

Juneteenth

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Portland organizers say that Juneteenth is “meant to rejoice in freedom and remind everyone that African-Americans’ ancestors endured one of the worst slave experiences in human history.”

In Portland, the celebration starts with a “Freedom Parade” at 11 a.m. along Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, between North-east Jarrett and Knott Streets. This year’s Grand Marshall is “Mother of Juneteenth”

There will be foods, musical artists, special guest speakers, arts and craft vendors, prizes, a play area for children, and much more. This event is free to the public and family-friendly.

Rush also praises U.S. Sen. Jeff Merkley, who last December became the 30th signer of a joint resolution declaring Juneteenth a national holiday.

“This year marks 150 years since the steel chains were broken on African-American people,” Rush says. “Portland’s Juneteenth events may be small and not as prominent as in most other cities, but we still believe that our communities should join in celebrating our freedom as Americans.”

Also slated is a lecture on the history of Juneteenth by African American historian Hari Jones, assistant director and curator of the African American Civil War Freedom Foundation and Museum in Washington, D.C. The talk is 7-9 p.m. at the University of Portland on Wednesday, June 12, and sponsored by Wells Fargo.

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Clara Peoples, who in 2011 was bestowed the national honor of “Miss Juneteenth.”

Peoples is credited with leading Oregon’s first-ever Juneteenth Parade, along the docks during World War II.

The short parade ends at the Legacy Emanuel field at Northeast Vancouver at Graham, where the festival will take place starting at noon, and running through 6 p.m.



Clara Peoples, the “Mother of Juneteenth,” rode last year with Paul Knauls in the Juneteenth Parade. This year she is Grand Marshall.

One last special event is, “Juneteenth: Words Along the Way,” 6 p.m., Wednesday, June 19 at the North Portland Neighborhood Library back lawn, 512 N. Killingsworth. In the case of rain, the program will be moved to the second floor auditorium.

At this event, PassinArt Theater Company traces the early history of African Americans through poetry and prose, placing Juneteenth in context. This event will con-

clude with a make-your-own-sundae Ice Cream Social.

Sponsors of this year’s activities include Wells Fargo Bank, Legacy Health System, NW Natural, Skanner News, Passin Art Theater Company, Multnomah County Library, Christopher’s Gourmet Grill, and the City of Portland.

For more information or to get involved, write to juneteenthoregon@gmail.com.

Prison

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The other Measure 11 reform is the “second look” idea, which would have allowed judges to consider reducing sentences for youth tried as adults, after they have served 50 percent and 75 percent of their sentences.

But any changes to Measure 11 would need a two-thirds majority to pass. A staffer from Rep. Garret’s office said the support was not there.

District attorneys and law enforcement groups have opposed the reform effort altogether, especially the move to reduce mandatory minimums for any Measure 11 crimes.

“The professional public safety community including Sheriffs, Chiefs and District Attorneys have been unwaveringly direct from the first day of the commission’s work that we will not support any reforms which substantially impact the very successful mandatory minimum sentencing established by Ballot Measures 11 and 57,” the Oregon State Sheriffs Association and Oregon Association of Chiefs of Police, said in their testimony to the Legislature’s Public Safety committee.

“These mandatory minimum sentences

have worked exactly as they were intended: they put the most dangerous offenders behind bars for an appropriately long period of time.”

Rep. Wally Hicks, R-Grants Pass who sits on the committee has said he won’t support the proposals and doesn’t know any Republicans who will. And some Democrats too

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balk at voting for changes to Measure 11.

Corrections leaders, victims’ advocates, children’s advocates and judges have supported the reforms, along with former Gresham Police Chief Carla Piluso.

They point out that inmates classified as “violent offenders” include people who may have been part of a violent offense but did not themselves act violently, as well as peo-

ple who pretended to have weapons or had fake weapons.

“I recall a young man who pulled a very stupid prank and robbed a Gresham pizza parlor with a toy gun,” Piluso said in her testimony to the committee.

“It was undoubtedly a terrifying situation for the people involved. This young man had no other contact with police and was fundamentally a good kid. He was sent to prison under Measure 11. Did he need to be held accountable for his actions? Yes he did. However, I think with more judicial discretion a better sentence could have been handed down.”

The measure 11 reforms would have needed 20 votes in the Senate and 40 votes in the House.

“It’s a very high bar and it’s difficult under any circumstances to get that number of legislators on board,” said Rogers. “Of all the reforms the District Attorneys are opposed to, they fight the measure 11 reforms most.”

Rogers said that even without the Measure 11 reforms a bill that includes the other reforms would move the state significantly

toward prevention, drug and mental health treatment and re-entry programs that help people succeed when they are released.

“I think there is still a lot of value in the reforms,” he said. “But we can’t assume it will move forward. We need to remind the governor and our legislative leadership that this has been two years in the making and the costs of doing nothing are huge.”

Here’s what a few people told legislators:

Thad Betz, a staff attorney at Metropolitan Public Defenders

“I want to tell you about one of my clients who I believe should have had his case handled in the juvenile court system. My client, who I will just call J was 15 when he was arrested for Second Degree Robbery.

He was accused of taking another kid’s cell phone while a friend punched the kid.

Between the two of them, and because they were together, their behavior allegedly met the elements of Second Degree Robbery.

Read the rest of this story online at www.theskanner.com

Green

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is important not just for people who choose to pursue science as a profession, but to people in fields ranging from corporate executives to beauticians to politicians because they need to know how the world works too.

One of the objectives of TEWS is to help maintain children’s interest in science. Jemison says that children have a curiosity and love of science that often gets lost because of a lack of hands-on experiences as they get older.

“Kids ask the ‘What if’ questions,” she says. “You know, about the bugs, the snails and all of those kinds of things. The stuff between the couch. Kids want to know about how the world works and it’s actually about their natural learning techniques – to try things and experience things.

“I think it’s our methodology that we use in school that starts to be a deterrent to this

natural curiosity. By the time we get to third or fourth grade, we run into a lot of teachers who are not as versed in doing science training so they hold remotely to books.”

She says maintaining interest in science is about allowing children to develop their natural tendencies and giving them opportunities to learn about the difference sciences and work in those areas. When students try to do activities, that’s what helps them hold on to the experience.

“You learn and you watch the butterfly grow,” says Jemison. “You look at the cocoon and the chrysalis and you see what happens to the butterfly. You wire the house so you can see electrical pathways and understand when something is parallel or in series. Those are the things you remember.”

Another important component is making

the lessons relevant, she adds.

Part of the TEWS curriculum is to give students open-ended questions. According to Jemison, it’s about letting students use

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their own innate motivation and creativity.

During the Roosevelt activity, students presented solutions that ranged from people getting tax breaks for using alternative ener-

gy production sources in their homes to having a pollution police that forces polluters to do community service.

Jemison says that while the solutions were important, she and the environmental scientists really stressed the process. They wanted students to think about things and hold on to the information.

“One of the most exciting things that happened to me this afternoon is when one of the young women came up to me and said she’s on the sustainability council at her school and this gave her some different ideas and different ways to think about things,” says Jemison. “Even the environmental scientists that we had there said that they had an opportunity to think about the world a little bit differently as they interacted with students.”