

Dr. Martin
Luther King, Jr.



First National
King Holiday

Events
Scheduled

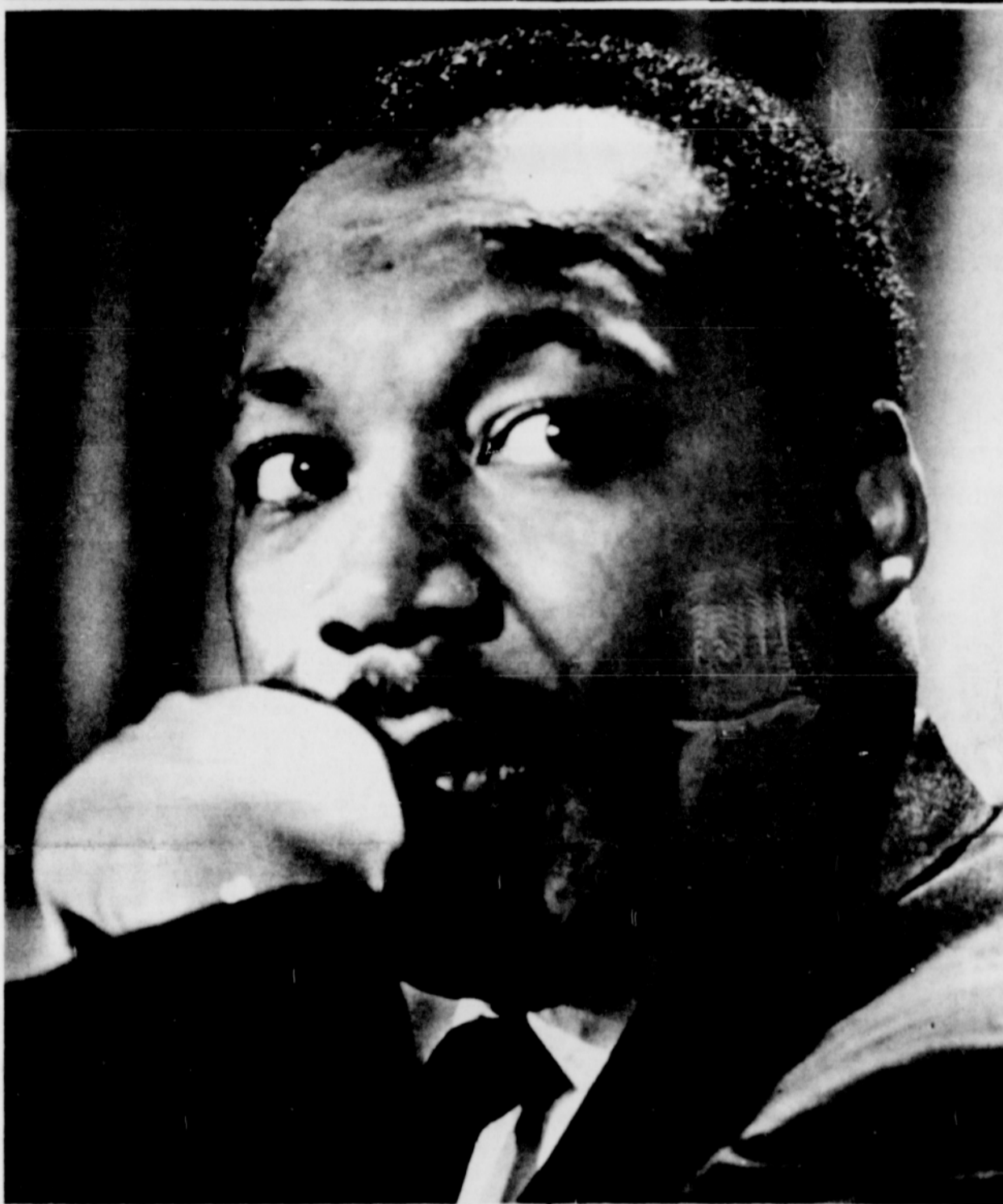
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"Free At Last," a two-hour musical tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., will air on TV stations across the country

Jan. 6-26. More events on pages 4 and 5.

Cross-Cultural trainer to speak

Michael L. Benjamin, from Michael L. Benjamin and Associates, a firm recently selected to provide Cross-Cultural training to the Portland Police Bureau, will be the guest speaker at the regular monthly meeting of the Greater Northeast Police Advisory Council on Tuesday, Jan. 14, at 7:30 p.m. in the Northeast Neighborhood Office located at the King Neighborhood Facility, 4815 N.E. 7th.

The public is invited to attend, in order to learn about techniques being used in promoting cross-cultural awareness and improve police/community relations. For further information call 248-4575.

PIC helps youth employment

by Jerry Garner

The Portland Private Industry Council (PIC) assists youth who face barriers to employment. Under the Job Training Partnership Act, 40 percent of all Title IIA funds are spent on youth, ages 14-21. The most successful PIC program dealing with youth employment problems has been the Youth Employment Institute (YEI). The institute, which is located at 1704 N.E. 26th St., has become a well-respected successful addition to the resources for youth employment in the City of Portland.

YEI is a training and job placement facility operated year-round by PIC.

"The YEI is a business and the youth trainees are the products and a successful product goes to work," said Marnella Bingham-Mosley, the supervisor of YEI. The institute offers a full range of services to all disadvantaged youth populations, including offenders and non-offenders and drop-out youth. To date 60 percent of the youth served by the Portland PIC have been minority, with 50 percent being Black youth.

Before graduation from the institute, Bingham-Mosley says that each trainee must be able to complete application forms accurately, write reports using occupational language, achieve competency in the use of calculators, graphics and charts, and be thoroughly familiar with career choices and the job market.

Bingham-Mosley said that the institute can only prepare young people to be successful on the job. "We still need to educate employers about the advantages of hiring our young graduates," said Bingham-Mosley.

PIC is active in the Leaders' Roundtable. The Roundtable is a group of approximately 15 key leaders in the area of youth employment who were called together by the Mayor and Superintendent of Schools to discuss the high rate of youth unemployment. There is now an executive Committee consisting of the Mayor; City Commissioner Margaret Strachan; School Superintendents Mathew Prophet; Business/Youth Exchange Chair Roger Brezely; and Portland PIC Chair Vern Ryles. This group is leading a major effort to create a consolidated youth employment system in the city.

Besides providing employment programs for youth with barriers, PIC is also active in the field of education. For those without high school degrees, GED preparation and testing is available.

Currently, Portland PIC has two contracts focusing on youth educational needs. The first is a program at Grant High School, called the Partnership Project, which is a joint effort with the Business Youth Exchange, the Portland Public Schools and the PIC. The purpose of the program is to make the English and Math curriculum related to the working world and to involve employers in the educational work.

The second program is at Cleveland High School and is called an Experienced Based Career Education program. In it, "at-risk" youth, who are in higher danger of dropping out, are given special attention and work experience so that there is a reason to stay in school as well as learn to work in the real world.

Another major effort of the PIC in the schools, is the step program. The year-round program is funded by the Ford Foundation and brings work and basic education together in the summer for 14- and 15-year-olds. The program is for three years and is a demonstration research program as well as a direct service program.

PIC not only assists disadvantaged youth, it also serves youth who are offenders. A majority of these youth will be mandated by the juvenile justice system to secure employment in order to pay restitution. PIC addresses the special needs of this population by providing services within the court that will assess and prepare youth for entry into the PIC youth programs.



A New Year's Day explosion caused by the suicide of Don Nickerson injured 10 others. Three homes including Nickerson's were destroyed and many others sustained damage. A nine-square-block area around Nickerson's 1017 N.E. Beech address was patrolled by volunteers from the Rainbow Coalition in an effort to prevent further injury from unsafe structures and unauthorized entry into vacated homes. Above, Beverly Stein (left) and Pam Smith, Rainbow members, go over a map of the area that was affected by the blast. Below, possessions of the Nickerson family were scattered throughout the site of the explosion. (Photos: Richard J. Brown)

Gas explosion rocks Northeast neighborhood



Commissioner Dick Bogle pledged whatever support he could offer in helping a shattered Northeast Portland neighborhood recover from a New Year's Day tragedy.

The neighborhood, located in the 1000-block of N.E. Beech, just north of Irving Park, was rocked by an explosion Jan. 1. One person was killed, at least 10 injured, three homes were destroyed and many more damaged.

Bogle was out of town, but was briefed on the situation by staff members who participated in an official tour of the explosion site and emergency shelters last week.

In addition to the tragedy's human impact, one of Bogle's concerns is the status of water and sewer lines in the area. Bogle is Commissioner-in-Charge of the City's water and sewer bureaus.

"Preliminary indications are that there has been no major damage to water and sewer lines in or near the neighborhood," Bogle said. "Of course, we don't know for sure until the debris has been cleared, and our experts can get in there to survey the damage."

"My heart goes out to the people of that neighborhood," he said. "I am convinced, however, that we will see an outpouring of support from the citizens and the leaders of this city to help them try to put their lives back together."

"I pledge my support to that effort."