

## The Glory of Black History

by John E. Jacob

Black History Month is here again, and this year it's received a big boost by the widespread attention given the film, *Glory*. *Glory* is the heroic story of the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, an all-black unit in the Union Army that fought its way into history.

But that history has been too long neglected. Few Americans know that blacks fought in the Civil War. The conventional, and mistaken, view has always been that the North went to war to free the slaves.

In fact, the North went to war to preserve the Union. It was willing to tolerate slavery but not to accept the right of states to secede. Only after the war was well under way, did President Lincoln incorporate abolition as a war aim.

That's why African Americans were excluded from the armed forces when the war began — because, as historian James M. McPherson wrote: "it would have sent a signal that this was to be an abolition war."

It became an abolition war because of the actions of African Americans, who marched across southern lines at the approach of the Union armies in the south, and who clamored for the opportunity to fight for freedom in the north.

Great African American leaders such as Frederick Douglass correctly saw black participation in fighting as a route to freedom, and it wasn't until late 1862 that the first black fighting units were formed.

The 54th Massachusetts wasn't among them; it was organized at the direction of the governor of Massachusetts. The first units were organized by the Union armies from among the ranks of escaped slaves.

Those units fought bravely and convinced the top brass not only that African Americans could fight, but that they could be an important weapon in the war.

The 54th Massachusetts, like other black units in American wars up to the 1940's, had white commanders. And the African American troops were paid at lower rates than white soldiers, leading to a "pay strike"

in which black fighting men refused to accept their second-class pay checks and demanded equal pay, something Congress didn't get around to doing until 1864.

Ironically, the 54th Massachusetts' greatest ordeal came in the crucial battle of Fort Wagner, just days after whites in New York rioted in protest against the draft.

It suffered terrible casualties, but achieved the goal of its brave volunteers — to win respect for black people and to play a leading role in the fight to overthrow slavery. The military authorities at first thought African American units would be useful as behind-the-scenes labor battalions, but they proved themselves in battle and helped preserve the Union.

Lincoln said as much, as Professor McPherson points out, when the President wrote that when the war would end in a rebirth of freedom in a re-united nation:

"there will be some black men who can remember that, with silent tongue, and clenched teeth, and steady eye, and well-poised bayonet, they have helped mankind on to this great consummation; while, I fear, there will be some white ones, unable to forget that, with malignant heart and deceitful speech, they have strove to hinder it."

Whatever minor historical truth that all Americans should know about.

We've come a long way in the 127 years since the 54th Massachusetts was formed, and every forward step along that way was made by strong people determined to be respected as equals and willing to put up with slurs and indignities to make their way and achieve their goal.

This is the month to celebrate their achievements, and to note that while the black troops who helped preserve the Union in the 1860's were at first deemed incapable, the armed forces of today's United States are led by an African American commander, General Colin Powell.

*A man must make his opportunity as oft as find it.*

Being professional is what *Unity of Love* is all about. We at "Unity" Arice, Calastine, and Lonnie offer our professional services to all that need us.

Call, we are able to answer any question or give the service you require. Be it Hair wearing, crimp wave, stand up curls, straight look, or short and sassy... We deliver!

**Unity of Love**

6720 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd  
283-5440

# 3-7-10-13 THE STRUGGLE CONTINUES...



**AMERICAN PLAYHOUSE**

These are my people.  
Their lives are my stories.  
**ZORA IS MY NAME**  
Starring: Ruby Dee as  
Zora Neale Hurston.

Wednesday, February 14 • 9:30PM



**BLACK STARS IN ORBIT**

Reaching new heights in  
America's space program.  
Saturday, February 17 • 8PM

...ON OPB



Kindness is a hard thing to give away; it usually comes back.

They who give have all things; they who withhold have nothing.

Say You Saw It In The  
**Portland Observer!**



Exclusive  
**P.R.I.**  
CLOTHIER

319 NE WYGANT  
PORTLAND, OR 97211  
(503) 282-3533

Sewing for Organizations • Alterations • Weddings • Tailoring  
Costumes • Sewing for Any Occasions

Fast • Efficient • Quality Sewing  
30 yrs. experience  
PRICES VARY

★ Restyling Available ★ Hems — One day service  
★ Some same day alterations

Present this coupon to receive a special 10%  
discount on all or any of your sewing needs.

February 1st-28th

Tues.-Fri. 9 a.m.-5 P.M. Sat. 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

★ Miscellaneous ★

Rips • Holes • Patches • Buttons • Bindings • Hems  
Button Holes • Emblems • Hook & Eye • Zippers  
and much more!!

**KEY LARGO**  
31 NW FIRST 223-9919

**FEBRUARY**

THURS. 15  
**BRYDGE**

FRI. - SAT. 16 - 17  
**CURTIS SALGADO AND THE STILLETOS**

SUN. 18  
**NORTON BUFFALO**

MON. 19  
**TESSERACT**

TUES. 20  
**ROISIN DUBH**

WED. 21  
**BIG HOUSE**

*The kindly word that falls today may bear its fruit tomorrow.*

**DRIVING MISS DAISY**

3 GOLDEN GLOBE AWARDS

MATINEES SATURDAY & SUNDAY  
WESTGATE 248-6979 ACT III

MATINEES DAILY  
LLOYD CINEMAS 248-6938 ACT III

MATINEES DAILY  
CHELSEA CINEMA 774-7731

**Enemies, A Love Story**

Released by Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp.

"Ron Silver gives a subtle, fiercely contained performance... Anjelica Huston is wry, stirring and powerful... Stein is both touching and funny, and Lena Olin is astonishing here... It's not like any other movie."  
—David Arsen, NEWSWEEK

"Two thumbs up."  
—Siskel & Ebert & THE MOVIES

MATINEES DAILY  
LLOYD CINEMAS 248-6938 ACT III

**OREGON BALLET THEATRE**

PRESENTS  
**DANCE THEATRE OF HARLEM**

Arthur Mitchell, DIRECTOR

Security Pacific Bank is proud to sponsor the Portland performances of Dance Theatre of Harlem. Feb. 20, 21 and 23, 1990, 8:00 p.m. Portland Civic Auditorium. Tickets \$55 to \$20. Call Oregon Ballet Theatre, 227-6867, Portland Center for the Performing Arts, 248-4496, or visit any GI Joe's/Ticketmaster outlet.

The Chase Manhattan Corporation is the 1989-90 Worldwide Tour Sponsor of Dance Theatre of Harlem.

SPONSOR OF THE  
KATU 2

link fm 102

**WALT DISNEY'S WORLD ON ICE**  
Produced by KENNETH FELD

All Live

Celebrate **MICKEY'S DIAMOND JUBILEE**

**FEB. 21 - 25 • MEMORIAL COLISEUM**

★ PERFORMANCES ★  
Wed. FEB. 21 7:30PM  
Fri. FEB. 23 7:30PM  
Sat. FEB. 24 12:00PM - 3:30PM - 7:30PM  
Sun. FEB. 25 1:30PM - 5:30PM  
†SAVE \$2.00 ON KIDS UNDER 12!

Information: (503) 248-4496  
Group Rates: (503) 235-8771 or 230-6702

3 WAYS TO GET YOUR TICKETS

IN PERSON: COUSEUM BOX OFFICE and all TICKETMASTER locations including CIVIC AUDITORIUM, and PCPA BOX OFFICES (service charge added at outlets)

BY PHONE: (503) 248-4496 Mon.-Sat. 9 AM to 8 PM • Use VISA or MASTER CARD (service charge added to phone orders)

BY MAIL: Send self-addressed, stamped envelope with check or money order payable to WORLD ON ICE, Memorial Coliseum, P.O. Box 2746, Portland, OR 97208 (\$1.50 service charge per mail order)

\*\*\*\*\* YOUR BEST ENTERTAINMENT VALUE! \*\*\*\*\*  
ALL SEATS RESERVED \$7.50 - \$9.50 - \$11.50 PRICE INCLUDES TAX

**FREE** WALT DISNEY'S WORLD ON ICE **MICKEY SOLAR CALCULATOR**

KGW-TV 3 CALCULATOR NIGHT Thu. FEB. 22 7:30 PM

One FREE Mickey Calculator will be given to each child under 12 years of age upon entry to the Coliseum with full-priced, paid admission to this CALCULATOR performance.

**Niecey's**  
Restaurant & Lounge  
5700 N.E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.  
249-1893

**LIVE!!! ENTERTAINMENT**  
Thursday - Sunday

7 Days Weekly Evenings  
FREE Hors d'oeuvres • 5-7 P.M.

**FULL BREAKFAST MENU**

**LUNCH & DINNER**  
Pork Ribs • Links  
Featuring Mr. C's Bar-B-Que  
Smoother Steak • Oxtails  
Fish (Catfish & Red Snapper)

Mustard Greens, And Lots of  
Other Appetizing Side Dishes  
Deserts: Peach Cobbler, and Cake