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# The PO



# BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Special Edition

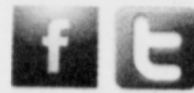


# The Portland Observer 44

'City of Roses'



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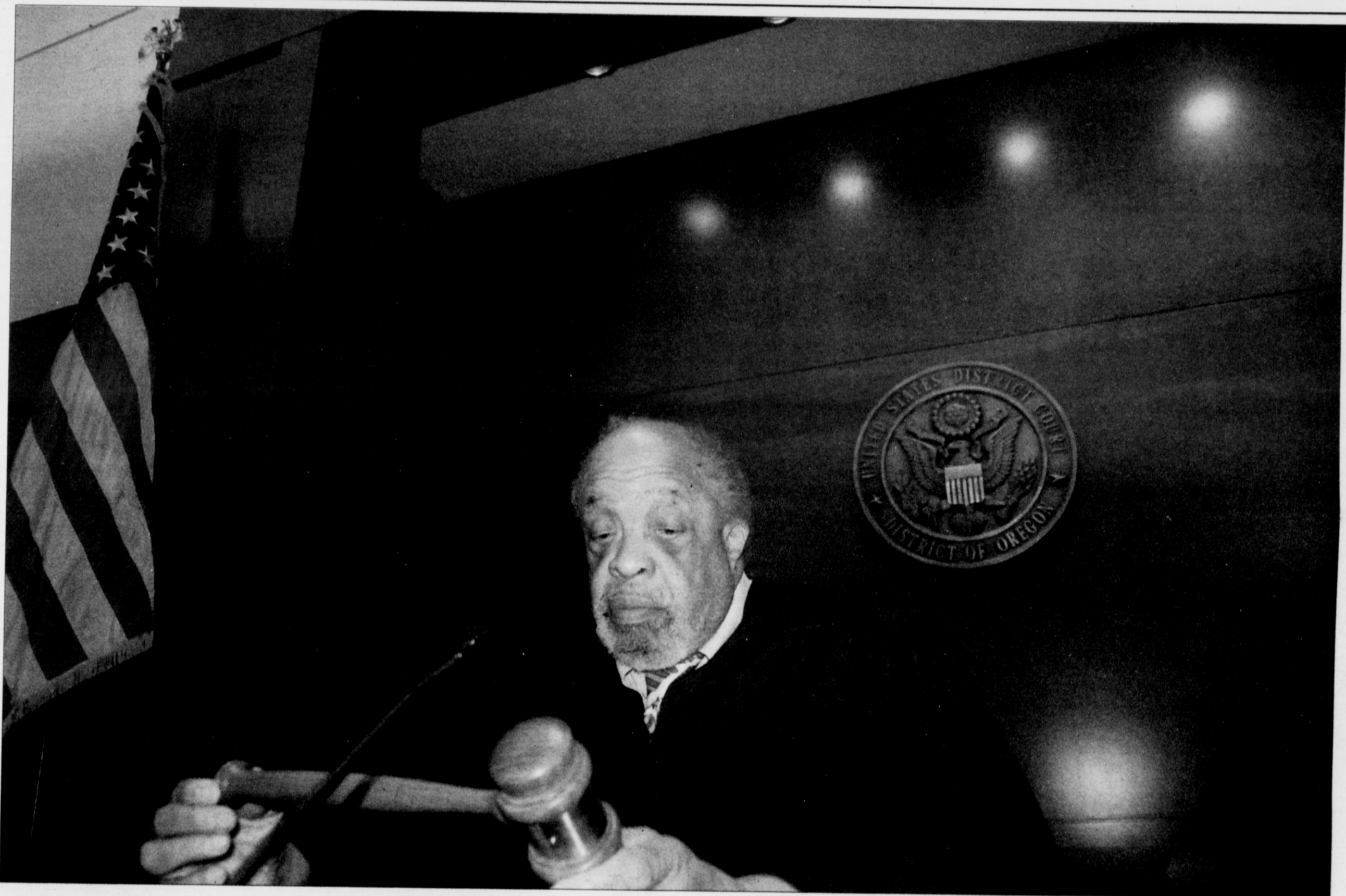


PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Senior U.S. District Court Judge Ancer L. Haggerty reflects on his journey to and from the bench of justice at the federal courthouse in Portland. Born in Vanport, three years before a devastating flood wiped out the city, Haggerty rose to become both the first African-American federal judge and the first black circuit court judge in Oregon.

# Drawing to a Final Verdict

## Ancer L. Haggerty reflects on journey to and from the bench

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Judge Ancer L. Haggerty seems to prefer to let his distinctions and accomplishments shine for themselves. The journey that saw him go from just another face in the Marines to making history as both the first African-American federal judge and first black circuit court judge in Oregon was not necessarily what he envisioned for himself early on.

Haggerty came up in a Portland that was deep in

transition; he was only 3-years-old when the storied Vanport projects were completely washed away by a Memorial Day flood in 1948. The disaster forced him along with his parents and thousands of other blacks who lived in the development into the segregated neighborhoods of north and northeast Portland.

As many of the Vanport survivors began to settle into homes in other parts of town, their children were integrated into schools that were primarily white.

Haggerty was a student at Woodlawn School and later Jefferson High School during the 1950s and 60s, both majority white at the time. While he recalls being conscious of these realities, to him it wasn't that big a deal." Instead he focused on his studies.

After graduating from Jefferson he set off to the University of Oregon where he'd earn his Bachelor's Degree in 1967. He would swap the "green and

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