

Memorial will honor clergyman who guided city in a rough time

■ The Rev. John Jackson, honored as part of Black History Month, was a factor in cooling strife over busing in the '70s

By OSKER SPICER
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A man who played a key role in helping Portland settle a fight over school desegregation and busing in the 1970s will be honored with a memorial to his life and work.

The dedication to the late Rev. John H. Jackson, pastor of Mount Olivet Baptist Church, is scheduled for Feb. 14. It will be an unveiling of a permanent display in the foyer of Jackson Hall on Portland Community College-Cascade Campus. The hall is named for the civil rights leader.

A three-phase symposium, "The History of African-Americans in Portland," runs from noon to 5 p.m. Feb. 14 — the third anniversary of Jackson's death — at PCC-Cascade, 705 N. Killingsworth St. It's sponsored by the newly formed Cascade Community History Center and will feature a forum and reception in addition to the dedication.

The event honoring Jackson is one of many in Portland celebrating Black History Month.

Jackson, who was 81 when he died of a stroke, is remembered for many things, including his insight and sense of purpose.

"There was never a time when he



THE REV. JOHN JACKSON

would waver on the issues," said Ben Priestley, director of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, who worked closely with Jackson during the early days of the Black United Front. "He was a bit of a guiding light for many of us who were younger and more impatient in those days. He had a solid sense of what the civil rights movement was really all about."

During the late 1970s Portland was in the midst of a fight over desegregation and busing. The Black United Front, with Jackson and Ron Herndon as co-chairmen, called for a student boycott of Portland Public Schools. Nearly three-fourths of Portland's 7,000 black students stayed home, and the move created the momentum that led to many changes in the school system, including the building of Harriet Tubman Middle School.

Portland is celebrating Black History Month with a blend of revolutionary reflections, silver-screen

projections and kitchen-counter collections.

Among the activities will be talks and book signings by former Black Panther leader Bobby Seale, the seventh annual Cascade Festival of African Films and an exhibit, "Cookie Jars and Other Collectibles."

Seale, who will speak at two events Feb. 28, will discuss the birth of the Black Panther movement and the impact it has had on American society. He is a volunteer community liaison with Temple University's Department of African & African-American Studies.

The cornerstone of the Cascade Community History Center's collection will be Jackson's papers, including letters, sermons, photographs, awards and a personal library. The collection also contains correspondence from President Carter, the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., Coretta Scott King, the Rev. Ralph D. Abernathy and former Oregon governors Neil Goldschmidt and Mark Hatfield.

Project coordinator Linda Elegant said the center also will contain other papers, photographs and artifacts documenting the history of Portland's black community.

The historical materials are in a campus office, but plans call for a \$1.4 million history center in the PCC Cascade South Annex on Killingsworth Street, near Jefferson High School.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH EVENTS

The following is a list of events celebrating Black History Month. If you know of other activities to include in this calendar you can fax information to The Oregonian's City Life team at 294-5023. Please include your name and phone number:

TODAY

■ The Interstate Firehouse Cultural Center presents "Voices in Stone," an exhibition of Shona stone sculpture, tapestries and batik imported from Zimbabwe by Samuel and Judy Bryant. The exhibit opens with a free reception from 5:30-7:30 p.m. and remains on view at the center, 5340 N. Interstate Ave., through Feb. 28.

FRIDAY

■ The seventh annual Cascade Festival of African Films will open with Med Hondo's Mauritanian epic "Sarraounia: The Warrior Queen" at 7:30 p.m. at the Act III Lloyd Cinemas, 1510 N.E. Multnomah St. The festival continues through March 8.

■ David Peck will present "A Tribute to 'Soul!'" — a video review of the groundbreaking, black-oriented public television show that aired during the late 1960s and early '70s. The 7 p.m. screening at the Northwest Film Center, 1219 S.W. Park Ave. will be followed by a discussion featuring Darrell Millner, a black studies professor at Portland State University, Art Alexander, an independent writer and video producer. Admission is \$6, or \$5 for older adults, students and Portland Art Museum members. The video segment will be repeated at 2 p.m. Saturday.

■ Playwright Jeff Stetson's "The Meeting," depicting a fictitious meeting between Muslim minister Malcolm X and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., 7 p.m., PSU's Smith Center, Room 355, 1825 S.W. Broadway. Admission is \$3.

SATURDAY

■ "Gospel Explosion," a musical featuring

community choirs, 6 p.m. at St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church, 8101 N. Fiske Ave. Free with a canned-food donation.

■ An exhibit of "Cookie Jars and Other Collectibles," featuring black kitchen articles and other memorabilia from the collection of Reberita McGee-Fitz, will be displayed from 1:30 to 3 p.m. at Vessels Tableware with Meaning, 2605 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.

WEDNESDAY

■ Radical Women will present a free screening and discussion on "A Passion for Justice: A Documentary Video about the Life of Ida B. Wells-Barnett" at 7 p.m. at the Northwest Service Center Community Room, 1819 N.W. Everett St. A Southern-style supper will be served at 6:30 p.m. for a \$5 donation. Wells-Barnett was a pioneering black journalist, educator, anti-lynching activist and founder of the nation's first black women's club. For more information or to secure child-care services during the event, call 228-3090 at least two days in advance.

FRIDAY, FEB. 14

■ A symposium on "The History of African-Americans in Portland" will run from noon to 5 p.m. at Portland Community College-Cascade Campus, 705 N. Killingsworth St. Five scholarly papers will be presented at Terrell Hall, Room 122. Presenters include: Elizabeth McLagan, author of "Peculiar Paradise: A History of Blacks in Oregon 1788-1940"; Rudy Pearson of American River College in Sacramento and author of "African-Americans in Portland During the 1940s"; Kimberly Moreland, author of "History of Portland's African-American Community, 1895 to the Present." Following the forum, at 3 p.m., Dian Jackson, widow of the late Rev. John Jackson; Ben Priestley, director of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, and Ron Herndon, community activist and educator, will reflect on John Jackson's life.

■ "A Valentine's Evening of Jazz," a semi-formal dance, will be sponsored by the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity from 8:30 p.m. to midnight at PSU's Smith Center Ballroom, Room 355. Call the Black Cultural Affairs Board at 725-5660 for admission information.

SATURDAY, FEB. 15

■ The Bosco-Milligan Foundation will outline its continuing effort to identify local buildings and sites associated with black individuals, institutions and events during a community meeting from 10 a.m. to noon at Mount Sinai Community Baptist Church, 602 N.E. Prescott St. The session will feature a slide show, workshop and refreshments to encourage more people to share their experiences, memories and photographs for an expanded version of the 1995 publication "Cornerstones of Community: Buildings of Portland's African-American History." The new edition will be developed by September. For more information call the foundation office at 231-7264.

SATURDAY, FEB. 22

■ The seventh annual Cascade Festival of African Films continues with Family Film Day, which offers three films for children, at 2 p.m.

FRIDAY, FEB. 28

■ Ex-Black Panther leader Bobby Seale will address forums at PCC-Cascade and Portland State University. Seale, co-founder and former chairman of the Black Panther Party during the late 1960s and '70s, will speak in the PCC-Cascade auditorium from 1:15-2:15 p.m. and at 8:15 p.m. on the same date at PSU's Smith Center Ballroom, Room 355. A \$5 admission fee is required for the PSU lecture, and organizers are requesting a canned-food donation to the Oregon Food Bank for admission to the PCC presentation.