

Black History Month

The Black Press

BY RON WEBER/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Passionate Voices for African Americans

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wards. Northerners, both black and white joined her cause. Joining the staff of the "New York Age," Wells continued her investigation of lynching. Late in 1892 her anti-lynching efforts netted her a front page feature story, "Southern Horrors: Lynch Law in All Its Phases."

Her story along with a lecture circuit gained her national attention. Soon after she toured Europe speaking about the horrible treatment of the American Black. Well's efforts helped start many groups, which pledged to fight racism and prejudice in America.

The "Anglo-African" magazine covered the continuing drama of the rescue of black fugitive John Pierce who had been grabbed by slave catchers and then snatched from three U.S. Marshals by two-dozen black and white Oberlin College students and then swept away to freedom. One of the students who were convicted in the rescue, Charles Langston, categorically praised "the brave men and women" who participated in the rescue. His own brother, John M. Langston was the first elected official in the country published a statement in the "Anglo-African" that his brother made to the judge after sentencing.

"I was tried by a jury, who were

prejudiced; before a court that was prejudiced; prosecuted by an officer who was prejudiced..."

"One more word sir, and I am done. I went to Wellington, knowing that colored men have no rights in the United States, which white men are bound to respect;



The journalist and activist Ida B. Wells-Barnett wrote and spoke out against lynching and other injustices suffered by black people in the United States.

that the courts had so decided; that Congress has so enacted; and that people have so decreed."

The first commercially successful black-owned general magazine began on Nov. 1, 1943. Using direct mail as a marketing tool, the magazine quickly went from its original subscription of

three thousand to more than twenty thousand. In an extremely bold move, the editor, John Johnson purchased most of the first issues himself to convince white distributors that there was a huge and immediate demand for this kind of publication. His plan

worked. Mirroring "Readers Digest," Johnson focused on the same kind of articles and stories while focusing on black subjects, catering to a black readership. He used many articles published by prominent Americans, including First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt.

The list of all the whites and African Americans who helped fight the horrors of slavery, racism and prejudice through the printed word is more than we will ever know. Many of the nation's black citizens went unnoticed while risking their lives and even paying the ultimate price of death and torture to help improve the future of untold millions of minority populations throughout the nation. It may never be known who they all

were, however, lest we forget what they did for all of us, we must honor them not only during Black History Month, but all the year throughout. Their selfless sacrifices helped build America and make it a better place for races. Thanks to their efforts the freedom of the press in America is something we can all be proud of.



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Honoring African-American pioneers in healthcare.

An important figure in medical history was Dr. Charles R. Drew. Born in 1904 in Washington, D.C., Drew earned his medical degree in 1933 and later pioneered developments in the preservation of blood plasma and establishment of blood banks. He became such an expert in this field that the British government called upon his services to set up the first blood bank in England. During World War II, Dr. Drew was director of the American Red Cross blood donor project. He later served as chief surgeon on Freedmen's Hospital in Washington, D.C.

"There must always be the continuing struggle," Dr. Drew once said, "to make the increasing knowledge of the world bear some fruit...in the production of human happiness."

Legacy Health System salutes Dr. Drew and other African-American pioneers in medicine.



Legacy would like to take this opportunity to thank our partners in Portland's North/Northeast Community including the African American Health Coalition, Rotary Club of Albina, Grant High School Mentoring Program, Jefferson High School, Tubman Middle School, Boise-Eliot Grade School, Jefferson Caring Community and other Health Education Programs.

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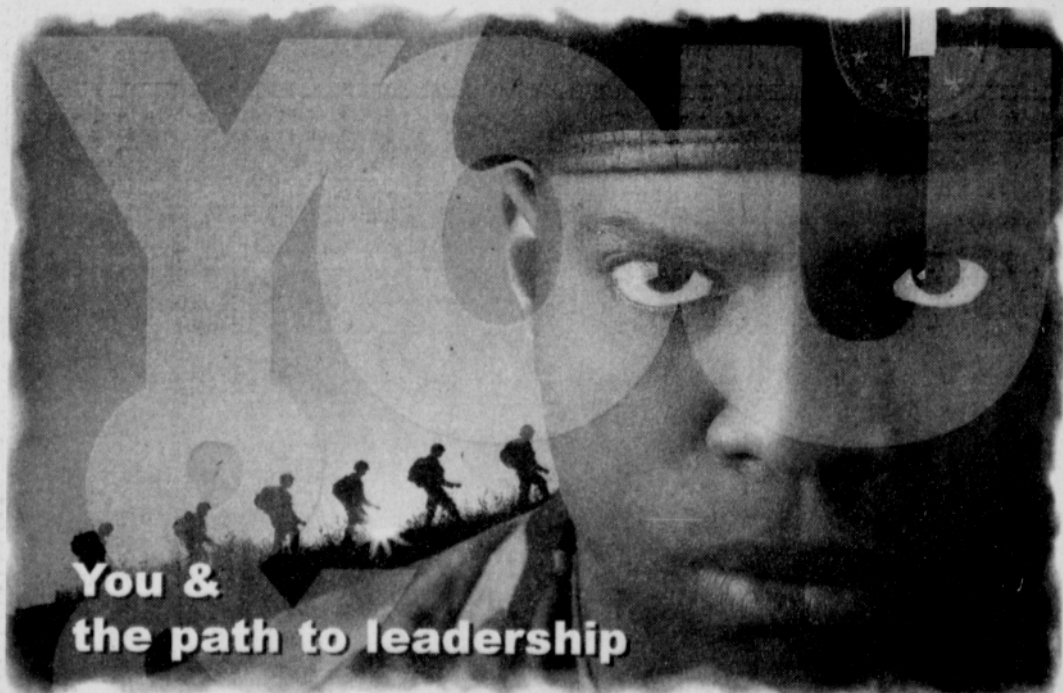
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