

The Week in Review

Candidate Ousted By Protesters

Democratic candidate Bernie Sanders was rushed on stage at a speech in Seattle on Saturday. Black Lives Matter activists said they were calling on the senator to take action on saving black lives and called on him to release his plans to reform policing. Sanders did not address the crowd and left without speaking. He appeared later the same day at the University of Washington and on Sunday drew more than 28,000 to hear him speak in Portland despite local protestors marching outside the venue. *Mara Jacqueline Willaford, (pictured left), holds her fist overhead as Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., stands nearby at a rally Saturday (Credit Elaine Thompson/AP).*



Shooting Victims Identified

Gresham police have released the name of the three people involved in a Saturday afternoon shooting that resulted in one fatality. 27-year-old Kevin Dwayne Vearnado of Portland was found dead outside an apartment complex around Northeast 162nd Avenue and Halsey Street. Nearby, Malcom Xavier Jesse, 21, was found with a non-life-threatening gunshot wound. A third victim, 29-year-old Collett Renee Harris, took herself an area hospital for a non-lethal gunshot wound as well.

Police have made no arrests but believe all three victims know each other and are working with family members to identify everyone involved.

Suicide from downtown Portland building

Authorities have identified a woman who fell to her death last Monday night from the top of Portland's Standard Insurance Center building. 46-year-old Juana Elena Valdez was confronted by a security guard who tried to prevent her from jumping but he was unable to stop her and she dropped to the pavement below, according to a police report released Thursday. Little is known about the Hillsboro victim, except that records indicate she had a history of financial problems.



Ferguson Protests Escalate

Missouri authorities declared a state of emergency Monday after police arrested dozens of activists, include civil rights leader Cornel West, outside the St. Lois federal courthouse Monday, following another weekend of unrest in Ferguson, the city where unarmed black teen Mike Brown was shot and killed just over a year ago by a white police officer. *Inset Picture: People come to the aid of a distraught woman after gunshots were fired near a protest in Ferguson, Mo., Sunday, Aug. 9, 2015 (Credit Jeff Roberson/AP).*

Our Roots Run Deep

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

that dated back over a century, Hanks said he was able to build several profiles from some of the earliest black pioneers with names and original home addresses in what is now called the downtown and Old Town areas.

Being a history lover and wanting to share what he had learned, Hanks started leading groups on public walking tours of some of the locations, last fall.

"The early pioneers of color who lived downtown and in the Pearl District are from a forgotten chapter in Portland's history," Hanks explained. "They were just ordinary people like most of us today. They came to Portland in search of freedom, community, and economic independence."

Hanks found that many of the early black Portlanders were former slaves, with names such as a Julius Caesar Taylor and the Crawford family.

Several of them were also business owners. During the 1860s, Hanks says he discovered that one black pioneer founded a Portland real estate company, while another owned a saloon and almost got killed one night.

Another early black resident, he says, was instrumental in the integration of Portland public

schools in 1870s. One runaway slave even ended up owning a local home.

Hanks suspects that some of the earliest black people arriving in Portland had once been part of the Underground Railroad, a famous escape route for runaway slaves predominantly fleeing the South. The first black newspaper had an office two blocks away from what's now Pioneer Courthouse Square, work that would eventually lead to the opening of other black-owned newspapers like The Portland Observer.

"There are many more historical facts on the tour, such as the first Ku Klux Klan part of Portland, and the first black lawyer here," says Hanks. "I also try to include a tribute to the Native Americans who were taken to Oregon reservations from here."

Hanks has also written a book that's steeped in years of his own African American ancestry research.

Akee Tree: A Descendant's Quest for His Slave Ancestors on the Eskridge Plantation is his account of two families, his own during slavery and that of the family that held his ancestors in bondage.

Hanks has also helped celebrities discover their pasts. He was a contributor to the 2006 PBS special "African American Lives –

Oprah's Roots," which examined the genealogy of Oprah Winfrey.

Hanks hopes to continue to write and research local black history while enriching Portland with his walking tours. He invites the community and visitors alike to take some time out of their day and walk through the past with him.

Hanks currently offers two historical tours that focus on Portland pioneers of color, all of which take place on Saturdays.

The downtown tour begins at 9:30 a.m. and lasts approximately two hours, focusing on Portland from 1850 through 1899, beginning at Southwest First Street and Ankeny next to the Portland Saturday Market.

His Pearl District tour, which lasts one hour, begins at 12:30 p.m. at Northwest Broadway and Everett Street, and focuses on Portland black history from 1865 through 1920.

Tickets are available for two upcoming sessions on Aug. 22 and Sept. 12. Admission is \$10 for adults, \$2 for children under 17 and free for children under 10. Tickets can purchased on location or reserved by emailing portland-pioneersofcolortours@yahoo.com. For more information, you can follow Portland Pioneers of Color Walking Tours on Facebook.

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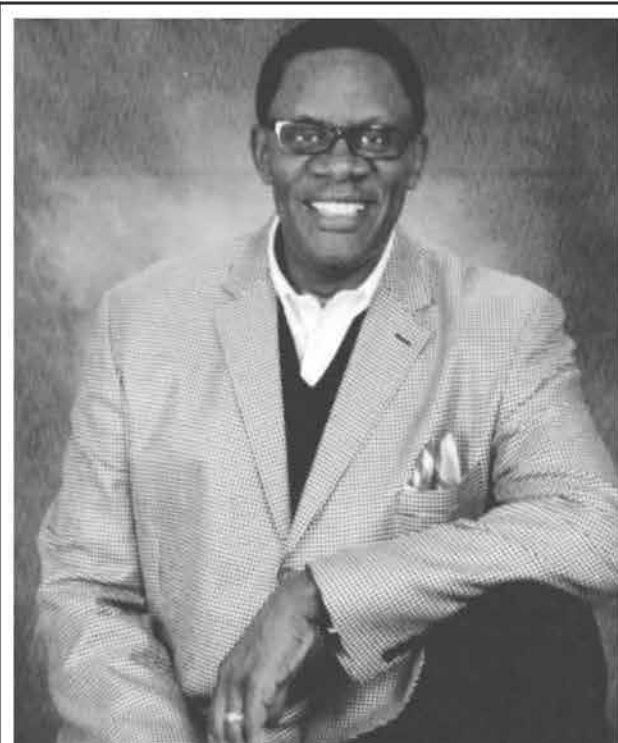
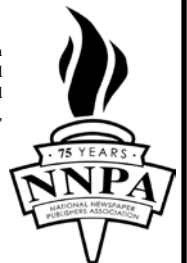
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