

President Obama!

Historic journey begins



Barack Obama, joined by his wife Michelle, takes the oath of office from Chief Justice John Roberts at the U.S. Capitol Tuesday to become the 44th president of the United States.

First black president takes oath

(AP)-- Stepping into history, Barack Hussein Obama grasped the reins of power as America's first black president on Tuesday, declaring the nation must choose "hope over fear, unity of purpose over conflict and discord" to overcome the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression.

In frigid temperatures, an exuberant crowd of more than a million packed the National Mall and parade route to celebrate Obama's inauguration in a high-noon ceremony. Waving and cheering in jubilation, they stretched from the inaugural platform at the U.S. Capitol toward the Lincoln Memorial in the distance.

With 11 million Americans out of work and trillions of dollars lost in the stock market's tumble, Obama emphasized that his biggest challenge is to repair the tattered economy left behind by outgoing President George W. Bush.

"Our time of standing pat, of protecting narrow interests and putting off unpleasant decisions — that time has surely passed," Obama said. "Starting today, we must pick ourselves up, dust ourselves off and begin the work of remaking America."

It was a day of high spirits — jarred by sudden concern about the health of

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An Inauguration to Remember

Area residents reflect on racial progress

BY JAKE THOMAS
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Portland residents celebrated a day they thought they'd never see Tuesday as Barack Obama was sworn in as the 44th president of the United States, the first African American to break one of the largest racial barriers of the past.

At the Urban League of Portland's Multi-Cultural Senior Center just off Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, seniors chat it up over cups of coffee while waiting for the day's meal of meat loaf and gravy.

On television, with a portrait of the new president just under it, NBC's Brian Williams and Al Roker banter between each other about the

inaugural ceremony. This seems like it could be any day at the center, but it isn't.

Lee Lenard, 89, remembers coming to Portland in 1960 from West Texas and finding work as a shoe shiner at the Greyhound bus station. Back

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'We've come a long ways, brother,'
--Lee Lenard

'I think he's extraordinary,'
--C.J. Hamilton



Week in The Review

Tongue Tied Oath

Both Chief Justice John Roberts and President Barack Obama stumbled slightly over wording of the presidential oath of office on Tuesday, providing a brief, awkward moment in an otherwise smooth inauguration ceremony.

Black Pioneers Pave Way

President Barack Obama led off his inaugural parade by paying homage to pioneers who paved the way for the nation's first black chief executive. The honored parade participants included Redactors from a black Civil War regiment, World War II's surviving Tuskegee Airmen and Freedom Riders from the civil rights movement.

First Lady's Dress Dazzles

First Lady Michelle Obama wore a sparkling yellow sheath dress with matching coat by Cuban-born American designer Isabel Toledo for the inauguration of her husband, a choice many applauded as a cheerful message of hope and a vote for the American fashion industry.

Mayor Fights Sex Scandal

A contrite Mayor Sam Adams apologized to Portland Tuesday for lying about a sexual relationship with a teenage male but asked the city to consider it an anomaly in two decades of public service. See story, page A3.

Inaugural Draws 1 Million

More than 1 million people crammed onto the National Mall and along the inauguration parade route Tuesday to celebrate the swearing-in of the nation's first black president in what was one of the largest-ever gatherings in the nation's capital. The crowd stretched nearly two miles — from the Capitol to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

39 years of community service