








The PORTLAND WATER BUREAU
CELEBRATES
Black History Month
FEBRUARY 2011

In 1926, African American historian Carter G. Woodson single-handedly pioneered the celebration of "Negro History Week", for the second week in February, to coincide with the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass. The week was later extended to the full month of February and renamed Black History Month.

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Smithsonian Channel Uncovers News Film from King Murder

Some forward-looking college professors enabled television's Smithsonian Channel to offer a look at the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. from the time in which it occurred.

The network said will air a documentary in February culled primarily from local news footage in Memphis, Tenn., where the civil rights leader was murdered on April 4, 1968. Most of the footage hasn't been seen on television since it origi-

documentary with a vivid, "you-are-there" feel and the uncovering of some fascinating moments.

Royle said he was drawn, for instance, to coverage of King's famed "mountaintop" speech at the Mason Temple the night before the assassination. Cameras followed King after the speech to where he slumped in a chair, and viewers could sense the man's fragility.

The producer said he recognized how the existence of such film was unusual when he researched an older documentary on Sam Ervin, the North Carolina senator who chaired the Watergate investigative committee in the 1970s. Royle said he traveled across North Carolina and could find only a minute and a half of tape of Ervin in his home state.

Another stroke of luck for Tom Jennings, who produced "MLK: The Assassination Tapes," was finding Vince Hughes, who was a 20-year-old Memphis police dispatcher on his second day of work when King was killed. Hughes kept audiotapes of police calls on that day and crime scene photos from where King was shot, and the material was made available for the film.

Jennings also went to radio station WDIA to collect interviews from black Memphis residents at the time. The white-owned and operated TV stations at the time had little such material, Royle said.

"This (documentary) plunges you into the immediacy of the period and allows you to absorb it the way people at the time absorbed it," Royle said. "There's something that's electric about that. It gets you to sit up and pay attention."

Smithsonian plans to air the special on Feb. 12.



Martin Luther King Jr.

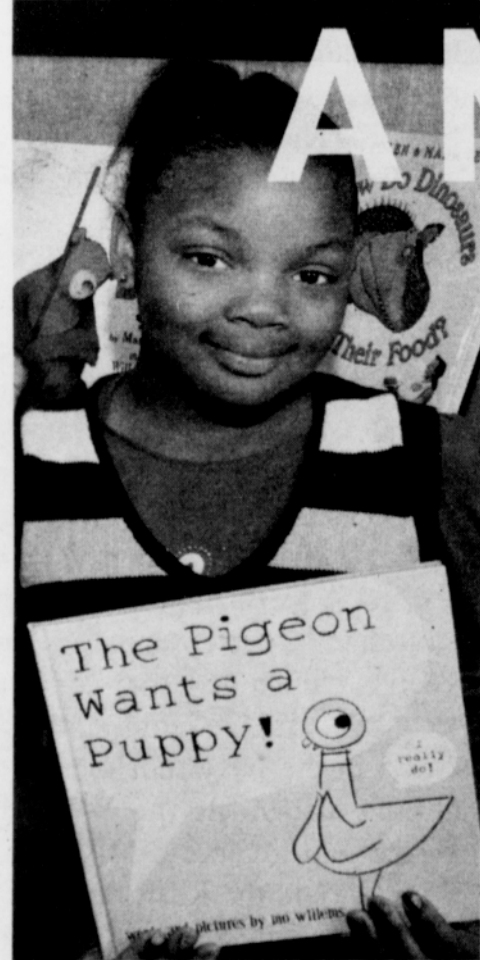
nally aired.

Many such moments are lost since local television stations usually taped over old broadcasts or threw away film reels, said David Royle, executive producer at the Smithsonian Channel. But some University of Memphis professors sensed in March 1968 that civil rights history was happening with a strike of local sanitation workers, the event that drew King to Memphis, and they collected footage of the events through King's murder and its aftermath.

"What they were doing was absolutely visionary – and very unusual," Royle said.

It enabled the production of a





AFRICAN AMERICAN READ IN



African American Literature is for everyone! Come hear local celebrities and community leaders read from works by their favorite African-American writers at the 16th Annual African-American Read In. **For children and adults.**

Sunday, February 12, 2012
2:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Hagen Campus Center | Concordia University
2811 NE Holman Street Portland Oregon 97211

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

Concordia University's Art & Culture Program presents
Celebrating African American Artists Exhibition
Artist's Reception: Feb. 24 | 6 pm - 8pm
Exhibit: Feb. 13 - March 9
Free, open to the public.

Afro/Danceworks Workshop at Concordia University
Bobby Foulter, will offer a workshop of movement and choreography with technique based in the tradition of the African Diaspora.
Feb. 22 | 12 pm and Feb. 24 | 5 pm. Free, open to the public.

For more information please visit: www.cu-portland.edu/calendar

Observing Vancouver First Families Preview

First Thursday's Museum after Hours at the Clark County Historical Museum kicks off its new season on Thursday, Feb. 2 at 7 p.m. with a celebration of the First Families Project book preview, featuring Bertha Baugh, and Jane Elder Wulff, project writer.

Four years ago, Vancouver's NAACP Branch #1139 agreed to sponsor a history, "First Families of Vancouver's African American Community: From World War Two to the 20th Century," and at its annual meeting in December, plans were finalized to release the book early this year.

After families who came to Vancouver to work at the Kaiser shipyard and other wartime industries were identified, writer

Jane Elder Wulff interviewed family members and wove their voices together into the story of Vancouver's African American Community.

Sponsors of the project also include Humanities Washington, the Clark County Historical Promotion Program, and Black United Fund of Oregon.

"We hope this book will encourage others, especially young people, to preserve their cultural heritage for the benefit of future generations," said Cornetta Smith, First Families Project Director.

The Clark County Historical Museum is located at 1511 Main St. in Vancouver. For more information, call 360-993-5679 or visit cchmuseum.org.