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Joy of Freedom
*Parade and
celebration to
honor Juneteenth*
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**Parks Go
Smoke Free**
*Ban begins July 1
for entire Portland
parks system*
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The Portland Observer 45

'City of Roses'



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Celebrating Pride Month and a 2015 proclamation by the Multnomah County Commission supporting the LGBTQ community are (pictured from left) Giovanni Blair McKenzie, founder and executive director of Queer Intersections Portland and a former youth ambassador for the Human Rights Campaign; Antoinette Edwards, director of the Portland office of Youth Violence Prevention; and Edwards' son Khalil Edwards of PFLAG Portland Black Chapter.

Black Pride!

*Gay rights
supporters
celebrate*

BY OLIVIA OLIVIA
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

June marks the 40th celebration of Portland Pride, a celebration of the LGBTQ community, but the month is also shining a light on the powerful emergence of several leaders in the black community advocating for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender rights.

One organization in particular, the PFLAG Black Portland Chapter, has extended its reach since its beginnings just a few years ago as the first African-American PFLAG chapter of the nation, the organization that formally was called Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

Khalil Edwards, the Portland chapter's president, has been working on a full slate of community celebrations for Portland Black Pride, with most of the events for all ages and families taking place this week. (See Metro, inside)

PFLAG acquired management of Portland Black Pride in 2011 and it has grown immensely," says Edwards.

"We did our best to revitalize it and bring it new energy," he said.

The chapter is also celebrating some major gains for gay rights in Oregon and some vital partnerships, including with the Urban League of Portland and Basic Rights Oregon, another LGBT advocacy group and an organization where Edwards is a racial justice organizer.

The support has made it possible for PFLAG to have some paid staff and increase its capacity as an organization, expanding its reach and political weight.

The chapter runs a policy and advocacy program,

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Kourtni Capree salutes a captive audience as Portland's 40th annual Pride Parade moves through the streets of downtown Sunday, giving support to the LBGTO (lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender and questioning) community.

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