

# RELIGION

## Obituaries

### Alvin Russell Jr. 1956 - 1997

Funeral services were held Thursday, June 26, 1997 at Killingsworth Little Chapel of the chimes-430 N. Killingsworth St.

Alvin Russell, Jr. age 41 was born January 17, 1956 in Portland, Oregon.

He attended Colton Grade-School and Oregon City High School. He has lived all of his life in the Portland area.

He worked as a machinist for Boeing in Gresham for the past 23 years.

Alvin died June 21, 1997.

Officiating pastor was Rev. Dr. LeRoy Haynes, Jr. from Allen Temple CME Church in Portland, OR.

Burial was at Willamette National Cemetery-Portland, Oregon.

### Jerry E. Allen

July 12, 1940 -  
June 29, 1997

Funeral service were held Monday, July 7, 1997 at Good Samaritan Church of God, 1737 NE Alberta, Portland, Oregon.

Born in Lubbock, Texas, he came to Portland in 1942 and was raised and educated here.

Interment was at Rose City Cemetery.

## Staple Singers inspire

'First Family of Gospel' make return to Portland



Mavis Staple presents a message of faith. (Photo by Yvonne Lerch)

Concertgoers hear uplifting, rousing set

The Staple Singers, making their first Portland appearance in more than a decade, closed the Waterfront Blues Festival on Sunday with an uplifting and rousing set.

The "First Family of Gospel" - Pops Staples with daughters Mavis, Yvonne and Cleo, scored top 40 hits in the 60s and 70s with such songs as "I'll take you there" and "Respect Yourself."

The 1994 Grammy-winning "Father-Father" attests to the Staples continued quest to create music true to their personal convictions: Messages of hope, faith and brotherhood.

And they did on Sunday night!

## Chinese recognize faiths

Leaders of two state-controlled groups say China has freedom of religion, but said foreign missionaries do not belong in the country.

The officials, speaking at a briefing for foreign reporters, denied accusations by religious activists that China's Communist leaders are systematically attacking independent religious activity. Such complaints have prompted conservatives in the U.S. Congress to demand trade sanctions against Beijing.

"There is no general persecution in China. But China being so vast, you cannot expect the policy of religious freedom to be applied completely everywhere," said Han Wenzao, president of the Chinese Christian Council.

"We do have problems. However, the situation is not as bad as some of the Western media say."

Christianity is spreading rapidly in China, with some 10 million church members and up to 500,000 new believers joining every year, according to Luo Guanzong, chairman of the Three-Self Patriotic Movement Committee.

Despite increased openness about religion, Beijing insists on controlling all church activity. Independent religious leaders have been jailed and harassed, and Roman Catholics are barred from contact with the Vatican.

## An Open Letter To All Our Friends:

We would not want to overlook any of our friends in saying, "Thank you."

The family of Dannella Bltson wish to take this time to thank you for all your prayers, support, and kindness you bestowed upon us during the loss of our mother, grandmother, great grandmother, sister and aunt.

Your kindness meant far more to us than words can ever tell. We ask that you continue to pray for us.

- The Dannella Bltson Family

## Fighter turns to religious healing

The Rev. Alfred Audette has been ordained only five years, but he leans an experienced, compassionate ear into the confessional grill: world-savvy but never world-weary.

"There isn't a businessman who can tell me anything I haven't lived before. There isn't a married man or woman who can tell me anything I haven't heard before. And there isn't a kid who can tell me anything I haven't seen before," says the pastor of St. Marguerite Bourgeoys parish.

He states this matter-of-factly, without a boast or sigh, knowing that not many priests or clergy of any denomination have lived the life he has lived: hot-shot fighter pilot with 200 missions over North Vietnam. Air Force consultant on race relations, business entrepreneur and adviser to police departments.

husband, father of four, widower, grandfather of 14 - "eight in Texas, four in Maryland, one in Virginia, and one in heaven" - and now administrator of a rural church with a leaky roof and a hemorrhaging debt that got him in trouble with some parishioners when he began bingo as a Band-Aid.

The mortgage seems to have bugged him more than dodging SAM missiles over Haiphong harbor. Mulling over parish finances, he forgot to renew his pilot's license and no longer rents a plane at nearby Danbury airport to take the altar boys up for a ride.

Graying, trim and handsome at age 64, Audette is evidence of a recent phenomenon in the Catholic Church: the late, late vocation. His path to the pulpit did not begin with a pious mother praying for a priest in the family.

"My mother passed away when I was very young," he reminisces in a parish office decorated with holy pictures and photos of his family, ordination and combat flying days that tremble as carpenters bang away at the roof.

"I was in an orphanage for a number of years, not your warm home environment," he said. "There were no family role models, but at nearby Attleboro (Mass.), there was a tiny airport with small planes and dashing pilots to dream on."

Entering the Air Force, he "kept hustling everybody, including the general, to get into flight school." On a blind date at the officers' club in Wichita, he met Mary Ann Poling. "She was dynamite. I proposed to her 25 seconds after we met, called her every day after that for 10 days and married her two months later."

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## Preachers nix Roswell space alien stories

Some preachers in this New Mexico town where aliens allegedly landed 50 years ago say Satan is behind the growing belief in extraterrestrial life.

Pastor Jim Suttle of Roswell's non-denominational Calvary Chapel said on Saturday that the tens of thousands of people who have flocked to Roswell's UFO spectacular this week were drawn by the devil's "alien minions."

"People are looking to UFOs as a replacement for God," said Suttle, organizer of a conference giving a Christian spin on aliens. "This is Satan distracting people from the Lord."

Stan Crosby, organizer of the six-day UFO extravaganza marking an alleged alien crash landing in the desert near here on July 4, 1947, brushed off the criticism and said the event allows preachers to spread their message even wider.

"If aliens show up here let them (preachers) try to convert them ... if not, they're free to spread the word to the tourists," Crosby said.

Chuck Missler, a Christian minister from Idaho, has come here to do just that. Missler, lead speaker at the Alien Encounters conference, said aliens are "fallen angels" from another earthly dimension rather than another planet.

He believes a major conflict is brewing between Christians and alien hordes. "When Christ returns, the battle will begin."

Throughout the week's festivities, people who claim to have been abducted by aliens said the beings that took them appeared to be benevolent and not necessarily far from God.

"They told me that they're here to save us," Leah Haley, who claims to have been abducted on many occasions, said. "They don't want us to destroy our planet and each other."

John Mack, a Harvard psychiatry professor and UFO researcher, said a mass visitation of aliens would drastically change our religious, military and economic institutions and force an overnight rewriting of conventional wisdoms.



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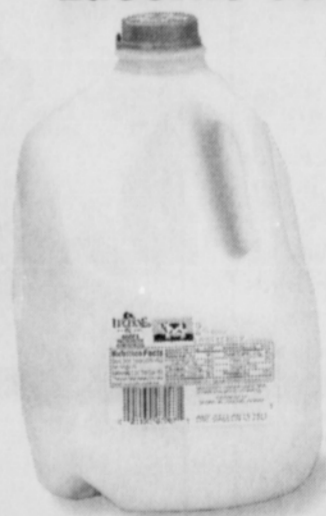
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