

METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

Community Calendar

Women's History Celebrated

The Portland chapter of the Older Women's League will host a free, open meeting and discussion opportunity to celebrate Women's History Month on Saturday, March 8 from 9:45 a.m. to noon at the Portland Impact Center, 4704 S.E. Hawthorne. Those interested are invited to come for coffee and refreshments to share stories or listen to women tell stories about women who made a difference in their lives. For more information, call 503-721-0848.

Spirituality and Healing Workshop

Join speaker and prayer-based healer Cindy Neely at Reflections, 446 N.E. Killingsworth, on Saturday March 8 at 4 p.m. to explore how to replace stress and depression with hope, peace and certainty. Neely will also talk about how a spiritual perspective improves relationships, health, career and community. For more information, call 503-288-6942.

Discover Jupiter and Saturn

Learn about the two largest planets in the solar system at the Mt. Hood Community College Planetarium Sky Theater on Saturday, March 8 and Sunday, March 9 at 2 p.m. 'Giants in the Sky' will show visitors how to find and observe Jupiter and Saturn. Planetarium Director Doug McCarty will also point out prominent constellations, star clusters and galaxies using the star projector in a 45-minute live presentation. Admission is \$1. For more information, call 503-491-7297.

Spring Gardening Lecture

Barbara Blossom Ashmun, master gardener and author of five books, will present ideas and tips on how to design spring gardens on Sunday, March 9 at 2 p.m. in the Beaverton City Library Auditorium, 12375 S.W. 5th St. For more information, call 503-644-2197.

Wellness Check-up

Stop by the Community Learning Center, 4212 N.E. Prescott, on Sunday, March 9 from 1 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. for free diabetes, blood pressure and vision screening. A disaster preparedness presentation by the American Red Cross will be held at 3 p.m. and refreshments will be served after the preparedness meeting. For more information, call 503-281-8596.

Cover the Uninsured Week

Monday, March 10 through Friday, March 14 a series of events will take place around Portland to raise awareness and spark a public discussion about the millions of Americans without health insurance. A Town Hall Meeting will be held on Monday from 10 a.m. to noon at the Center for Self Enhancement, 3920 N. Kirby Ave. Tuesday from noon to 1 p.m. an Campus Forum will be held at OHSU in the Old Library Auditorium. On Wednesday a health fair will take place in Pioneer Courthouse Square from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. On Thursday there will be an interfaith breakfast from 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. at the Holiday Inn Portland Conference Center, and on Friday from noon to 1 p.m. small and large business leaders will discuss the issue at the Portland City Club Forum at the Multnomah Athletic Club. For more information on any of these events, call 503-225-7207.

We give them life skills and spiritual weapons.

- Victory Outreach Church Pastor Robin Mayfield



PHOTOS BY DAVID PLECHL/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Monica Spisal (top) and Robert Ross (bottom) are moved by the power of the Sunday morning service at Victory Outreach Church, 3012 NE Alberta. Both are turning their lives around through the support of this tight-knit Christian community.

Turning Lives Around

BY DAVID PLECHL

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Almost everyone at Victory Outreach Church has a story to tell.

Hispanic, black or white, no group holds a majority at this Northeast Alberta Street congregation. Color is not the common denominator of the church faithful, survival is.

Sanford Washington found this lively chapel just five years ago when he was addicted to drugs and living on the streets.

He knew he had to turn his life around so he tried turning it over to God.

Washington said the light from the Lord has positively affected him and he shares the experience each Sunday with others at Victory Outreach.

"You don't have to rely on the idea of God around you. God is inside you," Washington said. "It means turning your wheel into his. When God steps in your soul, the wheel is strong and you can't help do what he asks of you."

Washington's words are not taken lightly. Nor are they intended to be - much of the congregation share similar stories of recovery. This is a church dedicated to turning lives around.

Pastor Robin Mayfield has been with the church for three years.

Church reaches out to those most in need



"I wanted to get into a ministry that was helping people," Mayfield said. "The spirit of God led me to fellowship with them."

Victory Outreach goes into the streets, down Burnside and into penitentiaries and jails to reach the drug addicted, alcoholic and homeless, those most in need of a helping hand and a guiding light.

"We feel if a guy comes out of jail he needs a clean and safe environment to live in," Mayfield said.

A 12-month in-house program is designed to get parishioners back on their feet. The recovery home is in Battleground, Wash. and can house up to 50 men and women. It's almost always full.

"We give them life skills and spiritual weapons so that they can fight this battle out there," Mayfield said.

Classes and 12-step programs deal with forgiveness and anger management. Bible studies twice a day and church every day, keep the faithful focused on the task at hand.

The church is part of a growing network of Victory Outreach. What started as a street church for drug addicts in the 60s has blossomed to more than 500 churches worldwide.

Pastor Max Garza started the Alberta

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Civil Rights Leader Plans Visit

Distinguished Congressman to speak at peace conference



Rep. John Lewis

Civil rights leader and distinguished Georgia Congressman John Lewis will be the featured speaker during a peace conference in north Portland.

Lewis will present a talk entitled "Walking with the Wind: the Civil Rights Movement - Then and Now" during the annual "Peace-ing It Together" conference on Saturday, March 15 at 10 a.m. at Holy Redeemer Church, 25 N Portland Blvd.

Lewis has dedicated his life to protecting human rights, securing personal dignity and building what he calls "The Beloved Community."

Born the son of sharecroppers in 1940 outside of Troy, Alabama, Lewis grew up on his family's farm and attended segregated public schools in Pike County, Ala. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in religion and philosophy from Fisk University and is a graduate of the American Baptist Theological Seminary in Nashville Tenn.

He has been awarded numerous honorary degrees from colleges and universities throughout the United States, including Clark Atlanta University, Duke University, Howard University, Brandeis University, Columbia University, Fisk University, Morehouse College, Princeton University and Williams College.

Lewis is the recipient of numerous awards, including the prestigious Martin Luther King, Jr. Non-Violent Peace Prize and the NAACP Spingarn Medal. He is also the recipient of the John F. Kennedy "Profile in Courage Award" for lifetime achievement and the National Education Association Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Award.

He continues to serve the greater Atlanta area, as its representative in the U.S. House of Representatives.

A book signing and reception will follow the conference.

Theatre Company Tackles Tough Issues

'Deceptive Love' is play by African American group

BY WYNDE DYER

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The curtain rises on PassinArt's upcoming production of 'Deceptive Love' with a proposal of marriage. But the real question the play proposes is one for the audience - how closely married to your prejudices are you?

Written by an African American playwright, directed by a black director and performed by a cast of minority artists, 'Deceptive Love' is a play that hopes to challenge the way audiences think about a long list of pertinent issues.

Billed as a story about love and relationships, the script actually works to dissect each union in order to question the faith of its characters and to test their feelings on homosexuality and AIDS.

"It questions how deeply ingrained our prejudices are," said director William Earl Ray. "They are so deeply rooted in our personal beliefs, but when the tables are turned how do we deal?"

'Deceptive Love' is the story of Deon Smith, a young African American with a playboy past. He moves away from his hometown to find love and religion. Six months later Deon takes his new fiancé, Marie, on a trip back home to break the good news. But bad news from his past promiscuity is following close behind.

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Siouxsie Suarez, who plays Marie in 'Deceptive Love,' laughs as Brian Sance, who plays her lover's brother Mark, asks if she has any sisters for him. The play opens at the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center on Friday and continues all month and into April.

PHOTOS BY WYNDE DYER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER