

METRO

The Portland Observer



An Evening with Sonny Turner
Hit-making voice from *The Platters*
to perform in Lincoln City
See A&E section, inside

SECTION B

Community Calendar

Health Inequities

The public is invited to join in the dialogues with community members, organizations, business leaders and local elected officials to discuss the root causes of health inequities as well as long-term solutions in a this seven-part series. For neighborhood locations, dates, and times visit mhealth.org/healthequity.

The Shamrock Run

Sunday, March 16 the Shamrock Run charity race to benefit Doernbecher Children's Hospital will take place; racers can choose from a 5K, 8K and 15K race or a 3.5 mile fitness walk; the event features the Clan Macleay Pipe Band. To register, visit shamrockrunportland.com.

Church Milestone

The historic Vancouver Avenue First Baptist Church, 3138 N. Vancouver Ave., will host a special observance Sunday, March 16 at its 10:30 a.m. service commemorating the 50th anniversary of the laying of the cornerstone and the completion of a renovated church building. The annual Palm Sunday Soul Food Feast will follow. All are welcome!

Spring Beach Cleanup

Saturday, March 29, between 10 a.m. and 1 p.m., SOLV needs thousands of volunteers for the 24th-annual beach cleanup to restore the coastline to pristine condition. To get involved, call 800-333-7658.

Kids Who Help K.I.D.S.

Sunday, March 30, from 9 a.m. to noon, kids ages 12 and under who bring a new clothing item with tags attached to their nearest Sweet Tomatoes Restaurant will receive a free breakfast meal; all clothing to be donated to Kids in Distressed Situations. For more information, visit websites Sweettomatoes.com or Kidsdonations.org.

Camp Fire Incredible Kids

Camp Fire USA Portland Metro Council invites the public to honor any incredible child. Honorees will receive an award, coupons and their name in print. The fee is \$25 per child with registration available until March 31. For more information, call 503-224-7800 extension 142.

Homework Help

The Black Parent Initiative and Concordia Teachers Corps provide free homework help for kids ages 5 through 19 on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 3:45 to 5 p.m. at Grace Covenant Church, 5450 N.E. Flanders St.; and from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at Calvary Christian Center, 126 N.E. Alberta St.; as well as Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5 p.m. at the East Portland Community Center, 740 S.E. 106th Ave.

Concordia Candidate Forum

Tuesday, April 1, from 6:30 to 9 p.m., the public is invited to attend this free forum featuring candidates for the Portland Commissioners Position 1 and Position 2.; the event is to be held in the Gym of McMenamin's Kennedy School, 5736 N.E. 33rd Ave. For more information, visit concordiapdx.org.

Rain Garden Workshop

Saturday, April 5 from 9 a.m. to noon, Leach Botanical Gardens, 6704 S.E. 122nd Ave., will host the workshop teaching how to build a beautiful rain garden to capture rainwater runoff, followed by a community open house of the Botanical Gardens, from 1 to 4 p.m. To register for the events, visit Welcometherain.org or call 503-652-7477.

Homebuyer Programs

PDC's homebuyer-assistance programs address the gap in home ownership rates between whites and communities of color. For information about the new and expanded homebuyers assistance programs, visit pdc.us/nhp or call 503-823-3400.

Explore the Nights Sky

The Planetarium Sky Theater at Mt. Hood Community College - Gresham Campus, will explore the mysteries of the universe and the beauty of the heavens. Public shows are available on the second Tuesday of each month at 7 and 8 p.m. for \$1 admission.

Helping the Hungry

The Oregon Food Bank desperately needs your donations of nonperishable foods or funds. To find out how you can help, call 503-282-0555.

Sharing Faith through Music

Harlem Gospel Choir sets Portland date

The internationally acclaimed Harlem Gospel Choir will perform at 8 p.m. Tuesday, March 18 in the Chiles Center on the University of Portland campus, 5000 N. Willamette Blvd.

Founded in 1986, the choir travels the globe, sharing its joy of faith through music while raising funds for children's charities.

The choir features some of the finest singers and musicians from Harlem's churches and from the Greater New York area. The scheduled performance highlights the theme "Bringing People and Nations Together and Giving Something Back."

The choir's mission is to promote greater understanding of African-American culture through music, compassion for the less fortunate through charity fundraisers, and above all, a world filled with peace, love, and acceptance.

Since its conception, the choir has performed internationally for the likes of Pope John Paul II, Nelson Mandela and Elton John, and alongside many musical legends including U2, Diana Ross, Cindi Lauper and Lyle Lovett.

The choir's dynamic concerts feature spiritual songs such as "Amazing Grace," "When the Saints Go Marching In," and "I'll Fly Away," and are designed to leave audiences uplifted and inspired.

Tickets are currently on sale at the Chiles Center box office, at all Ticketmaster outlets, online at ticketmaster.com or by phone at 503-224-4400. Individual tickets are \$15, and group tickets (for 5 or more people) are \$10 each. University of Portland students can purchase tickets for \$10 per person, but only at the Chiles Center box office.



The world renowned Harlem Gospel Choir will perform at the University of Portland, Tuesday, March 18.

Mt. Hood Chooses New Leader

Ohio native to start July 1

The Mt. Hood Community College Board of Education has chosen Dr. John J. "Ski" Sygielski as its new college president.

Sygielski, who prefers to be called by his nickname "Ski," has served as President of Lord Fairfax Community College in Middletown, Va., for the past five years and will begin his new position on July 1. His appointment comes following a comprehensive search process.

"This is an exciting time for the college," stated Duke Shepard, board of

education chairman. "Dr. Sygielski is an energetic leader who has the experience to guide the college toward a greater future. We are extremely happy in being able to find someone of his quality."

Sygielski, a native of Ohio, oversaw more than \$22 million in capital construction projects in his most recent position, including the opening of a third campus location, increased community partnerships in support of economic, social and cultural activities; and improved outreach efforts to high-school students resulting in a 25-percent increase in the number of dual enrolled students.

"Education is about transforming lives," Sygielski said. "I now look forward to

working with MHCC students who strive to succeed; full and adjunct faculty who raise the bar of learning for first generation students; transfer students; dual enrolled students; persons of color; individuals interested in starting a small business or those interested in entering (for the first time) or re-entering the workforce after being absent for years for a variety of reasons; employees who are committed to helping others succeed; donors who want to make a difference; alumni who support the institution that gave them a start; government, education and business leaders who are in need of an educated and qualified workforce; and elected officials who understand the impact that MHCC

makes in its service region."

Sygielski holds a degree in philosophy (with honors), master's degrees in business management and administration and a doctorate in education.

His work experience includes corporate training; elementary, secondary and post-secondary education; and public- and private-sector consulting.



John "Ski" Sygielski

'Rabbit Romp' Ushers in Spring

With egg hunts, activities for all ages

The Oregon Zoo invites families to "Rabbit Romp," a celebration of spring, on Saturday, March 22, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The morning will feature egg hunts every 20 minutes with children ages 3 to 10 divided into age groups and challenged to find candy eggs and prizes. Toddlers 2 and under can participate in a candy hunt organized especially for them. Rabbit Romp festivities all day include a petting zoo, games and photo opportunities.

Sea otters and other animals also receive egg-themed enrichment, and - continuing its Year of the Polar Bear celebration - the zoo will host special polar-bear activities as well.

The bears receive plastic boomer balls to play with, while keepers describe how climate change is affecting polar bears in



A polar bear enjoys enrichment activities in one of highlights coming to the Oregon Zoo on Saturday, March 22 during "Rabbit Romp" day.



Visitors can learn about the plight of Washington pygmy rabbits at an informational booth during the Oregon Zoo's Rabbit Romp spring festival.

the wild.

By hosting Rabbit Romp, the zoo hopes to also focus attention on threatened Washington pygmy rabbits.

In 2002, following a steady population decline, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife enacted an emergency recovery program after finding fewer than 20 rabbits in the entire state. Since then, the Oregon Zoo has successfully bred and released these rabbits into the wild, helping bring them back from the brink of extinction.

Visitors can learn about the plight of Washington pygmy rabbits at an informational booth, where they can guess the number of bunnies in the booth and learn more.

The zoo opens at 9 a.m. daily and is located five minutes from downtown Portland, just off Highway 26. The zoo is also accessible by Max light-rail line. Zoo visitors are encouraged to ride Max or take TriMet bus No. 63 to the Oregon Zoo.

Visitors who take the bus or Max receive \$1 off zoo admission.