

Chief Named To PSU Foundation

Charles Moose is named as one of six new civic and business leaders to guide the foundation board at Portland State.



See Page A8.

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25th
ANNIVERSARY

Diversity in Ashland

LeWan Alexander is featured on stage at the Oregon Shakespearean Festival.



See Metro, inside.

The Portland Oregonian 25¢

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THE WEEK IN REVIEW

Homicides, AIDS leading killers

Homicide is now the third leading cause of death for black males in America and AIDS is the fourth leading cause, primarily because of a heavy toll among black homosexual males. Among black females, AIDS is the eighth leading cause of death and homicide ranks as tenth. AIDS is also the eighth leading cause of death among white males but does not rank among the top 10 among white females.

Jackson Denounces Gingrich

National black political leader Jesse Jackson said Republican Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich "represents a side of history that we have struggled against for all of this century." Jackson's views reflect those of many black leaders who feel Gingrich and his conservative Republican colleagues are pushing for political changes which would harm African Americans.

Nation Of Islam Ties Investigated

Members of Congress have forced Housing and Urban Development Secretary Henry Cisneros to investigate allegations that federally funded businesses linked to the Nation of Islam are practicing discrimination. In a recent letter to Senate Leader Bob Dole, Cisneros said he was "very concerned about recent allegations of possible discrimination involving contracts with the Nation of Islam and affiliated groups."

Single Parents Head Many Families

Thirty percent of all American families and 63 percent of the nation's black families are headed by single parents. According to the Census Bureau, the households include mothers and fathers who are divorced, widowed or never married and represent all income groups. But the majority, about 80 percent, were families led by women.

Fans Flock To Negro League Museum

Thanks largely to the TV documentary "Baseball," Kansas City, Mo. and the Negro Leagues Baseball Museum is gaining added attention and tourists. The TV series recognized Kansas City and its black Negro Leagues team, the Monarchs.

Officer Will Not Be Charged

A mostly white grand jury in Lexington, Ky. has refused to indict a white police officer who shot a black teenager to death. Sgt. Phil Vogel shot 18-year-old Antonio Sullivan in the head as Sullivan emerged from a closet with his hands raised. Four other officers testified that Sullivan was surrendering. But Vogel maintains his gun discharged accidentally.

Civil Rights Group Voices Concern

The Citizens Commission on Civil Rights in its biennial report praised President Clinton for reversing some of the anti-civil rights policies of the Reagan and Bush administrations, but warned of a "new danger" and threats to civil rights in proposals in Congress by conservative Republicans.

Bend Woman Leads NAACP



Myrlie Evers-Williams, new NAACP chair. (Photo courtesy of The Oregonian)

BY MICHAEL LEIGHTON

She only announced her candidacy three weeks ago, but the enthusiasm for her was so strong that supporters cried with joy when the vote was concluded.

Myrlie Evers-Williams, the wife of slain civil rights leader Medgar Evers, was elected by just a single vote margin Saturday as the first woman to head the NAACP, the nation's oldest civil rights group.

A member of the NAACP board, Evers-Williams is said to have the communications skills necessary to challenge elements in the new Republican Congress' so-called Contact with America and bring the NAACP into greater prominence.

Formerly from Mississippi, where her husband was murdered in 1963 and his killer finally brought to justice just last year, Evers-Williams promised to rebuild the organization which has been troubled of late by controversy.

She is a resident of Oregon, moving to Bend after a career in California as a college administrator, city official and corporate executive.

Evers-Williams replaces William F. Gibson as the chairwoman of the NAACP

Board of Directors. Gibson was charged with squandering the organization's money. The NAACP has gone through a series of financial woes and is more than \$4 million in debt.

Rank-and-file members filled a meeting hall in New York City with protests signs and spirited debate Saturday to object to the renewal of Gibson's leadership.

He was the second top official of the NAACP to face charges of impropriety with the group's money. Last year, Benjamin Chavis, the former NAACP executive director, was ousted in a vote by the NAACP board.

In Bend, news of Evers-Williams election brought community pride to an area with very few African Americans.

Area resident Barbara McGowan said it spoke well for the Bend-Redmond community that a celebrity and a woman of color would choose to live there.

Evers-Williams has a definite presence in the community, said Gary Capps, the executive director of the Bend Chamber of Commerce.

When Medgar Evers' murderer, Byron De La Beckwith,

was finally convicted last February, many central Oregonians realized that they had a celebrity in their midst.

Portland Black History: Gone But Not Completely Forgotten

BY PROF. MCKINLEY BURT

Iwalked down Williams Ave. the other afternoon, viewing what was left of yesterday--reflecting as to what tomorrow may hold. Memories emerged from evening shadows as my mind recreated long gone scenarios and people of the late 1940's and up to 1950. It was like walking into a nostalgic tapestry woven of sights, noises and voices -- palpable enough to wipe out the present for a moment.

I will tell of things that were significant to me as a young evening law school student. The rest you may fill in from memory, parents, grandparents or archives. We begin our stroll at Russell St., headed south, the black environs sort of stopped here at the northend. The 'other side' had been designated white by real estate brokers, restrictive covenants and old German families. This is the area that resembled a war-torn village after the Eman-

uel Hospital/Model Cities grandiose development project failed, even with funds from the "Taylor Act".

At the northeast corner was a popular chinese restaurant and up the street ways was a church whose pastor was Rev. McSwain, and then, a firehouse. On the southeast corner was a busy dry cleaners operated by two black partners, 'Brownie and Spicer'. On the northwest corner was a half-century old pharmacy and directly across the street was the "Citizens Cafe" -- I would consume a gallon of coffee just to look at the pretty tan waitress, "Shirley". The rest of the block was 'exclusively white'.

Headed south, the next corner of interest as N. Williams and N.E. Tillamook. On the southwest was the "colored YWCA". Now-state senator Bill McCoy and I had rooms up the street and often we would attend dances at the center (today's Elk's Club). The end of this bachelorhood was cinched when a very attractive young lady by the name of Gladys was hired there as a secretary. I held out

longer.

On the southeast corner was a popular soda fountain run by the Proctor family, really an African American institution in the community. I don't know which was the biggest asset -- the delicious malted milks and ice cream sodas or old man Proctor's beautiful daughters. There was Annabelle, Geneva, Rose and a brother as I remember.

Now, the northwest corner of this intersection was a scenario never to be erased from my memory -- though reaching for many time-aged facts is like trying to catch the win a net. It was here that the Benton Family from Arkansas opened the first African-American-owned grocery in Portland, August 1947. Strongly supported by his wife, aunt and uncle, Bill Benton Sr. made the "Neighborhood Grocery" a successful institution for three decades.

Early on it was forecast that he would "never make it" because the center for

black food purchases had been the highly competitive "Safeway Store", five blocks away at Williams and N. Broadway. True, it was a "David and Goliath" situation, but 'Bill' put together a combination of service, marketing skills and support of neighborhood institutions that soon had the big chain store reeling (regular customers got gifts, and he allowed no one to go hungry, waiting on payday).

It didn't hurt his cause at all that he made the best sausage in Oregon, conventional and specialties. During hunting season, people from all over the state brought deer, elk and other game to be rendered into his famous sausages. The Safeway store finally folded, even after concession to black demands for an integrated staff. Neighborhood Grocery was my first retail accounting client. I still remember the family building their own concrete block structure -- one day I got to hold one end of the chalk string. (The 'trip down Williams' will be concluded next week).

Portland Black History

The latest effort to identify buildings and sites associated with Portland's early African Americans will be held Saturday with a community meeting from 9 a.m. to noon at the Mt. Sinai Community Baptist Church, 602 N.E. Prescott.

The program "Buildings of Portland's African American History," will be presented by the Bosco-Milligan Foundation as part of its celebration of Black History Month.

Last February, the foundation presented a pilot program that linked buildings to people and institutions as discussed in Kimberly Moreland's "The History of Portland's African American Community: 1805 to the Present," published in 1993 by the Portland Planning Bureau.

Kimberly and other long-time residents

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Juvenile Crime Hearing At King Facility

Major changes to Oregon's juvenile justice system will be the focus of a public hearing Saturday at 9 a.m. at the King Facility, 4815 N.E. 7th.

Testimony is wanted on plans for implementing Measure 11, passed by voters in November, which requires mandatory sentences for violent offenders aged 15 or older.

Comment is also sought on a Senate Bill 1, a proposal to establish a Department of Youth Authority, which would take over Children's Services Division duties relating to delinquent youth; build four 400-bed prisons; and implement new sentencing sanctions.

Rep. Avel Gordly, D-Portland, said the proposed legislation "will have a major impact on minority youth and especially African Americans, who are currently over-represented and disproportionately confined in the juvenile justice system."

"These are the residents of north and northeast Portland. This public hearing will be an opportunity for members of the community most affected to voice its opinions and concerns," said Gordly, a northeast Port-



Maceo Pettis of the Coalition of Black Men debates proposed changes in the justice system at an African-American Legislative Roundtable. A public hearing on proposals before the legislature will be take place Saturday in northeast Portland. (Photo by Donn Thomas)

land resident.

Gordly fears any legislation enacted will be seriously flawed, because discussion is not taking place.

She points to the Oregon Supreme Court Task Force on Racial/Ethnic issues in the judicial system which also looked at the treatment of juveniles.

"The reports says that we have two sys-

tems of justice, one for whites and one for everyone else. The legislative judiciary committees must deal with this information," she said.

Gordly worked with Sen. Jeanette Hamby, chair of the Senate Judiciary Subcommittee, to bring the hearing to northeast Portland, instead of the normal hearing site at the state capitol building.