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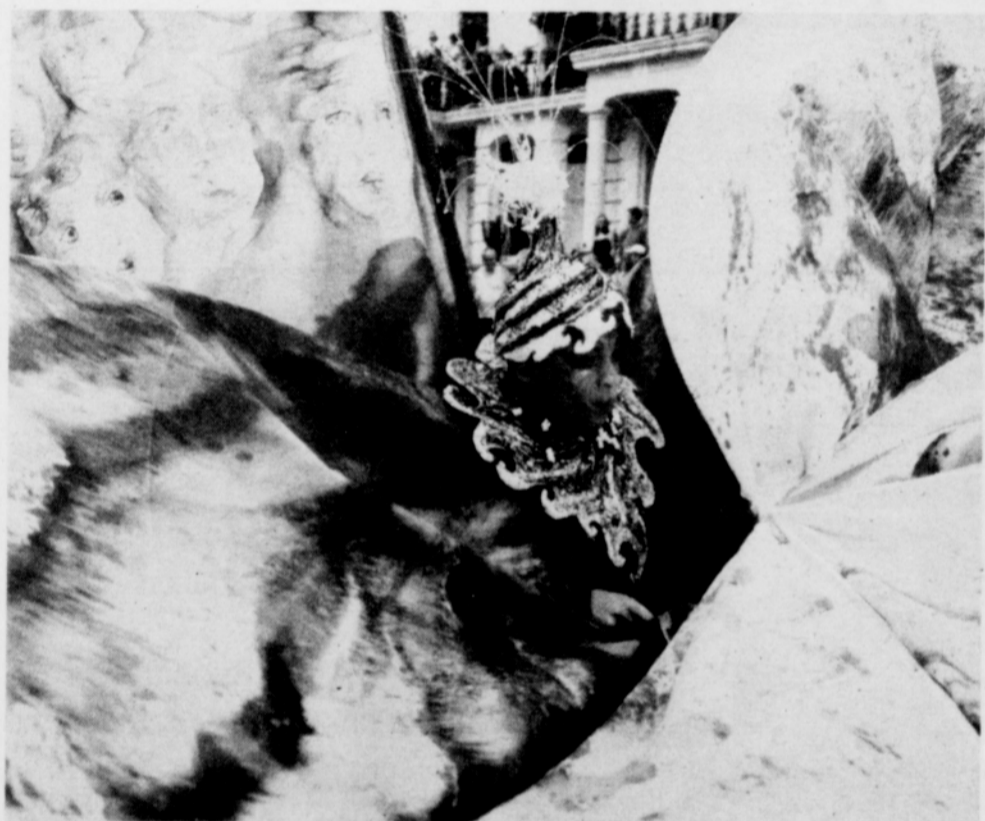
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What's on your list today?

LOCAL NEWS



PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Albina Roadrunners Track Club will pay tribute to their longtime former coach and community advocate Phil Walden who died last year. Pictured to promote the upcoming event is Coach Leon McKenzie (from left) and track club participants Dai'lyn Merriweather, Xavier Pierce, Joda Pierce and Aliyah Brown.

Legendary Coach Honored

Phil Walden 'All Comers' track meet set

By MINDY COOPER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Track sports enthusiasts and residents from throughout the city are invited to a track meet community event on Tuesday, July 24, at Grant High School, in honor of Mr. Phil Walden, who passed away last summer.

The festivities will begin at 5 p.m. with food and a social

hour. Registration will follow at 5:30 p.m., before the track events begin at 6 p.m.

For nearly 50 years, Walden impacted the lives of many generations of youth, as a mentor in the black community, a father figure, coach, and friend. Even in tough financial times, he would often spend his own resources to make sure that every kid had the opportunity to participate in sports.

"We want to keep his (Walden) name out there because he touched so many people," said John Mays, track coach at Benson High School

and Concordia University. "Not just inner city, but kids from all over the state to give them an opportunity."

According to Mays, Walden was a 'grassroots coach', who touched thousands of youth's lives by reaching out to them and encouraging them to participate in sports going back to the 60s.

"He would take kids to track meets. He worked with inner city kids to give them an opportunity to participate in sports," said Mays, who said his influ-

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