



# The Portland Observer

Volume LII • Number 15



www.portlandobserver.com  
Wednesday • August 7, 2024

Committed to Cultural Diversity



Internationally Acclaimed Gospel Artist  
JJ Hairston

## A Cultural Celebration Soul2Soul Welcomes Internationally Acclaimed Gospel Artist

J.J. Hairston and Youthful Praise (affectionately known as YP) continue to make waves in the Gospel Music Industry while garnering national and international recognition. Founded in 1991, the once 35-member church choir from Bridgeport, CT has transformed into a Billboard chart topping national gospel artist.

Recently, J.J. Hairston & YP have garnered much success with the release of "You Deserve It," an infectious worship song that has taken the nation by storm.

The single was named #1 in 2017 by Billboard Magazine on four charts: The Hot Gospel Songs Chart, Hot Gospel Song Artists Chart, the Gospel Air Play Chart, and the Gospel Digital Songs Chart.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

## All the Way from Mississippi

### Honoring Jerome Polk and His Accomplishments

Jerome Polk was born in Mississippi and raised in Portland, Oregon. He comes from a large family. Jerome was the 8th of 11 children. He is a businessman and an avid golfer. Well, this is not the book on JP.

Jerome came to Portland with his father and two siblings when he was 7 years old. Jerome has traveled the world but has called Portland home ever since.

Jerome graduated from Washington High School. JP, as he is known, started a family shortly after high school and has three children, a daughter LaNae, and two sons Anthony and Marcus. He has been married to his wife Brenda for over 43 years. He also has 13 grandchildren.

After graduation Jerome began working different jobs but landed as a longshoreman. He continued his union employment from 1969 until his well-deserved retirement in 1996. However, JP was not to be idle.

Jerome started a business in his home in 1988. It was a framing business that began to outgrow his basement. With JP's personality and business acumen customers were coming at all hours. In 1992 an opportunity to establish a place of business presented itself. Jerome took full advantage of the opportunity and he put out his shingle, JP's Custom Framing. JP's Custom Framing is located at 418 NE Killingsworth St. just east of MLK Jr. Blvd.

JP's Custom Framing is not only a place of business, but customers also enjoy the welcoming spirit of Jerome, his sister Sadie, and his niece Eddie. They always greet everyone with a smile and a sincere welcome.

JP is an avid golfer. He was first introduced to the game by Leon McKenzie. Mr. McKenzie was a member of Leisure Hour Golf Club (LHGC). That was around 1965 and Jerome has been playing golf ever since. JP doesn't do anything half-way. He is known to



Jerome Polk

practice for hours to improve his game. He has served LHGC as president three times and as sergeant-at-arms. Over the years, JP has influenced many young people. Jerome has given informal lessons to those that request it. JP is patient and has given life lessons through golf.

Jerome has been a member of Leisure Hour Golf Club for almost 60 years. He has also supported the Leisure Hour Junior Golf Program. LHGC was started back in 1944 by several African-American golfers. Those golfers were concerned about the lack of access to golf courses around Portland. Those founders were also concerned about the lack of diversity in golf. LHGC is a club for all golfers of different skill levels. Leisure Hour Golf Club is open to all races, ethnicities, genders and gender identity. LHGC is the most diverse golf club in Oregon. They held

their first tournament at Eastmoreland Golf Course. This year LHGC will be celebrating 80 years. They will have their Arvonn Rae Scholarship Tournament at Heron Lakes Golf Course. The event will be held August 17-18 at the Great Blue and Greenback courses respectively. LHGC offers scholarships to our youth whether they are going to college or trade school. Non-tournament play is scheduled for Friday, Aug. 16th at the Greenback course starting at 11:00am.

JP will be honored at the 80th annual celebration at SEI on Saturday, August 17th. There will be a formal program, dinner and dance. For more information about the event or golf contact Keith Edwards (503)957-7189 or Jimmy Brown (503)887-0136. The deadline for entry to the tournament is Thursday, August 8, 2024.