

HEALTH & FITNESS

Midwives and Women of Color

Advocates work to improve birth outcomes

The International Center for Traditional Childbearing, a group founded by Shafia M. Monroe of Portland, is celebrating the contributions of the African American midwife while highlighting the under-representation of midwives of color in health care institutions and schools.

According to Monroe, research shows that midwives lower the infant mortality rate, but there remains a shortage of midwives of color to service their communities in culturally appropriate ways that improve birth outcomes.

"We want to see more African American youth chose midwifery as their career choice," she said.

The national profile of midwives is majority white women, with less than 2 percent be-



Veteran midwife, certified childbirth educator, Doula trainer and health activist Shafia M. Monroe of Portland engages an "Inequity in Breastfeeding Summit" in Seattle.

ing black women with only 13 percent of black women being served by certified nurse midwives compared to 57 percent of white women being serviced by CNMs, she said.

Earlier this month, Monroe led a public discussion for International Midwives Month in partnership with the Women's Resource Center at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus in north Portland.

Participants watched a special screening of "Bringin' in' Da Sprit, an evocative and passionate documentary that celebrates the history of black midwives who commit themselves to holistic answers in the face of powerful misconceptions about the practice of midwifery.

Proceeds for the non-profit group's fundraising will help sponsor students and others to attend the organization's 9th International Black Midwives and Healers Conference on Oct. 9-11 at University Place and aid its mission of reducing infant mortality, increasing breastfeeding rates in communities of color by training cultural competent doulas.

For more information, you can visit the group's website, ictcmidwives.org.

Blood Donations Save Lives

The American Red Cross urges donors to choose their day to give hope to patients in need by donating blood or platelets during the "100 days of summer. 100 days of hope." campaign, officially sponsored by Suburban Propane.

"Memorial Day marks the unofficial start of summer and vacation season, and the start of a seasonal decline in blood and platelet donations," said Jared Schultzman, communications manager, Pacific Northwest Blood Services Region. "By choosing a day to give

blood or platelets, volunteer donors can give hope and help maintain a sufficient supply for patients in need."

To encourage donations around the Memorial Day holiday, those who come to give blood or platelets from May 23-25 will receive a Red Cross RuMe tote bag, while supplies last.

The Red Cross relies on volunteer donors for the 15,000 blood donations needed every day to support patients at about 2,600 hospitals and transfusion centers nationwide.

HEALTH WATCH

Free Body Basics -- This physician recommended class is appropriate for all ages and health conditions. Plan to attend this one-session class and learn the simple guidelines for safe exercises, including stretching. Call 503-256-4000 to register.

Take Off Pounds Sensibly -- TOPS meetings are held every Tuesday at 9 a.m. at the St. Michael's and All Angels Church, 1704 N.E. 43rd Ave. Learn about this weight loss support program which offers information, encouragement, weekly programs, fun contests, discussion and socialization.

Cholesterol Profiles -- Get the resources to help you keep an eye on your cholesterol and other indicators of heart health. Educational material provided. For more information, call 503-261-6611.

Bereavement Support Groups -- Free, safe confidential group meetings for those who have experienced the death of a loved one offered on various nights and locations. For information and registra-

tion, call 503-215-4622.

Maternity Water Workout -- Helping new moms regain muscle tone, strength, and flexibility, all in the support and freedom of the water. Call 503-256-4000 for more information.

Senior Aerobics -- A low-impact workout geared specifically toward seniors. Call 503-449-0783 for current schedule.

Red Cross Certification -- The Oregon Trail Chapter Red Cross now offers credits to help professionals maintain licensing or certification. For a cumulative list, visit pdxinfo.net.

Empowerment through Relaxation -- Free informal meditation classes that address breathing techniques, some gentle ancient African yoga poses and mental balancing techniques. People have left these classes joyful and with a peaceful view of their lives. Call Dr. Marcelitte Failla at 503-228-6140.

Tenderfoot Care -- Treat your feet with a soak, nail trim, buffing and massage at one of six clinics or at your home. Call 503-251-6303 for more information.



A COMMUNITY ON THE MOVE

Presented by the Oregon Black Pioneers

On exhibit at the Oregon Historical Society

February 1 – June 28, 2015

Explore how WWII shipyards, the Vanport flood, & urban renewal programs impacted Portland's black families & businesses in the 1940s & 50s.

Complimentary Community Dialogues

**The Great Migration:
The City and Flood**
January 13 at 7 p.m.

**Night Life: Clubs,
Restaurants, and the Music**
March 30 at 7 p.m.

**The Community: Families,
Churches, & Social Clubs**
February 22 at 3 p.m.

**Academic Perspective:
Displacement**
April 22 at 5:30 p.m.

Visit oregonblackpioneers.org for locations & details.



Oregon Historical Society
1200 SW Park Ave., Portland
503.222.1741 | ohs.org