

# BLACK HISTORY

The Portland Observer

## Raise the truth

**"Put truth in the suffrage statue!" -Black Women Cry!**

That's the battlecry of the National Political Congress of Black Women, Inc. (NPCBW) as it gets set to wage all-out combat, if necessary, to have the unlettered but feisty Black 19th century ex-slave, Sojourner Truth, placed on a statue pantheon with three white suffragettes scheduled to be ensconced in the Capitol Rotunda niche of honor.

Designated to lead the fight is an eminent scholar, Janette Hoston Harris, Ph.D. In a highly engrossing strategy meeting of Black women earlier this week at the Rayburn Building on Capitol Hill, Dr. Harris was named Chair of NPCBW's Sojourner Truth Statue Committee, by C. DeLores Tucker, NPCBW National Chair and Convening Founder.

Dr. Harris is a noted historian who has taught and published in the field of African-American history for thirty years. She now teaches at the University of the District of Columbia and is a past National President of the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History. She is the first African-American female to head the 82-year-old historical organization founded by the eminent scholar Carter G. Woodson. Best known for the Black History Week, which has grown into Black History Month, he is the author of the landmark book *The Mis-Education of the Negro*.

That issue is a national campaign to "Raise The Women Suffrage Statue" that contains three

white women--Susan B. Anthony, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton--from a dusty crypt in the basement of the Capitol Rotunda, where it has languished for 75 years, to a place of honor in Capitol Rotunda.

Dr. Tucker and the NPCBW Sojourner Truth Committee insist that the original statue has been disfigured, and many believe that both Sojourner Truth and the original inscription were removed from the statue. They want Ms. Truth restored to that niche of honor before the statue is placed in the Rotunda.

The women have also communicated with the leaders of the Raise The Woman Suffrage Statue Campaign Committee--Mrs. Wilhemina Cole Holladay, President of the National Museum of Women in the Arts, Ms. Karen Staser, President of the National Museum of Mr. Joseph Hardinan, President of the NASDAQ Stock Market, all of Washington, DC. In a letter to Dr. Tucker, Ms. Staser admitted that African-American women are no longer invisible, nor should their contributions be kept out of sight. She also reminded Dr. Tucker that the women honored on the statue were supported by Black men such as Frederick Douglas. Most importantly, she shared her belief, "We believe that, today, most Americans would agree with you that Sojourner Truth belongs on the statue."

Sojourner Truth played a key role in the suffrage movement. She changed her name after having a religious experience which led her to believe she was to do God's work here on earth. Sojourner Truth means "itinerant

preacher". She achieved freedom, and campaigned in 1868 presidential election of Ulysses S. Grant. She demanded her name be placed on the list of voters, but her request was denied. In 1872 she was back again attempting to vote in a presidential election, but was again turned away.

Her most moving and memorable speech was made in 1851 at a women's rights conference in Akron, Ohio. In her famous "Ain't I A Woman" speech she publicly responded to arguments that women should be denied equal rights on the basis that Jesus Christ was a man. This was one of many topics that many more-prominent white suffragists lacked the courage to speak out on and address.

A five-member statue committee to be appointed by Congress will determine the site of the statue's permanent placement after it has completed its one-year display. Both Dr. Tucker and Dr. Harris insist that one of the committee members be African American.

As to Sojourner Truth's place in the present statue, they both declared that "She was a pioneer in the fight for equal rights for women, just as the White women we were! Therefore, she should be honored on the statue with the three White women."

**NPCBW invites everyone to join this campaign. For further information, please call NPCBW offers at (202) 338-0800 or write to us at this address: Sojourner Truth Committee, NPCBW, 600 New Hampshire Avenue, N.W., Suite 1125, Washington, D.C. 20037.**

## Captain Micheal Healy

1839 - 1904

Michael Healy was the fifth son of an Irish immigrant who had become a Georgia plantation owner.

His mother was a slave. Georgia law determined the status of the Healy children to be black, thereby severely restricting their access to educational and cultural opportunities.

All were sent north, where they received excellent educations and went on to very productive lives. One of his brothers became a President of Georgetown University in Washington.

Healy served on various merchant sailing vessels and worked his way through the ranks to officer status. He accepted a commission in the Revenue Marine Service and after 20 years of distinguished service, mainly in Arctic waters, he was promoted to captain.

He then commanded the RC Bear and, during the next nine years, established a legacy of seamanship excellence and compassion for native Alaskans - that endures to this day.

Although removed from command as a result of several drinking episodes, he ultimately pulled his life together and was restored to duty. He was given command of the RC McCulloch and completed Alaska Patrols in 1902 and 1903. He was mandatorily retired in 1904 and died shortly thereafter.

The Coast Guard's newest ice-breaker is named after the Coast Guard's greatest and most famous Arctic sailor.



Captain Healy (front row, second from left).

## LIVING LARGE

You have it made in the U.S. Coast Guard. 20 careers to choose from, including saving lives, law enforcement and environmental protection. Competitive salary. 30-days' paid vacation. Free housing & meals, medical & dental care and travel. Earn college credits. Eligibility for G.I. Bill. For more information, call 1 800 GET USCG or visit us at

**U.S. COAST GUARD**  
BE PART OF THE ACTION



OFFICER IN CHARGE  
USCG RECRUITING OFFICE  
8109F NE VANCOUVER MALL DRIVE  
VANCOUVER, WA 98662-6422

## THE KOREAN AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF OREGON Salutes Black History Month

**Living Color**, 5001 N.E. MLK Blvd.,  
Portland, OR 97211; **Phone:** 287-7788

**Bargain Place Meet**, 710 N.E. Killingsworth  
Portland, 97211; **Phone:** 287-8082

**Alberta St Market**, 915 N.E. Alberta  
Portland, OR 97211; **Phone:** 281-6388

**Ainsworth Market**, 5549 N.E. 30th Ave.  
Portland, OR 97211; **Phone:** 281-0479

**Superfine Foods**, 4803 N. Lombard  
Portland, OR 97203; **Phone:** 283-3866

**C.L. Inc.; DBA Prescott Corner Maket**  
1460 N.E. Prescott, Portland, OR  
**Phone:** 284-7418

**Boston Market**, 726 N.E. Killingsworth  
Portland, OR. 97211; **Phone:** 282-6776

**Dekum Food Market**, 800 N.E. Dekum  
**Owner:** Sonny Kim; **Phone:** 283-1240

**Knott St. Grocery**, 2709 N.E. 7th  
Portland, OR 97212, **Phone:** 284-7490

**Mid-K Beauty Supply**, 5411 N.E. MLK Blvd.  
Portland, OR 97211; **Phone:** 335-0271

**LeRho Chateau, L.T.D. DBA King Food Mart**  
3510 M.L.K. Blvd., Portland, OR 97212  
**Phone:** 281-0357

**J's Food Mart**, 3275 N.E. Killingsworth  
Portland, OR 97211; **Phone:** 281-8489

WE APPRECIATE YOUR BUSINESS AND SUPPORT  
THANK YOU