



Kairospdx Leaders Swap Roles

Black community school announces changes

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Summer of Soul

A beautiful portrayal of 1969 Black culture

See film's review, page 7



PO QR code

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'City of Roses'

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Committed to Cultural Diversity

Connecting with Nature



The Portland NAACP and Metro is helping Black kids and other young people of color spend time in nature, drawing benefits that can lead to healthier, happier communities.

NAACP and Metro sponsor youth-led hikes

BY BEVERLY CORBELL
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Like generations before them, Black and brown kids haven't always felt safe or welcome in the outdoors, but the Portland NAACP and Metro have started a program this year to reverse that trend and involve them in a new hiking program at area public parks.

"It's so they can build positive memories out in nature and also to allow some of the youth to be around Black and brown professionals in environmental fields," said

J'reyesha Brannon, chair of the NAACP's Environmental Justice committee, a lead organizer of the program.

Made possible by a grant from the regional government

Metro, and a new bill passed by the Oregon Legislature, the outreach came with the recruitment of 10 young locals between 16 and 21 who signed up to be hiking guides. They were trained for three days by Metro to learn about plants, animals and waterways along the trails in the Smith & Bybee Wetlands, Oxbow Regional Park and Scouter's Mountain.

The hikes began July 6, and two remaining outings are still on the schedule, Aug. 2 and Aug. 3. To register for the hikes, go to the NAACP website at pdxnaacp.org/announcements.

The young hiking guides earn \$700 by leading the two-hour excursions, another way the program uplifts people of color or those that are disadvantaged.

"We had over 60 apply (to be guides) but we didn't know so many would apply," Brannon said. "So Metro is

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Makayla Harris

Grieving for Teen Killed Downtown

Shocking violence latest in string of shootings

Friends and family were left grieving after a young Black woman was killed Saturday in a drive-by shooting downtown that also injured six other people.

Makayla Harris, 18, was outside in the 300 block of Southeast Third Avenue around 2 a.m. when gunfire from a passing vehicle was sprayed into the street. Six other people were injured, according to police. No arrests have been made.

Her death was one of two killings from four different shootings on a Saturday morning across the city, continuing a string of gun violence and associated homicides that has seen rates soar in the past six months.

According to relatives left mourning, Harris graduated from Grant High School in northeast Portland last month and was the youngest in a family of six siblings.

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Helping Women Emerge from Trauma

Culture and faith empowered to address violence

Lisa Saunders is candid that her life hasn't been easy. There have been many hills and valleys.

At 26 years old, she found herself the single mother of two sons, a 1-year-old and a 3-year-old. After 9 years, she had left a toxic and emotionally abusive relationship that left her feeling broken. Leaving was difficult. And so were the years she would spend regaining her footing and learning who she was inside.

Yet through her struggle, Saunders says, she found strength, transformation and reconnection to her faith. It's a story she shares with other women throughout her community.

"I've sat and told my own story," said Saunders. "There are so many women out here who don't get to connect. I was going to work and doing these things, but I was completely shattered inside."

"Just because you work and do these things, that doesn't mean you're fine. The face looks

good, the outfit is great, but inside I'm bleeding. Inside, I might be suicidal. Inside, I have no self-esteem or I'm hearing tapes of things that were told to me about who I am."

Today, Saunders is a wife, mother and "doting Grammy" who's passionate about her faith. Her two sons have flourishing careers and families of their own. She's a certified adult mental health peer support specialist. And she's the executive director of FaithBridge, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping women — particularly Black women and women of color — emerge from trauma to reconnect in a life-transforming and faith-affirming way.

The women she connects with may be emerging from abandonment, incarceration, substance use disorders or abusive relationships. Some are struggling just with being an empty nester. Saunders expressly serves women of color and Black women who, stud-



PHOTO BY MOTOYA NAKAMURA/MULTNOMAH COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

Lisa Saunders is the executive director of FaithBridge, a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping women — particularly Black women and women of color — emerge from trauma to reconnect in a life-transforming and faith-affirming way.

ies and surveys show, often turn to their faith during trying times and turmoil.

In the wake of crises like the COVID-19 pandemic and the surge in community violence that have disproportionately affected people of color, Multnomah County is funding services at FaithBridge as part of a series of unprecedented investments — guided by input from over 1,000 people and organizations — in public and behavioral health programs

that support resilience and healing.

According to a Washington Post and Kaiser Family Foundation Poll, 87 percent of Black women, more than any other group, identified faith in helping them get through tough times. Saunders also cites a Pew Research Center Religious Landscape Study in which 84 percent of Black women surveyed said religion

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The Week in Review

Prison for Justice Center Fire

Cyan Waters Bass, 21, was sentenced to 4 years in prison Monday for setting fire to the downtown Justice Center, causing \$46,000 in damages during a Sept. 23 protest and riot. Bass admitted to using a wrist rocket slingshot to break windows, a flammable liquid to set the building on fire, and then throwing a Molotov cocktail toward police officers.

Woman Assistant Coach Named

The Portland Trail Blazers hired former Oregon Ducks and WNBA guard Ednie-sha Curry as an assistant coach, Jason Quick of the Athletic reported Monday. An assistant coach for the men's basketball team at the University of Maine, Curry, 42, will be the first female coach in Blazers history.



Federal Marijuana Bill Eyed

Top Senate Democrats, including Oregon Sen. Ron Wyden, introduced a bill last week that would decriminalize marijuana at the federal level. "The war on drugs has really been a war on people, particularly people of color...it's not just an idea whose time has come, it's long overdue," said Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer.

Fire Victims, Cause Released

The Oregon State Medical Examiner identified the two men killed in a predawn apartment fire on July 4 at Northeast Weidler Street as Robert William Gremillion, 31,

and Seth Robert Thompson, 31. The cause of the fire has also been determined as fireworks that caught a dumpster on fire.

First Sentence for Insurrection

A man who pleaded guilty to breaching the Senate chamber during the US Capitol insurrection on Jan. 6 was sentenced Monday to eight months in prison. Paul Hodgkins, 38, is the first Capitol rioter convicted of a felony to be sentenced.

I-84 Bridge Install Delayed

The planned installation of the Blumenauer pedestrian bridge and closure of I-84 over the weekend of July 9-12 was postponed because of additional planning work, according to the Oregon Department of Transportation. A new date will be announced when it becomes available, officials said.

New Logo for Winterhawks

The Portland Winterhawks revealed a new logo last week, removing Native American imagery which had long been criticized as having racist overtones. The team has been under new ownership since January.



Stunning Fish Discovered

A strange-looking fish washed up on the Oregon coast near Seaside last week, stunning beach walkers. The 3.5-foot, 100-pound opah fish, also known as a moonfish, is typically found in warmer, tropical waters, though it's not unheard of to find them along the Oregon coast, authorities said.

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LOCAL NEWS



Marsha Williams (from left), Zalika Gardner and Kali Thorne-Ladd, founders of KairosPDX, are pictured in a Portland Observer photo from 2018. It was announced Friday that Williams will become the school's new executive director as Thorne-Ladd moves to a new position as executive director of the Children's Institute.

KairosPDX Leaders Swap Roles

Black community school announces changes

KairosPDX, the public charter school serving grades K-5 with special emphasis on the Black community, announced the appointments and promotions Monday of Marsha P.J. Williams as its chief executive officer and Zalika Gardner as chief education and culture officer.

Both Williams and Gardner were among KairosPDX's five

co-founders of the school in 2012 with a mission to eliminate racial achievement and opportunity gaps by cultivating confident, creative and compassionate leaders.

Williams will replace current KairosPDX Executive Director Kali Thorne Ladd, also one of the school's co-founders, who will be departing the organization at the end of August and embarking on a new position as chief executive officer of the Children's Institute.

The KairosPDX board expressed it was grateful for Thorne's "dedication and trailblazing work and looks forward to her successes

in her professional journey."

Williams is a seasoned executive, who brings a wealth of diverse organizational skills and thought leadership to community-based and national organizations, most notably currently serving as the chapter president of the Portland Willamette Valley Chapter of Jack and Jill of America, Inc. and as a trustee on Warner Pacific University's Board.

Before KairosPDX, Williams worked in the health care sector. She received her Bache-

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New Ally for Change in Police Culture

Nonpartisan League of Women Voters takes stand

Changing the culture of the Portland Police Bureau must be a key goal of bureau leadership, according to a new advocacy position just released by the nonpartisan League of Women Voters of Portland.

The League's membership issued a report last week that con-



Police headquarters, downtown. (Photo by M. O. Stevens/Wikipedia Commons)

cluded that, "PPB must end practices that systematically place police in opposition to or in domination of the public, or that treat community members as enemies."

The report, coming after a year-long study of Portland police oversight and accountability, calls for added accountability for police

officers who violate community standards and police bureau policies and directives; a reduction in the use of force; fair, equitable, and respectful treatment of community members; and a reduction of bias-based policing with a goal

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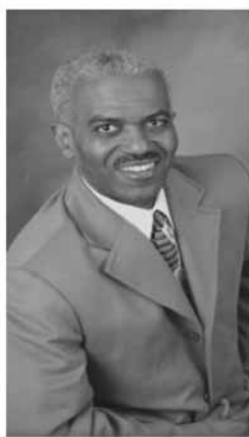
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KairosPDX Leaders Swap Roles

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lor's from Brandeis University, where she played collegiate basketball, and subsequently completed a Fellowship in Policy Research at Harvard Medical School.

Gardner, a master educator with over 27 years of experience, has worked with primary age chil-

dren as well as adult learners as an adjunct professor and professional development expert. She has been co-leading KairosPDX as the education director since its inception and will continue to oversee all educational innovation as well as ensure the organization's culture and mission work hand-in-hand, officials said.

"Zalika and Marsha are ex-

ceptional leaders and will take the school, and all that it does for kids, families, and community to the next level of success," said Joe McFerrin II, president and chief executive office of the Portland Opportunities Industrialization Center, another school serving the Black community and other students of color in north Portland.

New Ally for Change in Police Culture

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

of eliminating it.

"I am very proud that The League of Women Voters of Portland has produced a deeply researched and timely position on police accountability. Addressing the issues facing many U.S. cities, it provides strong recommendations for how Portland can achieve a safe, just and equitable public safety system," said Debbie Kaye, president of the League.

The organization said it enlisted an all-volunteer 22-member committee to study police oversight and accountability shortly before George Floyd was killed in Min-

neapolis last year. The committee reported that it reviewed 55 source documents and interviewed 22 key stakeholders, including police leadership, city council members, state legislators and community advocates.

The resulting 64-page study report explained Portland's history of policing, the current process of overseeing its police force, instances of inappropriate use of force by PPB officers over the past 20 years, and progress made so far on improving Portland's police oversight and accountability system.

The new League report calls for a reduction in use of force through

de-escalation and for alternatives to armed police, such as using unarmed, appropriately trained civilian employees to respond to certain calls. There is also a call for enhanced transparency in the scope and timeliness of releasing police records, as well as for strengthening civilian oversight and community involvement.

The League is also supporting giving authority to oversight groups to conduct independent investigations of police misconduct and to recommend discipline. For more details, visit the Portland League of Women Voters website at www.lwvpdx.org.

Grieving for Teen Killed Downtown

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

"I love you more than anything, baby girl," a sister, Shauna Harris wrote on Facebook.

A cousin, Kyla Duncan, started a GoFundMe page to help the family with the expenses of funeral services and a memorial.

"Makayla had the most contagious smile you've ever seen, she always wanted to have fun and be around her family and friends," Duncan wrote on the page, adding that Harris "was the most genuine and kind hearted person you could meet. She had a good soul and definitely didn't deserve this."

She was also remembered by Philip Humphrey, a Grant High coordinator for Self Enhancement, Inc., who described her as a "personality in such a small package," posting a photo on Instagram showing him beside Harris at her graduation last month.

Mayor Ted Wheeler and Police Chief Chuck Lovell gathered the media Saturday to respond to Harris' death and the latest in a string of shootings. Both said they would push hard for more officers and resources for the Portland Police Bureau, which has lost 125 sworn officers in the past year and faces new rounds of retiring officers in coming months.

Last year, in the wake of sustained protests against police brutality and racial injustice and calls to defund the police in favor of better mental health and other social services to prevent violence, Portland's City Commission cut some funding and disbanded a gun violence reduction unit that also drew criticism for unfairly targeting Black men and other people of color.

Since then, Chief Lovell has assembled new teams aimed at curbing gun violence and solving a rash of shootings through both investigation and proactive intervention before shootings happen.

Some residents, however, question if that's enough as the city marked its 50th and 51st homicides Saturday. There have

been about 570 shooting incidents in Portland so far this year — more than twice the number recorded in the same time period last year. Police have said that about half of those shootings were gang-related.

"We've had many years of growth as a city and a shrinking police force (and) you can only go so long in that trend before you hit a tipping point," Lovell said.

"If you go back to yesterday, we've had 11 shootings incidents resulting in 13 people injured or killed — and that's in a span of 38 hours. Not only is this shocking, all these calls really tax resources."

Lovell said it was too early to call Harris' shooting death gang-related.

He called on anyone who witnessed the incident or had cell phone video or photos of the area before, during and after the shooting to contact police. No arrests have been made.

"We all want to know what happened and who did this and why, and I pledge that more information will come out as soon as possible. Investigators think there might be more victims and witnesses who left the scene, which is understandable given how terrifying and hectic that scene was," he said.

--Associated Press contributed to this story.

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Helping Women Emerge from Trauma

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is important.

“And I’m convinced of it because I know the power of it in my own life, in my children’s life,” she said.

Born and raised in North and Northeast Portland, Saunders was the youngest of three children.

“I was the baby. And both my parents had their own trauma.”

That trauma was passed down through generations. Saunders’ mother experienced abuse, abandonment and deep emotional pain as a child, and as a young woman growing up in the South.

Later, as a mother herself, she was hyper-vigilant and protective “because she didn’t have someone like that in her life as a child,” Saunders said.

Lisa’s father experienced grief and was an alcoholic much of her childhood and young adult life. Her brother struggled with a substance use disorder. He died on his 40th birthday in the Oregon State Penitentiary. Throughout their turmoil, the family’s connection to faith remained. Her mother and father were both gospel singers.

“I had family members who were broken. But when they passed away, they passed away very strong. We really don’t get the chance to heal,” she said. “There’s generations of pain that’s in our RNA and DNA.”

Saunders’ breakup with her boyfriend triggered layers of pain and put distance between her and the things she needed to heal. “I was drunk in the club, in the 90s in Spandex, lis-



PHOTO BY MOTOYA NAKAMURA/MULTNOMAH COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS

Lisa Saunders holds photo of two young sons. Today, they have flourishing careers and families of their own.

tening to En Vogue, doing my own thing. So I wasn’t really attending church.”

But eventually, she reconnected to church and started doing in womens’ ministry. She started a Facebook page. Things started changing. “I ended up sharing my story with other women,” she said. “And they just came.”

Small gatherings grew larger. Soon, Saunders began hosting gatherings in coffee shops. She called the events “Crystal Gatherings.”

“I remember I was at home and I had this beautiful crystal vase sitting by the window, and the sun was shining through it. I was thinking about all the cuts and grooves in the pieces of glass. And it was like I heard God say, ‘That’s what makes you beautiful.’”

A common thread among participants was

trauma, but also a hunger for healing — particularly healing in a way that’s culturally relevant, Saunders said.

“There’s physical hunger, but then there’s spiritual hunger,” she said.

Saunders began writing a white paper. She cited work from the Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior about African American women in extreme poverty who were also food insecure. Providing food alone wasn’t enough to help those women heal from the rest of the trauma in their lives, Saunders said.

“For African American women, there was so much stress and trauma in their lives that even when presented with food, they couldn’t eat,” Saunders said. “Do we just do a food pantry? Or do we do a food pantry and heal-

ing, that’s culturally relevant?”

“That reinforced a lot of what I know. We have trauma-informed care. We recognize people are in trauma. We also recognize there are triggers to trauma in our systems and physical spaces.

But beyond that, I don’t want to be stuck in trauma.

I don’t want to be defined by my trauma. There needs to be a next step.”

As more women joined Saunders’ Crystal Gatherings, the events grew to include in-depth workshops that covered subjects from “Finding Your Voice” to “Wounds, Bruises and Scars.”

In January 2019, Saunders took a bold step in the next part of her journey helping women heal. She left her full-time job after 20 years and started a new organization that would build on the promise of her Crystal Gatherings: FaithBridge.

“I was sitting in Starbucks, thinking about what I should do,” she said. “And then it just came to me. ‘You should be a bridge to healing.’ So I built FaithBridge. It’s really what I’ve been doing for years, but more codified.”

Saunders’ work reaches career women who seem like they have it all together. FaithBridge also reaches women leaving incarceration, who may also struggle with addiction.

“These are the women who more so need the support,” Saunders said.

The work can unfold at retreats, away from everyday environments, or at transitional homes for justice-involved women.

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FULL-TIME, IN-PERSON SCHOOL IS COMING BACK.



Anticipation is building for students to return to full-time and in-person school this fall. For kids and families, this can be a mix of anxiety, excitement and opportunity. Local school districts are updating their health and safety plans to serve the needs of their students and families. Learn how your district is preparing at Oregon.gov/readyschools.



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Portland Community College is ready to welcome students to its new Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Training Center in Scappoose. Classes are aimed at students looking to start in the manufacturing trades or those working professionals who are seeking new skills to advance their careers.

Manufacturing Innovation

Years of planning and construction have finally paid off as Portland Community College's Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Training Center opens for classes this summer and credit offerings are planned to start this fall.

The new center is the educational arm of the nearby Oregon Manufacturing Innovation Center initiative — a collaboration of industry, higher education and government that combines applied research and development and workforce training.

Located at PCC's Columbia County Center, 34001 N.E. Wagner Court in Scappoose,

New center to begin credit offerings in fall

the facility officially opens on Monday, Aug. 16 with a free, five-week series of "On-Ramp to Manufacturing" classes that are designed for people interested in working in advanced manufacturing.

The non-credit, introductory classes are geared to help participants make informed decisions about their careers, build skills for success in school or on the job, and access

support on their journey to becoming a PCC student.

The courses include "Explore Options" where students look at career paths in manufacturing, learn about educational opportunities and connect with industry professionals. It will feature PCC programs like bioscience, computer aided design and drafting, electronic engineering, machine manufacturing, micro-electronics and welding.

Officials say attendees will receive support as they enter the PCC admissions process, connect with other students and build skills. For more information, call 971-722-2175.

'Summer of Soul' – Much to Savor

OPINIONATED JUDGE

BY
DARLEEN ORTEGA



Film beautifully portrays 1969 celebration of Black culture

If you look up “Summer of Soul” (or “When the Revolution Could Not Be Televised”) on Metacritic, you will find that the ratings of this phenomenal documentary—a first directing effort by Ahmir “Questlove” Thompson—has evoked “universal acclaim” from critics. And rightly so. But let us pause to reflect on what the trajectory of this particular work of art has to teach us about our collective selves—what it takes for Black artists to gain recognition in this country, and the losses that accompany every hard-fought gain.

Visionary New York promoter and entertainer Tony Lawrence conceived and organized a series of free concerts over six weekends in 1969, dubbed the Harlem Cultural Festival. The project required vision—it was held at what was then known as Mount Morris Park (now Marcus Garvey Park) and drew a combined total of 300,000 people in a dazzling celebration of Black culture that was unique for the time. New York Mayor John Lindsey supported the project and, when the New York Police Department refused to provide security for the artists,



Mavis Staples and Mahalia Jackson perform at the Harlem Cultural Festival in 1969, featured in the documentary ‘Summer of Soul.’ Photo courtesy Searchlight Pictures.

the Black Panther Party stepped in.

The event was an unqualified success. Acts as diverse as the Fifth Dimension (then at the top of the pop charts), Stevie Wonder (then 19 and pounding out a re-

markable drum solo and astounding keyboard work), a youthful Gladys Knight and the Pips flashing Motown moves, the Edwin Hawkins Singers delivering their hit rendition of “O Happy Day,” gospel legends Mahalia Jackson

and the Staples Singers, Sly and the Family Stone, Nina Simone, and blues great B.B. King performed to buoyant crowds, and television producer Hal Tulchin captured 40 hours of footage. It all happened the same summer as Woodstock—and as director Thompson has pointed out, had the Harlem Cultural Festival involved any of the excesses of that better-known event, it might have attracted more, albeit negative, attention. Tulchin tried for many years to attract funding to turn the footage into a television special or documentary film, dubbing the event “Black Woodstock.” But no one was interested. The footage tragically sat in his basement for almost 50 years.

Thompson’s background as a drummer, bandleader, D.J., and music historian makes him the ideal person to bring us this cast-aside treasure. These 50 years lat-

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Supporting Oregonians

COPING WITH PROBLEM GAMBLING

Times Are Changing

Summer. The season so many of us have waited for, with its promise of cheerful weather, camping, daytrips, and street fairs — so much to do! And, this year, we’re able to make summer plans with fewer cares around social distancing and masks. As vaccination levels increase, our worries start to lessen. Dare we say it? Life feels like it’s getting back to normal this summer.

But right on the heels of those comforting thoughts, some of us still have doubts. We’re encouraged to continue taking precautions for public health. Many of our favorite summer gatherings are still holding off. Even the sunny skies and warm weather sometimes turn into too much of a good thing. Coping with all the change can feel like a bit of a roller coaster. For some of us, issues like problem gambling can be harder to control when life still feels so uncertain.

Help is Available

Luckily, here in Oregon, help is available. Through the Oregon Problem Gambling Resource (OPGR), gamblers and those who love them can get support from trained addiction counselors, often right from home. Treatment is effective. People are ready and waiting to provide mechanisms to cope and to heal. And, best of all, it’s free.

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For more information, visit →

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Arts & ENTERTAINMENT

All Libraries Open by End of August

Services return as public gets vaccinated

The Multnomah County Library system has announced that all locations will be open by the end of August.

The renewal of branch library services got started last week as vaccinations for the coronavirus reached more than 70 percent of the adult population.

As branches reopen, patrons are able to browse, pick up holds without an appointment, use computers and Wi-Fi, scan/fax/print documents and get help from library staff. Other library services like in-person programs, youth story times and public meeting room use will begin later and expand over time, official said.

Masks are still recommended for library patrons.

"I'm proud of the new and innovative ways the library served this



With vaccinations for coronavirus fully available and reaching at least 70 percent of the adult population, Multnomah County has been able to safely open more libraries to public access and plans to have all locations open by the end of August.

community during the pandemic, but there's nothing we have looked forward to more than opening those doors to serve people in person at every library," said Director of Libraries Vailey Oehlke. "I am

grateful to our community for its support of the library through this historic and challenging time and I am eager to embrace our next chapter together."

Learn more at multcolib.org.

Eight Easy Steps to Playing Piano

Portland musician authors new book

Portland musician Kirk Green's new book, *Eight Easy Steps to Playing Piano*, will be celebrated on Saturday, Aug. 7 with a book signing event from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, 3138 N. Vancouver Ave.

Members of the community, music teachers and students of music alike are invited to attend the free gathering and discover a fresh take on the musical arts with this smartly written, colorful new book that teaches the fundamentals of piano play in a fun and easy manner.

Written by Green with colorful design and sharp layout by Paul Neufeldt, *Eight Easy Steps to Playing Piano* is suitable for all ages, containing everything music students will need to boost the learning process, including hand positioning, differences between high and low tones, dynamics and different time signatures.

Green explains that after completing the *Eight Easy Steps*, piano students will be capable of writing their own songs, and play with ease to all their favorite music.

Teachers will find this to be a great reference and new students will follow its format to learn



*Portland musician Kirk Green with his new piano instruction book, *Eight Easy Steps to Playing Piano*. This book is available on Amazon and iBooks.*



how to play piano with ease. The book is formatted to both visually and musically understand the relationship between the musical grand staff to the positioning of the black and white piano keys.

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Opinion articles do not necessarily represent the views of the Portland Observer. We welcome reader essays, photos and story ideas. Submit to news@portlandobserver.com.

OPINION

The Insurrection and the Lost Cause *Recycling propaganda to gain power*

BY BEN JEALOUS

A violent insurrection engulfed the U.S. Capitol just six months ago.

One United States Capitol Police Officer

Brian Sicknick died and other Capitol police are still healing. Investigators are still going through video and social media documenting the attempt to disrupt congressional affirmation of President Joe Biden's victory. Just six months ago. But many Republican leaders are already trying to rewrite the history of that day and what led up to it.

Some are downplaying the seriousness of the attack on Congress. They portray the invasion as a tourist outing. Some far-right activists are trying to shift blame away from the Trump supporters who were clearly responsible for inciting and carrying out the attack.

The people spreading lies about the Capitol insurrection are the spiritual heirs to the Daughters of the Confederacy. They are the ideological descendants of those who spent decades lying to the American



public about slavery and the Civil War.

Promoters of pro-Confederacy propaganda known as "Lost Cause" ideology had a purpose. They wanted people to view the defense of slavery and the "southern way of life" as a noble cause. They wanted to create justifications for the brutally enforced segregation and subjugation of Black people during the Jim Crow era. They created and promoted in textbooks and media a false version of history. And they used that false version of history to keep a grip on power that they did not deserve to hold.

Republicans who deny or downplay the insurrectionists' attempt to overturn the presidential election are creating their own Lost Cause ideology. They are trying to portray Stop the Steal activists and insurrectionists as patriots pursuing a noble cause—the defense of "election integrity" and the "purity of the ballot box."

What we have here is layer upon layer of lies.

Trump's claim that his victory was stolen by Black and brown voters in corrupt cities was the lie that fueled insurrectionists' rage. It was repeated

endlessly on right-wing media. It is still repeated by Trump and his supporters to portray President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris as illegitimate.

The stolen-election lie is being used to justify new voter suppression laws aimed at preventing future Democratic wins. It is a lie that Trumpists will use to mobilize white right-wing voters in 2022 and 2024.

Lies about the Jan. 6 insurrection began while it was still under way. Right-wing figures claimed without evidence that the attack was not led by Trump supporters but by unnamed leftists. Some claim that it was all planned by Trump's "deep state" enemies in the FBI.

And now we have an added layer: the frantic campaign against "critical race theory." The manufactured panic about critical race theory demonstrates why right-wing funders spent billions of dollars over the past few decades building an infrastructure of political and media networks. Think tanks, media outlets, political organizations, religious-right groups, AstroTurf operations, and Republican politicians

have all swung into action, sounding alarms about the supposedly dire threat of students, soldiers, and employees learning to think critically about the racism in our country's past and our institutions.

They are recycling the red scare propaganda used against Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights activists, warning of Marxist infiltration and indoctrination in schools, businesses, government agencies, and even the military. Conservatives who until the past few months proclaimed themselves champions of free speech and academic freedom have turned on a dime and are supporting laws banning teaching or discussing racism in the classroom.

The campaign against critical race theory is designed to scare white parents and other Americans into fearing the

growing presence of Black and brown people in positions of influence and power. It is designed to inflame fears and provoke fearful people into action to "protect" themselves and their loved ones. It is designed to bury our understanding of history in an effort to control the future. Its perpetrators are playing with fire.

We cannot successfully face our future by lying about our past, ignoring the realities of the present, or outlawing the truth. Our path forward must be as a multiracial, multiethnic, religiously diverse democratic society united by a shared commitment to the principles of equality, fairness, opportunity, and justice for all.

Ben Jealous serves as president of People For the American Way. He formerly served as president and chief executive officer of the NAACP.



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CLASSIFIEDS/BIDS

Portland Public Schools (PPS) Human Resources Department is seeking talented people from diverse backgrounds and experiences to lead change to support PPS students. We are seeking an Employee and Labor Relations Manager to make a lasting impact on our school district by supporting employee performance management, conducting investigations, and providing staff coaching/training.

The ideal candidate will conduct research, analysis, and use independent judgment to interpret statutes, regulations, and policies and procedures in the field of employee and labor relations. As a manager of employee and labor relations, you will be expected to leverage your experience as an HR business professional to provide support to employees, supervisors, and senior leaders. We seek candidates with a demonstrable commitment to racial equity and social justice goals, and who will be committed to achieving the PPS Racial Educational Equity Policy Goals.

How To Apply: Visit pps.net/jobs and use job number 22763 to review the full qualifications.

Salary Range: \$88,756 - \$105,979

First screening will occur on July 28, 2021 at 3:00pm.

The Director of the Talented and Gifted (TAG) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Program is responsible for leading programs within the Office of Teaching and Learning. The Director is instrumental in reimagining the identification of potential TAG students while applying an equity lens. The Director is charged with the development of new IB programs in the district and supporting students participating in current International Baccalaureate Programs of study. The Director, working in collaboration with administrators and teachers, ensures the delivery of effective TAG instruction, rate, level, identification, family communication, and equitable access to TAG services. In addition, the Director is responsible for the development, implementation, and evaluation of the IB programs. The Director will ensure alignment, program advancement, and internal communication links exist across multiple sites, grades, and organizational levels. Portland Public Schools is committed to eliminating systemic racism and its adverse impact on student learning. We seek candidates who bring a commitment to racial equity, inclusion, and social justice.

How to Apply: Please visit www.pps.net/jobs and use job number 22844 to apply

Salary: \$135,429 - \$145,841 per year

Portland Public Schools (PPS) Funded Programs Department is looking for a dynamic Student Success Advocate (SSA) with a passion for serving our most vulnerable students experiencing homelessness in Portland and the greater surrounding communities. The SSA serves as one of the primary contacts between homeless families, school staff, district personnel, shelter workers, and other service providers. Under the general supervision of the Director of Funded Programs, the SSA will evaluate and determine the eligibility of students experiencing homelessness and will support a variety of programs designed to enhance and improve the academic, social, and/or emotional conditions of PK - 12 grade students as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act. This position requires variable work hours including evenings and weekends.

How To Apply: Please visit [http://www.pps.net/jobs](https://www.pps.net/jobs) and use Job Number 22827

Salary: \$46,451 - \$55,465 per year

Portland Public Schools (PPS) Chief of Staff Office is seeking a Business Operations Specialist & Complaints Coordinator. This position will serve as an essential team member of the Chief of Staff Team and will be responsible for providing high-level and confidential administrative support to the Chief of Staff and track reports from community members. The candidate will play an integral role in supporting departmental functions which includes interdepartmental coordination, staffing, reporting and will also provide informal post,ition management, interface on behalf of the Chief of Staff and serve as the initial point of contact for internal and external stakeholders on all matters.

How To Apply: Please visit www.pps.net/jobs and use job number 22395 to apply

Salary: \$65,995 - \$78,801

ADMISSIONS AND REGULATORY SERVICES ASSISTANT

The Oregon State Bar is looking for someone to provide administrative support to the admissions and regulatory service functions of the Regulatory Counsel's Office and Admissions Departments.

Visit <http://www.osbar.org/osbcenter/openings.html> for full job details.

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GENERAL COUNSEL

The Oregon State Bar is looking for someone to pursue and protect the legal interests of the Oregon State Bar (OSB), assist the Chief Executive Officer in managing day-to-day operations of the organization, direct operations of the General Counsel's Office and other departments and programs for which General Counsel has budgeting and personnel-related responsibilities.

Visit <http://www.osbar.org/osbcenter/openings.html> for full job details.

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Portland Playhouse is hiring a part-time **Audience Service Manager**. Hours vary, pay range is \$17-19 an hour. For more information and to apply, please visit <https://portlandplayhouse.org/get-involved/work-with-portland-playhouse/>

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'Summer of Soul'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

er, he knows what he's got, and knows how to maximize its impact—in a skillful two hours, he shows us an array of jaw-dropping performances, and splices them with just the right amount of context to keep us hungry and amazed. We understand that this is all happening one year after the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr., and Robert Kennedy, four years after the assassination of Malcolm X in Harlem. We are reminded of the uprisings across American cities, including Manhattan, the previous year, and understand that the necessary government support for this event may have been motivated by a desire to keep Harlem residents peaceful and occupied. We understand where this is happening—in Harlem, an epicenter of emerging Black fashion and culture and also government neglect, poverty, and problematic drug use. Tulchin's five cameras offer us glorious access to the beautiful crowds of Black faces of all ages, beaming and moving to the music, "the ultimate Black barbecue," in the words of one witness. It's a Blacker crowd than many of these artists ever got to experience, and we see how that impacts their performances.

One can't experience this film and miss the importance of what is happening here—including that almost no one, including Thompson himself, had ever heard of the Harlem Cultural Festival before this film. He wants us to understand that what happened here was revolutionary—and, as reflected by the film's subtitle (a nod to Gil Scott-Heron's wonderful lyric, "The Revolution Will Not Be Televised," well worth a listen just now)—that what happened those six weekends in 1969 was part of a transformative and powerful awakening, and that like many transformative and powerful awakenings before and since, it could not, would not be televised. That was not neutral. It cost the artists, who missed out on the boost from exposure that came to the Woodstock artists. It cost the millions of us who could have witnessed and been healed by this offering of Black brilliance long before now. And yet, with the characteristic resilience of Black culture, more Black brilliance has resurrected it for us. And now it meets with universal acclaim.

There is so much here to savor. Thompson has cannily offered us glimpses into the reactions of some of these artists to watching this footage after 50 years—Marilyn McCoo and Billy Davis, Jr. of the Fifth Dimension watch, visibly moved, remembering

what it meant to perform for this audience, having been criticized by Black people for not being Black enough because of their success on the pop charts. Gladys Knight recalls the revolutionary fervor that welled up in her as a young artist. Mavis Staples speaks of what it meant to her to share a microphone with her idol, Mahalia Jackson, and describes the context for a moving passing of the torch. Rev. Jesse Jackson, who also was there and introduced their joint rendition of "Precious Lord, Take My Hand," the off-requested favorite of the recently murdered Dr. King, gives a glimpse of the toil, suffering, and courage aligning across generations in that moment of shared struggle. Nina Simone, though not here to narrate a reflection, speaks directly and just as resonantly all these years later when she pointedly asks the assembled crowd, "Are you ready, Black people?" and intones, with purpose, "To Be Young, Gifted, and Black."

Let us not overlook the more difficult parts of what is offered here by Thompson and his many collaborators past and present, including Tony Lawrence (who cut an impressive figure presiding over the proceedings in an impressive array of suits and costumes but who faded into obscurity within a few short years). This gorgeous, heartfelt thing happened. A revolution was happening; it was felt, and even captured on film. It was, as one witness describes, "like a rose coming up through concrete." And then that rose was crushed, erased—and now, after all this time, resurrected. One of the most moving things for me was watching the reactions of Musa Jackson, a man who was present at the event when he was six years old, and who speaks with particular joy of his experience and of how smitten his six-year-old self was with Marilyn McCoo. In the end, he marvels through tears at seeing his memories resurrected in the film. "I knew I was not crazy—but now I know I'm not. And not only that—how beautiful it was."

As someone who knows the pain of beautiful offerings ignored and erased, Jackson's joy stirred my own hopes. Even when the revolution cannot be televised, perhaps it will not be erased forever.

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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Junior Golf Offers Career Help

The Leisure Hour Junior Golf Program in Portland is launching a new, versatile, post-high school transition program called Bridge 2 Success to provide high school juniors and seniors a path to higher education and alternative post-high school career options.

In addition to student preparation, Bridge 2 Success drives to ensure that all students are supported through transition out of high school by providing clearer direction, lifelong tools and enrichment



for all students. Participants seeking to pursue the alternative option of joining the workforce upon

graduation or considering military service are also provided pathways to these options.

The versatility and access provided by the Bridge 2 Success program results in many advantages to Portland-Vancouver Metro Area students transitioning out of high school.

Applications are currently being accepted for the upcoming school year. Register at the LHJGP website, lhjgp.com/. The deadline is Friday, Aug. 13.



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Meet Up to Empower Youth

Portland area mentor John Olive is opening the doors for local youth to hear from a group of celebrities headlining an International Youth Convention, Aug. 5-8 at the Hilton Hotel in downtown Vancouver.

Sponsored by Stage One In Action, an organization Olive helps lead, the event will focus on growing communities through youth mentorship.

The headliners include Dwight Johnson, a former NFL player who now leads the Stage

One in Action group; performance artist Kristy Love Brooks; executive chef Richard Austin and elite sports recruiter Derrick Tatum.

Geared to empower youth and transform their futures, the program focuses on personal development, career development, talent development and community involvement.

General admission to vendor booths is free for the public. For more information, visit the stageoneinaction.org or call 888-453-2878.



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Celebration of Life

Imil Centrell Wheeler

Aug. 15, 1972 – June 26, 2021

Imil Centrell Wheeler was born in Portland. He was a friend to many, from the West Coast to the East.

He attended schools in Portland, and Alexandria and Springfield, VA, playing on the varsity basketball and football teams at West Springfield. His favorite music was R&B and Reggae, and he enjoyed traveling. He enjoyed many sports, but basketball and football were his favorites and he always kept up with the Portland Trail Blazers!

Imil was a talented artist who won recognition for his accomplishments in schools. He was baptized at Antioch Baptist Church in Fairfax, VA in 1990, where he was an active member, and met life-long friends. He attended Virginia State University and graduated from St Paul's



College in Lawrenceville, VA, with a Bachelor's degree in Sociology.

A celebration Life memorial will be held Saturday, July 24 at 11 a.m. at Maranatha Church, 4222 N.E. 12th Ave.



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Helping Women

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

"It's creating spaces for women to heal. It sets an atmosphere where you can be somewhere that is safe."

The program doesn't force someone into a mold, but rather meets women where they are. Anyone can take part, no matter their faith, or even if they don't practice a faith. Comparable to practices and traditions such as Inipi (Lakota sweat lodge ceremonies) or yoga,

the work is meant to reach people who desire a connection to healing and spirituality.

"The program is about a connection to healing and faith, and what Black women have identified as their needs," she stressed.

FaithBridge is also centered on authenticity and lived experience.

"I'm very transparent about my own story. When we start I say, 'Tell me your story, instead of how you are,'" Saunders said.

Most women, when they're in a traumatic place, don't want to talk about themselves, Saunders says. "I ask them, 'What did you want to be when you grow up?' Do you know how many women can't address that because they're emotionally stunted? Time stops at places of trauma."

"What we have to do is find where the door got opened and work to shut the door. We move through the why — why are they doing what they're doing, not where they've been."

Saunders' work is changing lives. "I've met women from the very

first week who still call me," she says.

She mentions one client in particular who has post-traumatic stress disorder and other behavioral health challenges, leading her to relapse from time to time. "But she keeps going," Saunders says.

"I continue to give her hope, so she still calls. I start over with her. We go through the work and she's back on her feet again and back connecting with her faith. She may fall down again and then we'll go deeper. But the answer for her is healing."

Someone's community may hold and reflect back a certain narrative about their life, Saunders says. "And everybody knows your story. So how do you take your story back?"

"For many African American women, faith is what we relied on for our existence. Through slavery and the trauma, what we turned to was faith. It was a faith we had prior to coming to these shores. Long-term healing is what is needed."

(Editor's note: Thank you to Jessica Morkert-Shibley of Multnomah County Communications and her team for contributing this story.)

Connecting with Nature

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

excited about us and wants us to apply for another grant" for next summer.

Because many public places, including public swimming pools and other recreational sites were off limits to Blacks historically because of racism, many never learned to swim or learned about the outdoors, Brannon said.

Teaching the young hiking guides are Metro staffers Jazz Bias and Jason Ligons, both African-American and environmental professionals.

"Kudos to Metro staff," Brannon said. "It's the first time I've worked with a quasi-governmental organization where everyone was BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color)."

"It's good exposure (for the kids) to see these careers," she added.

Both Bias and Ligons hope some follow in their path, she said.

"One of the things Jason and Jazz said was that if one of the kids went on to pursue environmental education as a career, it would make the entire program worthwhile," Brannon said.

The young guides carry out mindfulness exercises and learn things like how some native plants have medicinal uses, like a salve made from the green part of

plantains, she said.

"People normally pull out plantains, which is considered a nuisance plant, but is actually really useful," she said. "It's really good for moisturizing when you mix it with coconut oil. It's good for the skin."

The hiking groups have been small because of Covid, she said, and have mostly been families with kids, but everyone is welcome.

The benefits of being out in nature are myriad, Brannon said.

"The hikes are so they can build positive memories out in nature, and also includes mindfulness and stress release to include meditation and the stress of racial trauma," she said. "We talk about safe spaces and how nature clears your mind. They get exercise and get away from cell phones," even though some kids "freaked out" with no cell service at Oxbow Park.

Another move that will help ensure the safety of Black community members and other people of color is the recent passage of Oregon Senate Bill 289, environmental equity legislation that carries penalties for people who do hate crimes in nature, she said.

"It falls in nicely in line with trying to get Black folks in nature that hasn't always been welcoming," Brannon said.

While all the hikes currently



A new hiking program geared to Black kids and other young people of color build positive memories out in nature. "We talk about safe spaces and how nature clears your mind," said J'reyesha Brannon, chair of the Portland NAACP's Environmental Justice committee, a lead organizer of the program.

are accessible by car, Brannon would like to see transportation made available to area parks in the future.

"Eventually we'd like to get a shuttle bus, and we've got another grant in the works (from Portland General Electric) for an EV (electric vehicle)," she said.

The grant application is for \$80,000 and Brannon said she is not super optimistic because of the high price tag, but she'll keep trying.

"We want to make sure these

hikes are accessible," she said.

Thanks to Metro's support, Brannon said the program will not only continue next year, but will be expanded and will likely include other groups with similar missions, such as the People of Color Outdoors Meetup group, founded in 2017 by Pam Slaughter, who helped write the Senate bill, Brannon said.

"I hope next time I can partner with her," Brannon said. "She's already doing this and that will make it even better for the kids."

In a publication by the Portland Audubon Society, Slaughter explained the reason many Black people are not as acquainted with the natural world as they should be.

"Black people and other people of color sometimes experience verbal abuse, threatening behavior, and even physical attacks while enjoying the outdoors," she wrote. "As a result, going outdoors to enjoy nature can feel like a potentially dangerous thing to do."

But spending time in nature can lead to healthier, happier communities, she wrote. "It's more important for people of color to connect with nature. It's critical."



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