

Juneteenth

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daughter, Jenelle Jack, has chosen to keep her grandmother's dream alive by organizing and educating Oregonians about this too-often overlooked part of history.

The Skanner News spoke with Jack about the story behind the Oregon celebration, carrying on her grandmother's

had dementia and Alzheimer's so she handed it over to my cousin, Doris Rush.

And then with grandma, she passed in October. I know that Juneteenth was her baby as well as her food program with the Church. In her last couple of days I just told her, "Grandma, don't

“Juneteenth is not a hot topic, but it is history and I think it is important that everyone knows this part of history

dream and her hopes to bring the community together. This year's celebration will take place June 18, from noon until 7 p.m. at Legacy Emanuel field at the corner of NE Williams and Graham streets. This interview has been edited for space and clarity.

The Skanner News: What is the history behind the Juneteenth Oregon celebration?

Jenelle Jack: My grandmother is from Muskogee, Oklahoma. She moved to Portland in 1945 and was working in the shipyards. Back in Oklahoma they celebrated Juneteenth every year, but during Juneteenth up here in Oregon, she asked, "Is there a celebration?" and she said that nobody knew about it.

So, she went to the supervisor and asked during their lunch break if they were able to celebrate Juneteenth and he said yes. Ever since then, she started celebrating Juneteenth here in Oregon and trying to make it aware to everybody.

TSN: How did you come to organize the Portland Juneteenth celebration?

JJ: A couple of years ago I helped her out with Juneteenth and then she started getting sick. She

worry, we'll make sure that Juneteenth still continues here in Oregon."

My cousin Doris' mom passed away in February and so I just took over. I know what she is going through because of what I went through with losing Grandma. Now both matriarchs are gone.

It is hard, but I think me working on Juneteenth has helped with my grieving process. My grandmother lived with me until she passed away.

TSN: What goes into putting on this event?

JJ: It's a lot. With being my first year, it is a lot. And the time we had to put it together wasn't enough. But, with a death in the family, we got to push for it. We got a lot of my cousins to help out. It was just reaching everyone.

There was a lot of people that we talked to that weren't aware of what Juneteenth was. Reaching out to them and getting their support, we made them aware and gave information out about Juneteenth, which interested them into getting to know more and helping us out in the effort.

Read the rest of this story at TheSkanner.com

Pride

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do massacre, Pride Northwest and the Q Center of Portland will hold a candlelight vigil in honor of those who died. The vigil will take place from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday at Q Center on N. Mississippi Ave.

There will be beefed up security this year as well. Acting Portland Police Chief Donna Henderson has asked for

“We're not going to hide, we're not going to run, we're not going to be victims

an increased police presence during Portland Pride Week events. The Portland Police Bureau will perform extra patrols around LGBTQ-friendly bars and nightclubs.

The Orlando shooting is being investigated as an act of domestic terrorism. The FBI Portland Division issued a statement saying there was "no credi-

ble threat" to LGBTQ communities in Oregon, but they urge people to report any suspicious activity to law enforcement.

Porta said Pride NW organizers have been actively working with their security officials and the Portland Police Bureau to provide a safe place to celebrate. She said PPB has been very engaged and proactive at reaching out to the community.

"Pride is typically safe to begin with -- the festival and the parade -- but we are in active communication and planning to ensure that continues to be the case," Porta said.

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales released a statement Sunday morning

asking for the people of Portland to come and show their support of the queer community.

"I'm calling on all Portlanders to hold our LGBTQ community close, and come out in a show of force against terrorizing people because of who they love," Hales said. On Monday, Hales removed the Oregon state flag from city hall and replaced it with a rainbow flag to honor the victims of Orlando.

Porta said discussions in the community are split between people being worried for their personal safety and wanting to come together to grieve. She said the overwhelming response is from those who want to stand up and defend their right to love freely and openly.

"We're not going to hide, we're not going to run, we're not going to be victims," Porta said. "We are going to cel-

Organizers of Portland Pride events are reeling after a mass shooting killed 49 people and injured 53 more at a LGBT nightclub in Orlando, Fla., but say they are determined to forge ahead with this year's Pride festivities. In this photo from 2012, a Multnomah County vehicle joins that year's Pride parade.

celebrate each other, we are going to celebrate our community and we are going to celebrate Pride."



PHOTO COURTESY BOISE/ELIOT ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

One North Celebration

The Boise and Eliot neighborhoods in North Portland are getting a new public space, and to welcome the community into the courtyard. One North is throwing a summer gathering in the style of a classic neighborhood block party. On Saturday this event will celebrate the past, present, and future of the North Williams/Vancouver corridor with music provided by Ural Thomas & the Pain, Farnell Newton & the Othership Connection, and Andre St. James (Sponsored by R&H Construction). There will also be art presented by The Black Williams Project and historic walking tours given by neighborhood historian OB Hill (pictured). Also performing and contributing to the Summer Party will be groups such as the Life Change Church, KairosPDX, The Center, Art in the Alley provided by the Boise Neighborhood Association, The Williams/Vancouver Business Association, and the North/Northeast Business Association. Also on hand will local food and drink provided by New Seasons Market, Las Primas, Bread & Honey Café, and Whole Bowl. This free event takes place from 2 to 6 p.m. at the Courtyard at One North, located at N. Fremont between Williams and Vancouver.

Poverty

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"For the past six years, Paul Ryan and House Republican budget policies have made life worse, not better, for lower income Americans. Assaults on health-care, housing, food stamps, and education have slowly eroded essential assistance," said Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-Oregon) said in a statement to The Skanner News. "Ryan's latest proposal continues this downward spiral, and would accelerate the dangerous effort to establish block grants, making it easier to further cut and reduce these critical and lifesaving programs."

"We feel like it is a deeply flawed proposal. It's great that the speaker is thinking about poverty and Congress intends to address poverty but this is not the way to do it," said Jeff Kleen, a public policy advocate for the Oregon Food Bank.

The plan recommends stronger work requirements under the

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, expanded work requirements for those on housing assistance, as well as a call for states tailor programs individually. The plan does not mention changing Social Security specifically, but does call for increased access to 401(k)s, basic banking services and retirement planning services that work for low and middle-income people. For more information on plan requirements, visit <http://abetterway.speaker.gov/>.

One change that stood out to Kleen is that Ryan's plan would change the way supplemental nutritional assistance programs -- also called SNAP -- are funded.

Right now, SNAP budgets are elastic, meaning they change depending on the state of the economy. Ryan's plan would fund food assistance programs using a block grant model, which has the potential of depleting funds during an economic downturn and leaving struggling families without this form of assistance.

While one of the philosophical tenets of the plan is to reward work, Kleen said programs like SNAP have a history of lifting people out of poverty, so cutting them doesn't square with available research.

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