)

A freelance journalist, social worker, and community activist, Kathryn Hall Bogle was "one of Portland's earliest and most passionate advocates of racial diversity." She wrote articles for many African American newspapers, including the Portland Observer and The Scanner, but may be known best for "An American Negro Speaks of Color," a 2,000-

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— DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

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Avel Gordly

word article describing the realities of being Black in Portland that she sold to the Oregonian in 1937. It was the first time the newspaper paid an African American writer for a story, and Bogle would contribute many more articles to the Oregonian over the years.

Beatrice Morrow Cannady (1899-1974)

Beatrice Morrow Cannady was the most noted civil rights activist in early 20th century Oregon. Using her position as editor



Denorval Unthank

of the Advocate, Oregon's largest, and at times the only African American newspaper, Cannady launched numerous efforts to defend the civil rights of the approximately 2,500 African Americans in the state (in 1930) and to challenge racial discrimination in its varied forms.

Mercedes Deiz (1917-2005)

Mercedes Deiz was the first Black woman admitted to the Oregon State Bar and, when she was sworn in as a judge of the Multnomah County District Court on January 6, 1970, became the first woman of



Mercedes Deiz



Hattie Redmond

color to be an Oregon judge. That appointment also made her the only woman then serving in that capacity.

Avel Gordly (1947-)

In 1996, Avel Louise Gordly became the first African American woman elected to the Oregon State Senate. Her legislative record includes an array of initiatives that focus on cultural competency in education, mental health, and the administration of justice.

Ancer L. Haggerty (1944-)

Ancer L. Haggerty was the first African American to become a partner in a major Portland law firm and the first to serve as a judge on the federal court in Oregon.

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I-5 Scar of Displacement Revisited

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received,” she said. “We want to acknowledge the harm that was done to the Black community.”

Channell said ODOT has done focus groups with members of the African American community and wants to make changes to reflect those public statements and the ideas of Albina Vision Trust.

“We would welcome them back to the table,” she said. “Their voices are important.”

In response to Albina Vision, Channell said ODOT has hired an independent consultant to look at the best use for highway

covers through a community process.

“Everything is on the table,” Channell said. “We are focused on working with the community on the design and will produce development scenarios with the board, and then it will go up to the executive steering committee.”

But before any decisions are made, community input will again be invited, Channell said, and the steering committee will direct workshops, starting soon, with the hope that a decision will be made by July about just what will go on the highway covers.

ODOT is already reaching out to community-based organizations about the work-

shops for “a targeted outreach to maximize historic Albina voices through online tactics,” Channell said. Information will be available on the ODOT website, Oregon.gov/ODOT, in about two weeks, she added.

“This is truly a shift in the way ODOT does business,” she said. “It’s not our typical way of operating, but this is an opportunity, a catalyst as an agency as well.”

In addition to construction, ODOT also wants to encourage long-term economic development, Channell said, especially for small and minority-owned contractors.

“Our goal is to set up job opportunities in a way that helps build a pipeline for wealth

generation,” she said. “In partnership with community organizations, ODOT wants to bring jobs to minority communities, but also create apprenticeship opportunities and mentorships, so jobs become careers for future economic growth.”

To help implement these goals, ODOT has hired Hamilton Funds as a consultant and is working with Gramor Construction “with specific focus and dedication” to expanding participation of minority contractors and women.

ODOT’s overall plan is not just construction, Channell said.

“So we’re not just building a project, but developing a pipeline for the future and requirements for a workforce we want to see that requires a high level utilization of minorities and women to build the project,” she said.

Channell said ODOT also has established a community oversight committee that will have a direct role in helping shape requirements for contractor.

“The possibility is on the table for highway covers,” Channell said. “The original design assumed more open space, but we heard from the community and some of our partners that we need a different community vision, so we hired an independent contractor, but this will be a community effort.”

Interstate 5 was built in the 1960s and has seen no improvements since then. Channell said ODOT now sees the project as a “generational opportunity” by looking 50 years into the future as far as impacts on the community, which will play an increased role now in the design.

“We at ODOT obviously contribute a lot, but we cannot do it alone and we are excited about community partners,” she said.

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Street Team

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consultation, and construction: we're ready. For community members living on the streets, this program could not come soon enough. People caught in the trap of a criminal justice system that ensnares them for simply trying to survive demand change, neighbors and family members demand change, and the first responders who need to be focused on high-level calls for service demand change. This first step toward change is here.”

According to Fire Chief Sara Boone, who is the first Black woman to lead the department, the fire service has had to be nimble over the years to respond to the ever-changing needs of the community.

“Portland Fire & Rescue is proud to help launch Portland Street Response and we're thankful for the hard work put in by our staff on this vanguard program,” she said. “We're excited to learn more from this pilot period and see how this much needed service can serve the whole city. This latest chapter of the first response story is historic, and we thank all of our partners who joined together to make this moment happen.”

The Street Response Team initially will be available in Lents, Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. After six months, a second team will be added to cover the same area and to expand services to nights and weekend. By 2022, the program will ramp up to include more teams and coverage to locations across the city.

Oregon's Struggle for Racial Equity



Thelma Johnson Streat

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Before his appointment to the U.S. District Court, he was a judge of the Multnomah County District Court and the Multnomah County Circuit Court.

Gladys McCoy (1927-1993)

Gladys Sims McCoy was the first person of color elected to public office in Oregon. Whether in her position at Head Start or as a member of the Portland School Board and the Board of County Commissioners, McCoy believed that what people do is "not worth doing" if others are "not better off as a result."



Gladys McCoy

Willie Mae Young Hart (1915-2007)

As a founding member of the Portland Chapter of

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Taking Aim at Gun Law Loophole

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employees that we have."

Nationwide, gun sales hit a historic high in January as violent riots hit the U.S. Capitol and a new president took over, continuing a record-setting surge that began as the coronavirus pandemic took hold in early 2020.

Under Oregon law, if state police fail to provide a gun dealer with an approval number or notify that the purchaser is disqualified from obtaining a firearm before the close of the gun dealer's next business day, the dealer may deliver the firearm to the purchaser.

This bill amends that, saying plainly that the dealer may not transfer a firearm unless the dealer receives a unique approval number from the state police.

The bill generated almost 300 pieces of written testimony either praising or denouncing the measure.

Michael Smith, chairman of the Gun Owners Caucus of the Democratic Party of Oregon, said it "opens the door to a de facto ban on firearms purchases."

Witnesses also lined up to testify by video link.

Talia Wexler, a sophomore at Grant High School in Portland, named several schools, including several in Oregon, that have been bloodied in mass shootings.

"The last thing that people should be afraid of at school is a bullet," Wexler said. "We do know that there are common-sense measure that the Oregon Legislature can take to prevent gun violence. Closing the Charleston loophole is

one of them."

On the national level, Rep. Brad Schneider, D-Illinois, in December introduced legislation to close the loophole that allows some gun sales to be completed without the results of an FBI background check. Under current law, federal firearm licensees may automatically go forward with the sale of a firearm if an FBI background check is not completed after three business days.

In South Carolina, a bill in the statehouse would close the Charleston loophole by prohibiting a gun transfer until a background check has cleared. Similar bills have been filed ever since the 2015 church shooting, but have not advanced far in the GOP-leaning state.

--Associated Press

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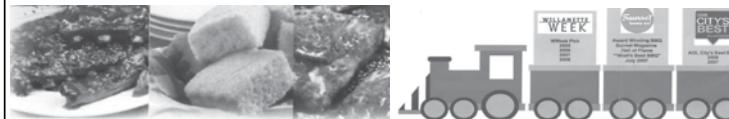
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Student Nahlee Suvanvej (right) and her career mentor Tracee Wells are pictured outside the Portland Metro Workforce Training Center, located at Northeast 42nd and Killingsworth.

A Degree and a New Lease on Life

Workforce training center puts student on new path

Enrolling in Portland Community College's Metro Workforce Training Center gave Nahlee Suvanvej not just a degree but a new lease on life.

The Humboldt Neighborhood resident had overcome past addiction issues and mental health challenges to move to a frame of mind where she could start looking at career training possibilities. But it wasn't until the 38-year-old entered the "Discovery Options" class at the workforce training center, located at Northeast 42nd and Killingsworth, that everything became clear. Through that class, Suvanvej received intensive one-on-one coaching and guidance that allowed her to build skills, examine interests and create a plan.

In 2019, Suvanvej participated in the center's Career Launch, which is a one-week workshop held exclusively for non-traditional and non-credit students who are interested in either an academic track with the college or other vocational training. Staff members help them identify career goals and create a personalized plan for success in college, and introduce them to key PCC services like financial aid, academic advising and more.

The Career Launch program is a precursor to PCC's Career Pathway certificate and college degree programs.

"I had a point of contact who knew my situation and created a positive experience," Suvanvej said. "I think this made a major difference and I felt connected to a larger community throughout the entire journey."

Tracee Wells is part of PCC's Community Workforce Development team that oversees Career Launch and connects people to family-wage jobs.

Through a partnership with the Department of Human Services, her team offers career coaching and exploration, skills workshops, and ongoing wrap around support.

"This is pretty much the idea behind Career Launch," Wells said. "Students focus on which academic program or other vocational training track they would like to pursue."

The center's work echoes the college's commitment to equitable student success with 83% of the students being served identifying as women, 56% people of color and 23% persons with disabilities.

"Everyday, we serve some of Oregon's most marginalized and vulnerable students," Wells said. "Nahlee symbolizes the successes we strive to gain from the workshop, as many of our non-traditional students may have multiple academic and employment barriers and can most greatly benefit

from an on-ramp class to better prepare for school.

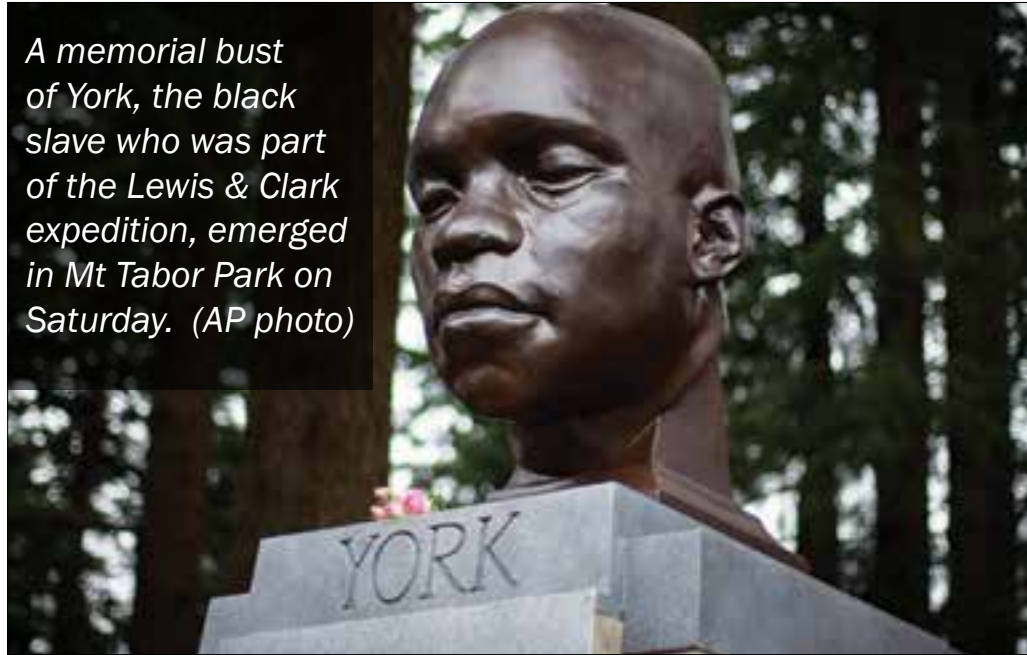
"We also work closely with our partners like DHS, who provide students with a means to receive an income, food subsidies, healthcare, transportation, and other critical support service assistance while they are in school," she continued.

Wells said that the next Career Launch group of about half dozen cohorts will start in March. Those interested can visit the Portland Metro WTC webpage at pcc.edu/workforce-development/metro/.

As for Suvanvej, she completed the "Peer Support Specialist" and "Basic Life Support" training certification through HealthCareers NW, which is another college workforce development program that is supported by Worksystems. She then moved on and finished the "Foundations in Hu-

Bust of York Appears in Park

A memorial bust of York, the black slave who was part of the Lewis & Clark expedition, emerged in Mt Tabor Park on Saturday. (AP photo)



A memorial bust of York, a Black slave who was part of the Lewis and Clark expedition, has appeared at Mt. Tabor Park in southeast Portland, the maker unknown.

The artwork emerged on Saturday, in the same place where a statue of Harvey Scott, a well-known conservative figure from Oregon's pioneer days and a former editor of the Oregonian who opposed women's suffrage, was toppled in October 2020.

York was enslaved by William Clark, who, along with Meriwether Lewis, led the ex-

pedition to cross into the newly acquired western part of the country following the Louisiana Purchase in 1803.

The York piece "should make all of us reflect on the invisibility and contributions of Black, Indigenous, Latinx and other Oregonians of color—especially artists," Carmen Rubio, the city's commissioner, said in a statement on Facebook.

She added that the bust is a "much-needed reminder to city leaders to hasten our work of rooting out white supremacy in our institutions."



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And to gain the necessary knowledge to help shape environmental policy, Secota earned her degree online from Oregon State University Ecampus. "I always had dreams that were bigger than my surroundings," she said. "Earning a degree has always been one of them."

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Randi Stewart of Portland is running her own online business, 526 Beauty and Skincare Products, at 526beauty.com.

Entrepreneur Inspired by Family

Randi Stewart of Portland turned the grief of losing her father three years ago to cancer into action for launching her own online business, 526 Beauty and Skincare Products, 526beauty.com.

The number in the company's name is in memorial to the fifth month and date of her father's birth.

"I was looking for something

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18

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Oregon's Struggle for Racial Equity

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7



the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) and Women In Community Service (WICS), Hart inspired others to serve as agents of change. She helped operate Portland's first Black-owned cab company and was the first African American nurse to work at Portland's Physicians and Surgeons Hospital.

Harriet "Hattie" Redmond (1862-1952)

Harriet "Hattie" Redmond was a leader in the long struggle for Oregon woman suffrage, especially during the successful campaign of 1912. The right to vote

was especially important to Redmond as a Black woman living in a state that had codified Black exclusion laws in its constitution. Redmond's work for voting rights helped lay the groundwork for the Black civil rights movement of the mid-20th century.

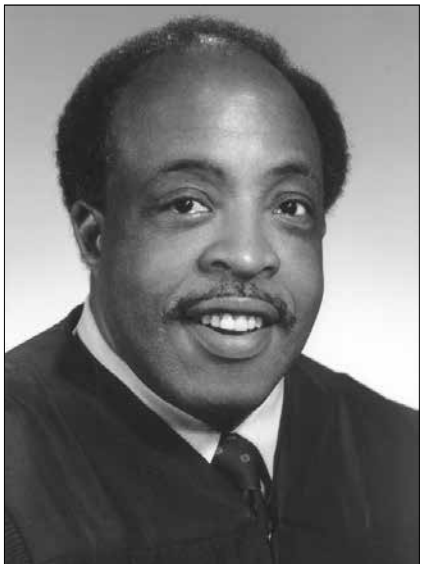
Thelma Johnson Streat (1912-1959)

Thelma Johnson Streat was a multi-talented African American artist who focused on ethnic themes in her work. Streat began painting at the age of seven and received art training at the Museum Art School in the mid-1930s. In 2016, Streat's mural, Medicine and Transportation, became part of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture's permanent collection and is currently on display in Washington, D.C.



DeNorval Unthank (1899-1977)

DeNorval Unthank received his M.D. in 1926 from Howard University College of Medicine in Washington, D.C. James A. Merriman recruited him to work care for Black workers of the Union Pacific Railroad in Oregon, and upon Merriman's move to Arizona, Unthank became the only Black physician in Portland. He was a co-founder of the Portland Urban League and was active in the passage of Oregon's 1953 Civil Rights Bill.



Lizzie Weeks (1879-1976)

Lizzie Koontz Weeks was an African American activ-

ist in Portland in the years after women in Oregon had achieved the right to vote in 1912. She organized Black women to empower them to be successful voters and was an early candidate for local party office. Weeks was the first female African American social worker employed by Multnomah County.



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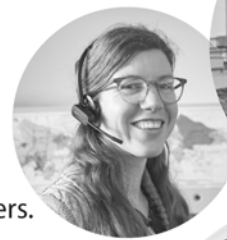
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OPINION

Letter to the Editor

Our Gun Violence Crisis

Forbes magazine ran a recent op-ed “Portland is dying” that grabbed the attention of city leaders. What doesn’t seem to garner the same kind of immediate response is the gun violence that is killing Black people in Portland.

According to Portland Police statistics, over the past 11 years in the city, Black, Indigenous, and People of Color under the age of 40 made up 45% to as high as 70% of the homicides where a person was shot and killed.

New police data also shows just how disproportionately the violence affects the Black community. Of the 191 people shot last year in Portland, 57% were Black compared to 28% who were white. In addition, almost half of the 41 people killed by gunfire in 2020 were Black.

I remember many of the gun violence victims in our city over the past 10 years. Billy Moore, a 16-year-old Black child shot while getting off the bus after saying goodbye to his dying mother in the hospital, for example; and Shiloh Hampton, a 14-year-old Black child gunned down while leaving the Lloyd Center mall and walking through Holladay Park; and Dhulfiqar Kareem Mseer, a 23-year-old refugee from Iraq and a Uber driver who was shot and killed as he stopped to pick up a passenger; and Kelley Marie Smith, 53, a Black woman who was shot and killed while delivering Uber eats.

We have a public health crisis in our city. Gun violence is disproportionately impacting, wounding and killing Black Portlanders and other Portlanders of Color, and so far, the Portland City Council doesn’t seem to care or have a plan to fix the problem.

Portland City Commissioner Jo Ann Hardesty, when asked recently if she believes Portland has a gang problem, said “no” and laughed when recounting how people in Portland would tell her to stay out of North and Northeast Portland because of gang violence. Commissioner Hardesty is wrong. Portland does have a gang problem. Her false narrative is dangerous to creating the funding and resources to address the issue of gun violence that overwhelming impacts young Black men. More importantly her words ignore the pain of the victims and families impacted.

Hardesty also recently stated in a KATU interview “They need to stop the supply of guns into the city of Portland.” Who is they? the Police? The gun violence reduction team? Disbanding the Portland Police Gun Violence Reduction Team was a poorly thought out, and was even worse in how Portland City Council went about it. We are witnessing the void it left to address gun violence in our city.

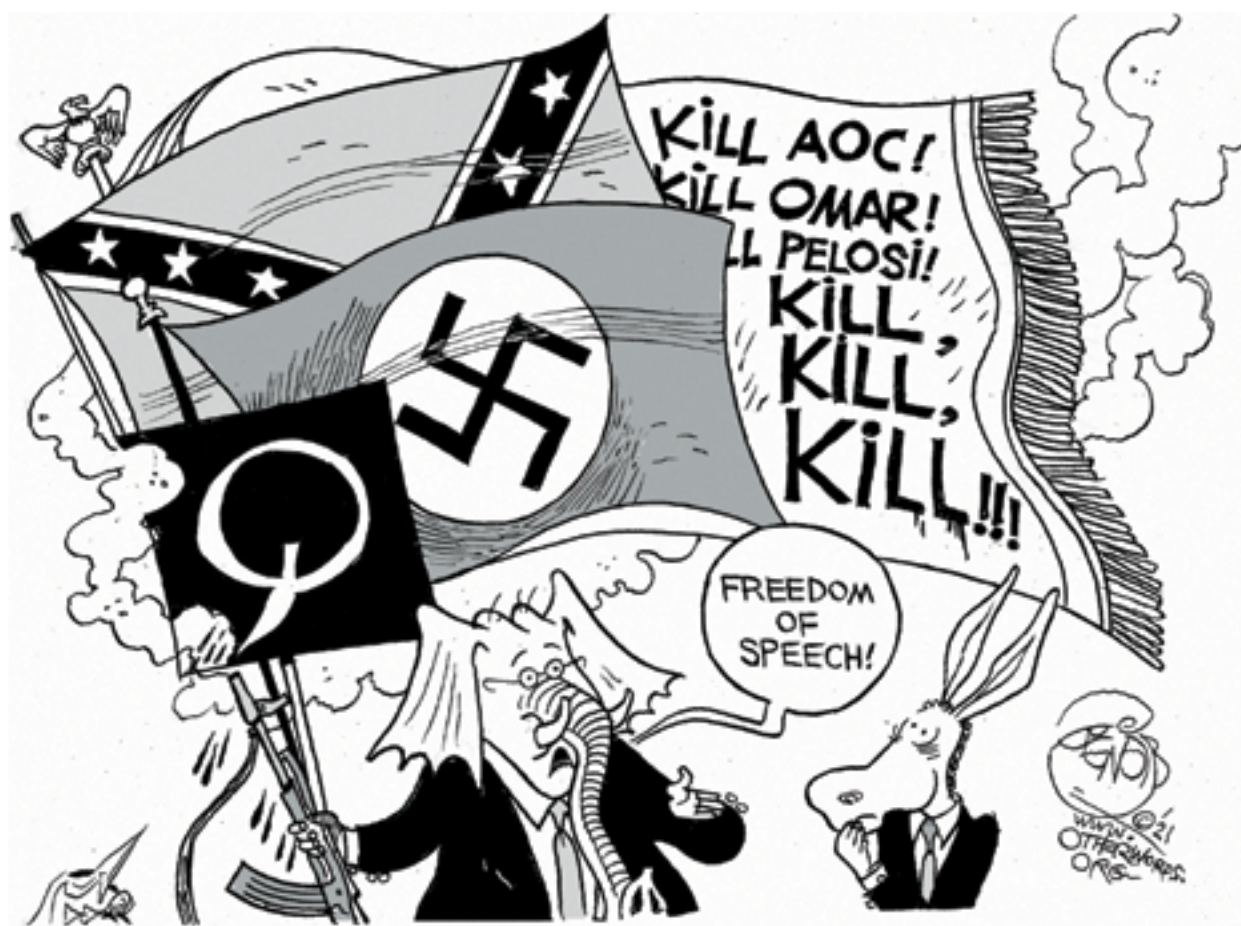
So far, the only Portland official with a plan to address the gun violence is PPB Chief Chuck Lovell who has responded to the concerns made clear from a city audit and data from police stops.

We as a community need to support every Black, Indigenous, Latino, Polynesian, and any Portlander or person of color who is seeking racial justice, including those that are being shot and killed in our streets, but we also need to support our police chief who as a Black man has a vested interest in ending these killings.

We need a plan, an accounting of the \$15 million in upstream services, and the funding for The Office of Violence Prevention. The solution must include more Portland police officers on the streets, improving trust, building relationships, and responding to gun violence in the community or more BIPOC Portlanders will die.

We can work to prioritize racial justice for all Portlanders and make the BIPOC community feel safe from gun violence and trust the police.

Sam Sachs, Portland founder of No Hate Zone



Black Women Seldom Get Support We Deserve Black History Month time to celebrate accomplishments

BY SIRIUS BONNER

February is Black History Month — a time to celebrate the brilliance, beauty and accomplishments of Black people. As the past year has dramatically illustrated, Black communities, and Black women in particular, are the backbone of justice and social change.



Throughout U.S. history, Black women have nurtured families — often not our own — organized communities, led social movements and re-imagined fields like the arts and sciences. Black women’s influence radiates in every corner of American culture.

Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette knows that in the tireless effort to survive and care for ourselves, our families and our communities, Black women seldom get the support we deserve. PPCW is proud to provide the health care, education and resources that Black women need to thrive, while recognizing Black women’s heritage, achievements and future.

As reproductive justice leaders have said for years, racism is a public health crisis in our country. From targeted voter suppression to state-sanctioned violence by police, Black people consistently overcome unnecessary barriers rooted in white supremacy to keep ourselves and our communities safe.

Because of centuries of deeply entrenched institutional discrimination, bias of medical providers and economic inequality, the Black community already faces limited access to health care and a heightened risk of health complications. This has resulted in disparities in sexual and reproductive health outcomes.

According to the latest data from the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention, Black women are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes compared to white women. And recent data show that Black Americans are disproportionately affected by COVID-19 due to medical racism and structural barriers to testing and receiving care.

ers to testing and receiving care.

The COVID-19 pandemic and maternal health crisis have shown us how deadly structural racism is to our health. For Black women, becoming a mother shouldn’t be a life-or-death decision. We need maternal health care that is compassionate, comprehensive and unbiased — and we need policies that address the urgency to save our lives.

In addition, PPCW is horrified by last month’s violent attack on the U.S. Capitol by white supremacists. This insurrection was the extension of a pattern seen across the country, as state legislatures have been threatened by paramilitaries and anti-democratic groups often aligned with white nationalist movements.

The stark difference in how police treated armed domestic terrorists storming the U.S. Capitol compared with the brutal treatment of peaceful protesters demonstrating against the murder of Black people cannot be ignored. Those protesting racial injustice this past summer were met with a militarized police force, mass arrests and tear gas.

Let’s be clear: White supremacy is terrorism. These violent assaults on our democracy cannot be tolerated, and we cannot allow ourselves to be intimidated.

This Black History Month, PPCW recommits to work with Black-led organizations and elected leaders to advocate for Black communities and promote equity, especially within our healthcare system. The Biden-Harris administration has taken the first steps to rescind the global gag rule, which harms Black and Brown women most, and now it must follow through with its campaign promises for sexual and reproductive health.

Health equity is at the center of Planned Parenthood’s mission. Our first priority is, and always will be, the health and safety of our patients. We strive to see, hear and learn from Black women as a care provider and educator they can trust — no matter what.

Sirius Bonner serves as vice president of equity and inclusion at Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette. For more information visit ppcw.org.

Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

Zoo Reopens after Digging Out

Snow and ice shuttered the Oregon Zoo over the long Presidents Day weekend, but the popular destination re-opened on Friday, with a return to regular operating hours.

"Most people didn't get to see it, but it's been beautiful up here on the hill," said Scott Cruickshank, interim zoo director. "The animals had a lot of fun playing in the snow. We can't wait to welcome back guests."

Under COVID-19 safety procedures, all guests, including zoo members, must reserve tickets online in advance, and masks are required throughout the zoo. To learn more about what to expect when visiting, go to oregonzoo.org/reopening.



The Oregon Zoo re-opened to regular operating hours on Friday after digging out from snow and freezing rain that caused a week long closure.



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RECIPES

Coconut & Squash Dhansak

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 500g butternut squash (about 1 small squash), peeled and chopped into bite-sized chunks
- 100g frozen chopped onions
- 4 heaped tbsp mild curry paste
- 400g can chopped tomatoes
- 400g can light coconut milk
- mini naan bread, to serve
- 400g can lentils, drained
- 200g bag baby spinach
- 150ml coconut yogurt, plus extra to serve

Directions:

1. Heat the oil in a large pan. Put the squash in a bowl with a splash of water. Cover with cling film and microwave on High for 10 mins or until tender. Meanwhile, add the onions to the hot oil and cook for a few mins until soft. Add the curry paste, tomatoes and coconut milk, and simmer for 10 mins until thickened to a rich sauce.
2. Warm the naan breads in



a low oven or in the toaster. Drain any liquid from the squash, then add to the sauce with the lentils, spinach and some seasoning. Simmer for

a further 2-3 mins to wilt the spinach, then stir in the coconut yogurt. Serve with the warm naan and a dollop of extra yogurt.

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two canny vantage points: The leadership and assassination of Fred Hampton, chairman of the Illinois Black Panther Party, in 1969, and Bill O'Neal, the young man who fed the FBI much of the information that made that assassination possible. The film is not a biopic, in the usual sense, and it doesn't try to be a definitive account of the Black Panther Party or the Black Power movement—we've got way more stories to explore. But the angles they have chosen, aided by two stunning lead performances and excellent supporting work, open the way to long-overdue curiosity about how the Party and its best leaders were viewed and targeted, and the way the cards were stacked against them, even inside the black community. This film both educates and, if we let it, helps us begin to realize how little we know.

The focus here, wisely, is on a brief window of time, about the last year-and-a-half of the short life of Fred Hampton. Murdered by law enforcement at age 21, he had managed to rise to leadership of the Illinois chapter of the Party, and was a charismatic visionary. Like the



Martin Luther King Jr. speaks after a Dec. 3, 1963 meeting with President Lyndon B. Johnson to discuss civil rights. The new documentary MLK/FBI explores the FBI's obsession with King. (National Archives photo)

older and more famous Martin Luther King Jr. (killed the year before he was), Hampton was clear in his politic, clear in his concern for the crushing and senseless poverty and violence that plagued the black community, and also clear that the black community was not meant to find its natural allies. He saw these problems as solvable, but requiring a revolution.

A focus here is the intensity of the FBI's obsession with

bringing down this young man, who was viewed (as King had been) as one of the most dangerous men in America. The film doesn't shy away from the violent rhetoric that was part of the politic of the Black Panthers and of Hampton himself, but subtly and without simplifying, it offers context for that rhetoric. Hampton spoke from a heightened awareness that the stakes for black people and indeed for all people

were much higher than popularly imagined, that a complete overhaul—indeed, a revolution—was demanded. That sense of the stakes is perhaps the most important contrast between movement leaders and the rest of the country—and also between Hampton and O'Neal.

Importantly, the film also conveys a sense that Hampton's use of violent rhetoric was not the real, main, or only reason that he was targeted by

law enforcement. As brilliantly embodied by Daniel Kaluuya, aided the canny choices of King and the creative team, a picture emerges of a young man motivated by love and prophetic vision, prepared to prioritize "the people" even at the cost of his own interests. Shortly before his death, Hampton elects to put collected resources into a medical clinic rather than into an exile that would have saved his life, ending debate with the simple question, "Is the party about me, or is it about the people?" Now that, friends, is dangerous—and it suggests why the Party's breakfast programs and medical clinics were perceived by law enforcement to be insidious and intolerable. The prevailing argument was that those efforts—getting done what white supremacy did not attempt to do, and with few resources to work with—were not a sign of ingenuity and resourcefulness but rather only a trick to lure people into becoming radicals. But looked at another way, those actions put freedom into the hands of the people and pointed the way to a liberation that was treated

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Entrepreneur Inspired by Family

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

to keep me out of a dark place, so I decided to launch a beauty company. As of 2020 I decided to step back from the cosmetic side of things and focus more of my attention on the skincare products," Stewart said.

A homemade dry skin care product she created, for example, was inspired to help her 5 year old son who suffers from very bad Eczema.

"So that inspired me to create a homemade Eczema product for not only my son but for other people experiencing the same issue. It's been such an amazing feeling to be able to change people's lives and help uplift their self esteem while helping bring their skin back healthy.

Other 526 products include: "Magic Butter", Organic facial wash, Organic hydration cream, Makeup remover, and Organic beard oil. Stewart said while her brands are designed to help improve damaged or unhealthy skin, the company also in the business to encourage, motivate and uplift people's attitudes and outlook on life.

"The more beautiful the skin, the sexier you'll feel within, she said.

A Degree and a New Lease on Life

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

man Services" Career Pathway Certificate at PCC before transferring to Portland State University's Child, Youth and Family Studies Baccalaureate Program while maintaining a 4.00 grade-point average.

"All of the supportive staff at PCC Metro provided the tools needed to encourage my career path forward," said Suvanvej, who is targeting a job in the human services field. "My dream of completing a bachelor's degree seemed unrealistic due to barriers. Through the information, support and resources of the session, I discovered and planned my academic pathway."

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Illuminating the Black Power Movement

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

as--and arguably is--un-American. "Power to the People" could only be treasonous when viewed from a dominant American culture lens.

The film's focus on Bill O'Neal--the Judas of the title--is just as complicated. O'Neal as a person was more opaque than Hampton--a petty criminal, he became an easy target for the FBI. He was evidently lured by money that, while modest by some standards, was far beyond what he could acquire by other legal means, and he no doubt lacked the principled vision of the stakes that drove those he spied on. But as played by LaKeith Stanfield, he is not exactly a fool or a sociopathic, and he is almost sympathetic. As I've read other reviews critiquing the film on that score, I've paused to wonder if part of the problem is our reluctance to see ourselves in O'Neal. Most of us are much more like him than Hampton--and the culture we all participate in and don't find ways to disrupt creates people like O'Neal who powered the FBI's counterintelligence program, known as COINTELPRO. If we really want to understand this Judas, we would do best to look at ourselves.

The curiosity this film awakened in me sent me to two other films that make good companion pieces. "MLK/FBI" is a new documentary by the venerable Sam Pollard (whose "Two Trains Runnin'" topped my list of the best films of 2016) and explores the FBI's obsession with King. It offers some further unpacking of the dirty methods that were used

without any real danger of pushback, and notes that in the 1960s, FBI director J. Edgar Hoover garnered much higher public approval ratings than the hated and feared King. Pollard, too, means to awaken our curiosity--not to what those long-buried tapes of King's private activities might reveal but to what it reveals about us that we are so prone to identifying black visionaries as public enemy number one.

The other is episode 6 of "Eyes on the Prize II," which features not only an interview with Bill O'Neal, but also some good context for the Black Power movement and how the black community in Chicago responded to the government lies told after Hampton's assassination. There is also a chilling account of the uprising in Attica prison, another shameful episode that most of us know too little about.

We've got work to do. I'm grateful for the work of these artists to assist us in undertaking it. "Judas and the Black Messiah" is enjoying a limited theatrical release and is streaming on HBO Max; "MLK/FBI" is streaming on Amazon Prime; and you can find "Eyes on the Prize II," which originally aired in 1990, on YouTube, though it is (tellingly) harder to find than season 1 of the series. Back to work.

Darleen Ortega is a judge on the Oregon Court of Appeals and the first woman of color to serve in that capacity. Her movie and theater review column Opinionated Judge appears regularly in The Portland Observer. Find her review blog at opinionatedjudge.blogspot.com.



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