



Black Women Leaders – Circa 1989 – Joyce Washington (left), the late former Portland Observer publisher, and Gary Ann Taylor, the late former Portland Observer circulation director and business manager, were essential to the success of the newspaper's early years.



The People's Observer was an African American publication in Portland in 1944, led by William H. McClendon, a prominent member of Portland's civil rights community. Although McClendon was not involved, the Portland Observer today traces its roots to McClendon's original publication.

The Portland Observer: Did you Know?

BY FELECIA SLIDER
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The Portland Observer is Oregon's oldest continuous black publication.

- The Portland Observer was started in 1970 by Rev. Alfred Lee Henderson of Portland's Bethel AME Church.
- In 1989, it was purchased by Joyce Washington. Under her watch, the Portland Observer staff grew from four to 11 employees, and circulation grew from about 1,500 copies in 1970 to more than 20,000 in 1995.

- Joyce Washington was a child when her family moved to Vanport, the community built to house shipbuilding workers on the Columbia River during World War II. She studied sociology at Portland Community College and Portland State University.
- After she took over the weekly, Washington had to run the paper out of her home for a while.
- The paper's corporate name at the time,

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Portland Observer Staff through the Years

- Alfred Henderson, 1970s; Founder
- Joyce Washington, 1980s-1990s; Publisher
- Charles Washington, 1990s-2000s; Publisher
- Mark Washington, 1980s-2020; Publisher
- Cory Washington, 1990s; Promotions
- Gary Washington, 1990s; Technical Assistant
- Leonard Latin, 2000s-2020; Ad Representative
- Michael Leighton, 2001-2020; Editor
- Gary Ann Taylor, 1990s-2000s; Office Manager
- Lucinda Baldwin, 2000s-2020; Office Manager
- Dean Babbs, 1990s; Graphic Design/Layout
- Paul A. Neufeldt, 1990s-2020; Creative Director
- Pamela Jordan, 1990s; Reporter/Writer
- Neil Heilpern, 1997; Reporter/Writer
- Lee Perlman, 1997-2008; Reporter/Writer
- Wynde Dyer, 2000s; Reporter/Writer
- Jayme R. Cuti, 2000s; Reporter/Writer
- Katherine Kovacich, 2000s; Reporter/Writer
- Nicole Hooper, 2000s; Reporter/Writer
- Katherine Blackmore, 2000s; Reporter/Writer
- Sarah Blount, 2000s; Reporter/Writer
- Isaiah Bouie, 2000s; Photographer
- Raymond Rendleman, 2000s; Reporter
- Jake Thomas, 2000s; Reporter
- Cari Hachmann, 2010s; Reporter
- Donovan M. Smith; 2012-2020; Reporter
- Danny Peterson, 2010s; Reporter
- Beverly Corbell, 2020; Reporter

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