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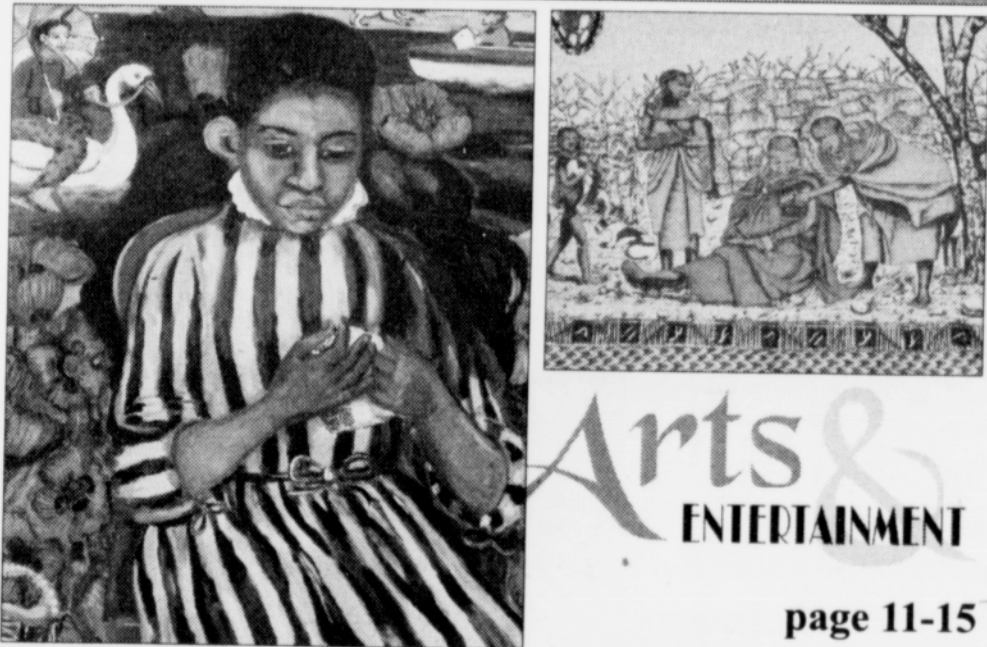
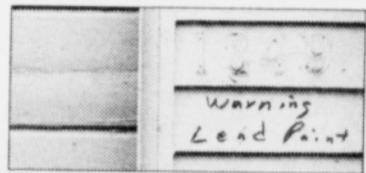
BLACK HISTORY MONTH



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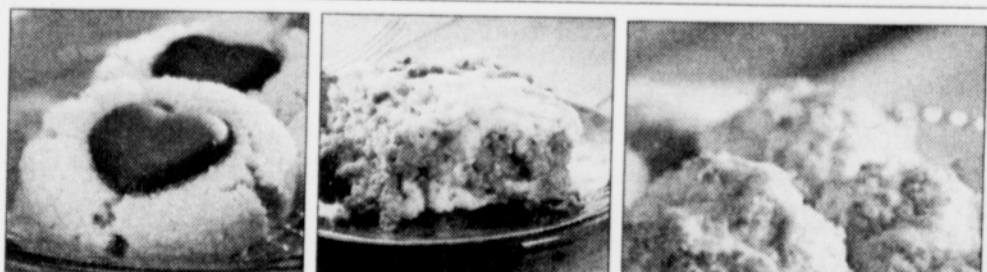


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PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Mayor Sam Adams honors survivors from the 1948 Memorial Day Flood that destroyed the multicultural city of Vanport during a Black History month celebration at City Hall. Pictured (from left) are Sharon Malone, Bud Fleury, Geneva Jones, Mayor Adams, Roland Jones, Dale Tweed and Jim Thompson.

Flood Survivors Honored

'The Vanport Experience' pays tribute to tragedy

In the dim lights of the Portland City Hall atrium, 10 survivors of the 1948 Vanport City Memorial Day Flood stood alongside Mayor Sam Adams to recall the tragedy that destroyed Oregon's second largest city in less than one day.

Last Friday's "The Vanport Experience" Black History Month celebration, was the first time in nearly 62 years that the flood disaster was recognized by a Portland City official.

The survivors were appreciative that Mayor Adams finally acknowledged their struggle that day and the rebuilding of their families lives.

Adams spoke of how the flood brought blacks and whites from both Vanport and Portland together to rescue and care for the flood victims. He remarked how the flood also later brought integration to Portland's schools, and an appreciation of the contributions African-Americans made to the community.

"We commemorate the Vanport flood, an event in our city's history that the Portland Observer recently called 'Portland's Katrina,'" said Mayor Adams. "My hope and my vision for Portland is that we never forget what happened that summer of 1948, and that we build a city where equity and prosperity replace discrimination and disillusionment."

The senior citizen survivors were in middle and high school, or young

adults at the time of the flood. One survivor shared with the more than 70 attendees, his original 8th grade student card that "excused him for not having a report card" because the Vanport school records were all destroyed by water.

Survivors and guests saw poster images of Vanport City and a special slide presentation of community life in Vanport and how people fled the flood waters and huddled in shelters. Weeks after the water receded, photos showed how many African-Americans grew tired of make-shift

but not for every Portlander."

The Mayor added that he was inspired by the fellowship of the evening's remembrance. He concluded the ceremony by presenting each survivor with a certificate of appreciation.

On behalf of Portland Observer Publisher Charles Washington, who was out of town for a black publishers business meeting, his associate Rebekah Belle, read remarks from him about how the Washington family was among the 15,000 to 20,000 African-Americans who came to

PSU Black Studies Turns 40

Portland State University's Black Studies Department is turning 40 years old this year. To celebrate, the department is sponsoring a celebration with food and a DJ at the historic Billy Webb Elks Lodge, 6 N. Tillmook St. on Friday, Feb. 26 at 5:45 p.m.

Speakers will include founding members of the department, as well as representatives from the Associations of African Students, the NAACP, and Black cultural Affairs Board.

There is a suggested \$10 donation, but free for students. RSVP to jennae@pdx.edu.

dwellings and demanded Portland no longer deny them permanent housing.

With the exception of the Portland Observer, the local news media was absent from this milestone event. Adams took the opportunity to reflect on the tensions that last month's Aaron Campbell police shooting had caused Portlanders.

"Tonight's event comes in the midst of a painful, emotional and justifiably tense time for Portland as a whole, and for our African-American community in particular," said Adams. "The events of the past few weeks, and certainly of the past week, only highlight what has been endemic to our city for too long: the fact that Portland is a great place,

Portland to work in the Kaiser Shipyards during World War II.

Washington told of how his family traveled by train with their belongings and a sack filled with sandwiches.

The Vanport City Experience reception was organized by staff from the Mayor's Office and the City of Portland Black History Planning Committee.

Committee members included Donny Adair, Art Alexander, Pollyanne Birge, Tim Hall, Donna Hammond, Karyn Hansen, Delphine Kennedy-Walker, Lynda Lewis, Janice McMillian-Friday, Barbara Rice, Marvin Riddick, and Felicia Williams. Food was served by Cannon's Rib Express.