

Black History on the Go

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

website states. “He’s been a health and physical education teacher, a drug and alcohol counselor, a student advocate, and integration specialist and a mentor.”

Carline also donated his \$5,000 coaching award from NBC Comcast to sending low-income student athletes to sports summer camps.

To start on his current endeavor, Carline began collecting items to enhance teaching about Black history while he was at Fort Vancouver, and he encouraged other classes to do the same.

“But they didn’t do anything,” he said. Not one to be put off, Carline decided to do it all himself and go from school to school teaching about Black history, bring with him what looks like a truckload of posters, books, photographs, magazine and literature on Black history.

“I’ve got stuff I collected over the years, and borrowed stuff from the library,” he said.

During the covid pandemic, he wanted to do something while stuck inside, so he took his exhibit first to Emmanuel Church and then to Fort Vancouver High, and from there, the idea took off.

“After that, and word getting out, I got calls from schools, so I turned it into a business,” he said. “I also got a call from the state about (sharing it with) youth corrections.”

Carline hasn’t stopped in the past several years, and through a contract with Portland Public Schools, he regularly takes his exhibit to local schools. He also goes to schools in the area, recently to Woodburn High, as well as all over the state.

“I went to Benson this week, then on to Burns, then Grants Pass, then for Women’s History Month in March, I will go to Albany,” he said.

The African American Mobile Display, its website and Facebook



Dennis Carline

page by the same name are all a family affair, Carline said.

“My son-in-law is a coder and creates things that teachers can use, and my brother and daughter helped with the Facebook page,” he said. “And my other daughter is a videographer and does the video.”

The website contains a wealth of information and links to other sources on the Civil Rights struggle, slavery and abolition, segregation and Jim Crow. It also has links to a wider range of topics, including African, Asian and European history, Latin American history, and much more. It even has all of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s speeches. The Facebook page is also full of informative links, like a recent post, with photos, of the history of Black Mardi Gras in New Orleans.

Carline’s website also has links to the Zinn Educational Project, which “promotes and supports the teaching of people’s history in middle and high school classrooms across the country,” the Zinn website (zinnproject.

org) states. The Zinn project offers free downloadable lessons and articles.

Given the climate of repression of African studies by some, Carline believes his work is more important than ever.

“You can’t teach critical race theory, but kids are anxious to learn this, so (in his display) I put in Civil Rights and how the Nation of Islam did a lot of good, and the Black Panthers did, too.

“And all those organizations like the NAACP, they contribute to the success of Black people today, but people don’t know about it,” he said. “They think Black history is not important, that we’re not important.”

Carline is exposing that negative propaganda, shining the light of truth on the vitally important role that Blacks played in the founding of our country and continue to play today.

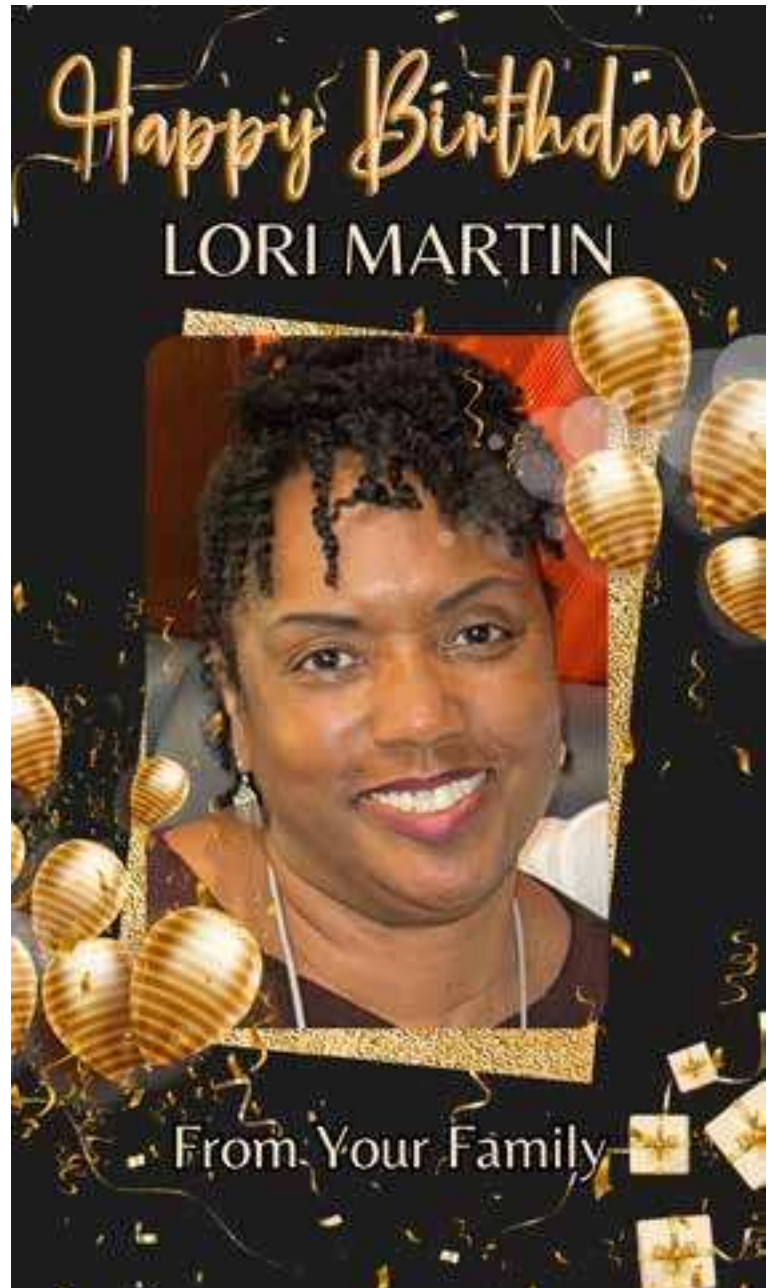
It’s a lesson that everyone needs to learn, including white kids. Carline said he presented his exhibit for a school in the Clackamas School District, where students are predominantly white, and they were shocked.

“Some of those kids were in tears and said they never knew any of this stuff,” he said. “That’s why I’m giving this information to kids, so they can make better decisions. Some people still want to live in the ‘60s, but that doesn’t work.”

Carline doesn’t just put up a display, he talks to the kids, shows them movies to involve them in learning about African American history.

“Another thing that really gets them is that I bring a record player, and play Marvin Gaye, Diana Ross and MLK speeches, and then answer any questions to enlighten them about the true history of race relations in America.

“Some are tough questions,” he said. “We’ve changed some minds, and some we don’t, but at least we give them the opportunity.”



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