

Portland Boxer Thad Spencer Dies at age 70

Thad Spencer, one of the heralded boxers from Portland's former Knott Street boxing gym, died Dec. 13 2013, at the age of 70.

A homegoing celebration will be held Saturday, Dec. 21 at 11 a.m. at Word Assembly Church, 2333 Harrison St. in Oakland, Calif., where Spencer had lived with his son Lance.

Thaddeus "The Babe" Spencer Jr. was born in Tuscaloosa, Ala. on March 28, 1943. His family moved to Portland when he was 3 months old. He came from a large family of five brothers and six sisters.

He accepted Christ earlier in

life, especially considering his father was a church sergeant and deacon and mother attended services faithfully.

Thad's first cousin, Willie Richardson, introduced him to boxing at the age of 14, but he couldn't go to the gym where his cousin trained because it was for professionals only. He learned to box at the Knott Street Community Center in northeast Portland and won several Golden Gloves and championships in Oregon and Washington.

At the age of 15, he became a sparring partner for top-ranked heavyweight contender Eddie



Machen. At 16, he decided to become a professional boxer and moved to southern California. It was there that his boxing career began to flourish. Thad lost the chance to fight Mohammad Ali when Ali was stripped of the title for refusing induction into the United States Army.

Thad enjoyed cooking, taking walks and being with his family where he was always "the life of the party!"

Thad Spencer, a professional boxer from Portland, graces the cover of The Ring magazine in 1960.



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The life, words and deeds of Nelson Mandela were celebrated during a special memorial service Dec. 10 at Maranatha Church in northeast Portland. Pictured (from left) are members of the committee which planned the event Dr. Leroy Haynes, Dr. T. Allen Bethel, David Capuie, Keyse Jama, Doro Perry and Kelvin Hall.

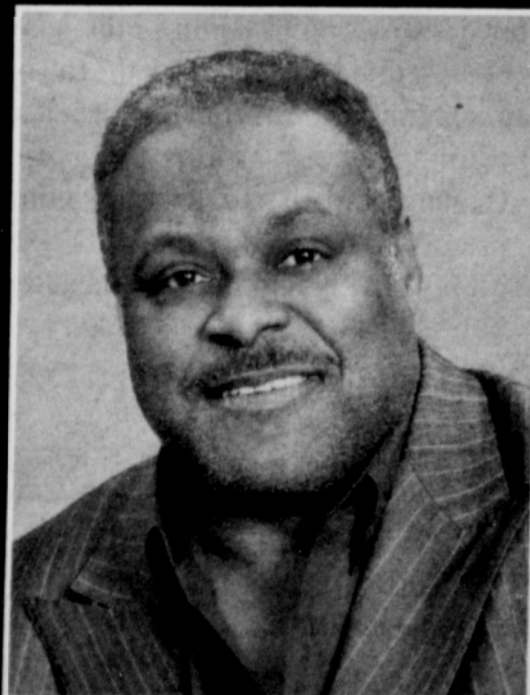
Nelson Mandela Memorial

A memorial Service in Portland for Nelson Mandela, the father and former president of the new South Africa, drew hundreds of people to Maranatha Church in northeast Portland.

The Dec. 12 event was sponsored by the Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police

Reform and the Center for Intercultural Organizing.

The service was held to celebrate and honor Mandela's struggle for freedom, his life, words and deeds. Mandela was a world icon for freedom loving people throughout the world.



Charles Washington

Past Publisher of the Portland Observer

In memory of an outstanding and dedicated member of Portland's Longest Standing Minority Publication.

