

# Metro/Religion

## Obituaries

### Margaret S. Rogers

A memorial service was held Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2001 in Kenton United Presbyterian Church for Margaret S. Rogers, who died Jan. 24 at age 96. Mrs. Rogers was born Jan. 6, 1905, in Spencer, Iowa. Her maiden name was Scharf. She received her teach-

ing credentials from UCLA and later graduated from the University of Oregon. She moved to Portland in the late 1940s and was a teacher for the Portland Public Schools, primarily at Whitaker Elementary School, until retiring in 1968. She was a member of the church. She married Walter Rogers; he died in the early 1940s. Survivors include her sisters, Lyla Stites and Orpha Tyler; seven nieces; and three nephews. Disposition is by cremation. The family suggests remem-

brances to a charity of choice. Arrangements are by Killingsworth Little Chapel of the Chimes.

### George R. Randall Jr.

A funeral was held Tuesday, Jan. 30, 2001, in Emmanuel Temple Full Gospel Pentecostal Church for George R. Randall Jr., who died Jan. 23 at age 28. Mr. Randall was born Nov. 1, 1972, in Portland. He attended Grant High School. He was the lead singer of the rap group "G-

ism." He moved to Vancouver, Wash., in 1998.

Survivors include his fiancée, Nicole Graham; daughters, Akyla and Kaelii; father and stepmother, George Sr. and Dorothy; grandmothers, Louise Noble and Gladys Patterson; grandfather, Morris Kelly; great-grandmother, Samella Brazil; sisters, Sheila and Alicia; and stepbrothers, Jeremy Hampton, Jermaine Frieson and Anthony Rivers. Interment is in Rose City Cemetery. Arrangements are by Rose City Funeral Home.

## Religion: The Other Stolen Legacy of America

By YUGEN FARDAN RASHAD  
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

"From its origin, Christianity was a universalist, proselytizing religion, and the sacred and secular histories of Christianity made manifest the necessity of bringing non-Christians into the fold. (taken from Winthrop D. Jordan's book "White over Black"). In the wake of opponents of President George W. Bush's faith-based initiative, which is designed to make it easier for these groups to obtain federal dollars, an interesting question arises: Do citizens of this country truly have religious choice? Has Christianity been grandfathered in, as this nation's unofficial religion? The Constitution says emphatically, no! But some would vehemently dispute this claim.

Eastern religious practices, like Eastern people, are generally rejected by the mainstream. As evidence is the negative portrayal by the American media, particularly Hollywood which, to a great degree, reflects mainstream tastes. We venture here to take a scholarly examination of this subject. Leroi Jones (Amiri Baraka) in his book Blues People, elaborates on this rejection of non-Western cultural and religious practices. Jones lands his case upon historical fact on how the enslaved African was prohibited from adhering



Yugen Fardan Rashad

to his native ways of worship: "First, his own religion was prohibited in this country." "But for the American slave, Christianity was attractive simply because it was something the white man did that the black man could do also and in the time of the missionaries, was encouraged to do." (Jones excerpt from Blues People).

The statement, "his own religion," raises an interesting question that deserves a closer look. (It should be noted that Christianity is not a "white man's religion"). Jones established that Christianity was put upon blacks by their enslavers and this attitude of the colonizer towards blacks and religion is talked about in Winthrop D. Jordan's

book "White over Black", when he writes that being a Christian was not merely a matter of subscribing to certain doctrines, but was "a quality inherent in oneself and in one's society: It was interconnected with all the other attributes of normal and proper men: as one of the earliest English accounts distinguished Negroes from Englishmen, they were "a people of beastly living, without a God, lawe (English spelling "lawe"), religion, or common wealth" - which was to say that Negroes were not Englishmen." (from book White over Black by Winthrop).

The notion of blacks as heathen (not Englishmen) certainly was used by religious apologists of that era to justify the cruel and unusual treatment of dismantling a people's whole religious system of worship. Due to the complexity of African worship practices, we get amalgams, hybrids and blends of eastern and western religious philosophies that gave shape to a monotheistic black church service. Ruby F. Johnson in her book "The Development of Negro Religion" explains this sacred potion when she writes that African religious elements - God, spirits, nature worship, and witchcraft - "found some expression in America." "Thus rose the beginning of the Negro church, which was not at

first Christian but an adaptation of "heathen" rites of "Obe" worship or Voodooism. The Christianizing process occurred gradually; after two centuries, the Negro church became Christian, "with a simple Calvinistic creed, but with many of the old customs still clinging to the services." (from the book The Development of Negro Religion by Johnson). We come to this moment knowing there was a great deal of "winking" and denial about the enslaved, his enslaver, and religion. But with all due respect to the millions of blacks and others who claim Christianity as their religion, a great gift the world is offered as a result of the forging of religious tongues of the European and African. In terms of living in a multi-cultural society with multiple religious views and beliefs, it's benefits all when this society is conscious of its diversity and strives to be inclusive. But let's face it - Christianity is the unofficial religion of American culture and this is true in spite of the First Amendment from the Constitution which states "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion". The concept of the church as a guiding moral base is intricately woven into the fabric of American life. The Islamic mosque, the Jewish Temple, and other edifices are seldom mentioned.



## Happy Valentine Day



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### Consolidated Plan Action Plan 2001-2002 Notice of Public Hearings Housing and Community Development Commission

March 7, 2001  
The Portland Building, Meeting Room C  
1120 SW 5<sup>th</sup>  
Portland, OR 97204  
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

April 4, 2001  
Gresham City Hall, Council Chambers  
1333 NW Eastman Parkway  
Gresham, Oregon 97030  
5:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

In May 2001, the City of Portland, Multnomah County, and the City of Gresham will submit the Consolidated Plan Action Plan 2001-2002 (the "Action Plan") to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The Action Plan is a combined plan and application for federal funds available to cities and counties under four programs: Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), HOME Investment Partnerships (HOME), Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG), and Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA). The Action Plan will guide how Portland, Gresham, and Multnomah County will spend scarce resources for the coming year on low- and moderate-income housing, community development, programs serving the homeless, and programs serving people with special needs.

At the March 7, 2001 hearing listed above, the Housing and Community Development Commission (HCDC) will hear public testimony on the need for low- and moderate-income housing, programs serving the homeless and programs serving people with special needs. At the April 4, 2001 hearing listed above, the HCDC will hear public testimony on the draft Action Plan. No advance sign-up is required for either hearing.

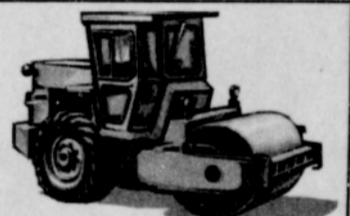
The draft Action Plan will be available for review at local branches of the Multnomah County Library, and at our website,

<http://www.ci.portland.or.us/bhed/citizen> after March 5, 2001. For a hard copy of the draft Action Plan, a list of ways you may comment on the draft Action Plan, or other information, please call the HCDC Staff, Ruth Benson, (503) 823-2392.

The meeting rooms are accessible to persons with mobility impairments. Please notify the Commission at least seven days in advance before the meeting if special equipment or interpreting service is needed.



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Disadvantage Business Enterprises (DBE) Sub-Contracting Opportunities on upcoming Tri-Met Interstate Max Project Line Section 10-C proposal.

In preparation for the oncoming Tri-Met Line Sections 10-C construction project. Hamilton Construction is seeking qualified DBE Sub-contractors in the following areas, Trucking, Street Improvements, Paving, Concrete Flatwork, Sewer Construction, Water Lines and Outdoor Electrical to use in their proposal.

If you are interested, please contact:  
**Andre' Baugh @ Group AGB LLC**  
503-281-3638 or fax 503-907-6649

DBE Coordinator for Hamilton Construction Company. Contractors are encouraged to contact Tri-Met to receive a set of plans for review.

