

Honoring a Visionary

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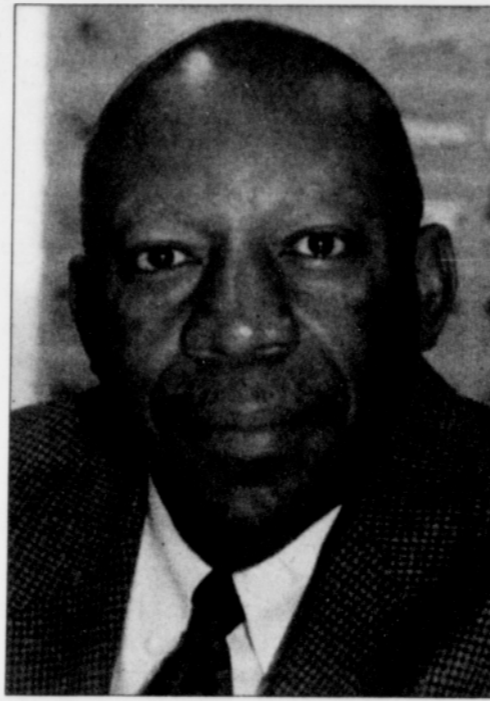
workers, the building was saved from the wrecking ball decades ago when Jordan won voter approval to turn it into a center for community life. Today, the center is one of the best and most-visited community centers in Portland.

After spending his early life in rural Texas, Jordan served as an officer in the U.S. Army. He received his B.S. from Gonzaga University in education, sociology, and philosophy. In 2001, he was awarded an honorary Doctorate of Law degree by the University of Vermont.

Jordan spent 10 years as Portland's first African-American City Commissioner beginning in 1974. He served 14 years as Director of Portland Parks & Recreation, retiring in 2003.

Jordan was the force behind such Portland landmarks as Pioneer Courthouse Square, the Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center, and Delta Park, as well as renovations to many of Portland's community centers.

He earned a reputation for his innovative and unconventional approaches to problem solving. He developed the Community Juvenile Officer Program that



Charles Jordan

put Portland Police officers in local schools to engage youth through positive interaction and activities. As Fire Commissioner, he developed an outreach train-

ing program to recruit people of color to the Fire Bureau.

On the national stage, Charles Jordan broadened the agenda of the environmental movement and land conservation to make it more inclusive. He is known for his

who worked with Jordan for years in several capacities. "He is a spiritual person with a strong connection to his church, and he saw us all as being connected. Portland's parks were where we could come together to build

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— Michelle Harper

groundbreaking approach to putting people--particularly people of color--at the heart of the American Conservation Movement.

"His great saying was, 'Parks are more than just fun and games,'" says Michelle Harper,

community and family."

Charles Jordan's leadership, commitment to Portland and innovative policies has helped ensure the city's high quality of life for generations to come.

For information, call 503-823-5300 or visit portlandparks.org.

Soar with the stories of African Americans in aviation history — discover what these American aviators achieved and what they overcame.

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