



A Publication of the Eliot Neighborhood Association
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Summer 2022

Reclaiming Black Joy:

A PARK-BASED CULTURAL ACTIVATION & CREATIVE PLACEMAKING INITIATIVE

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What are Portland Public Schools up to at Harriet Tubman?

By Bryan Chu

In Portland Public Schools — the largest school district in the whitest big city in the United States of America — tone policing, respectability politics, and decorum have no place in any boardroom, staffroom, classroom, or hyper-racialized white space where anyone — especially a person of the global majority like myself — speaks truth to power and has to defend themselves against the mostly white and passive aggressive Portland polite backlash that follows when refusing to submit to the fragile dominant status quo.

Portland Public Schools claims that community input drives all of their decisions. They claim that community engagement matters. They claim that student voice matters. They claim that Black Lives Matter, and yet they ignored Harriet Tubman Middle School parents, community members, and students who gave testimony at school board meetings, occupied the central office, made demands, asked questions, and walked out week after week to protest the racist retaliation perpetrated against me as well as the harm being done to the community and themselves.

This was the direct result of Portland Public Schools rash decision to rip me away from my classroom, my students, and a school already in crisis which, according to Interim Principal Kevin Bacon, “took it to a whole new stratosphere.”

If you understand the psychology that justified lynchings & witch hunts, and you are aware that we live in a state that was founded on the idea of becoming an all-white utopia, then you must also know how white supremacy operates and what it does to those who oppose it, then you understand why on April 1, 2022, Portland Public Schools placed me on

leave.
It’s been almost three months, and neither the district — Portland Public Schools (PPS) — nor the union — Portland Association of Teachers (PAT) — has said a word.
If what you’ve just read offends you, then you’re part of the problem.

Comprehensive Distance Learning and Hybrid were challenging as we figured out how to adapt to our personal and professional lives on screens in quarantine. We persevered. But coming back in person from the isolation and alienation of the pandemic has made this the most difficult year ever, and at a time when pulling communities together made the most sense, PPS did the exact opposite. Instead of mitigating trauma, they inflicted it. Instead of supporting teachers, they targeted us. Instead of removing obstacles, there are those in the district who are less competent and paid a lot more for jobs less important — who have always been the obstacle and indeed need to be removed.

I’m talking about the out-of-town vagabond policy hustlers, like Superintendent Guadalupe Guerrero, who think democratic institutions should be run like private corporations, and with the help of a highly melanated morally bankrupt school board, will use our tax dollars to pay for expensive new schools instead of providing custodians a living wage to maintain the new buildings and keep them clean.

The same way predatory philanthropists, like Julia Brim Edwards (Nike/ Nike School Innovation Fund / AVID) and Amy Kohnstamm (Timberline / All

(Harriet Tubman, on page 3)

This Old House on Morris

By Don Iler

A sunny Sunday morning in February. A knock at the door about a month and a half after we moved in. A man stood at the door with a cellphone with some photos and some questions.

“My great grandmother grew up in this house,” the man said. He had driven up from California the day before. He was in the midst of writing about his family’s history and wanted to know what we knew about the house.

Not a heck of a lot, I had to concede. My wife and I had purchased the house from some flippers and besides finding a paper on the PSU website called “Cornerstones of Community: Buildings of Portland’s African American History” referencing the house as where the Black Education Center first got started in Portland, we didn’t know

a whole lot. As the dust settled from our move, I dove into a quest to learn more about our house and its unique place in Portland history.

Just as the Eliot neighborhood has had its ups and downs through the decades, so has our house on Morris Street. Families lived, died, celebrated, learned, cried, and laughed here. And while our house’s history is unique, it also reflects the changes the neighborhood has gone through the past 120 years.

Before our house at 63 NE Morris Street was built, before the lot it was built on was platted from farmland, before the farmland had been tilled, the land around Eliot had been the traditional land of the Multnomah, Clackamas, and other indigenous people. The

(This Old House, on page 5)

Eliot Neighborhood Association

The Eliot Neighborhood Association represents a geographic area of the city. We want everyone to feel welcome on the streets, parks, schools, homes and businesses in Eliot. That includes those that live in the area now, those that have been displaced from the area and those that are merely visiting.

The Eliot Neighborhood Association is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization whose members are the residents and business owners of the Eliot Neighborhood. Its purpose is to inform Eliot residents about issues affecting the neighborhood through meetings, newsletters and other activities. Members of the neighborhood association must be over 14 years old and live, own property, have a business, or represent a nonprofit within the neighborhood. The Eliot Neighborhood Association was founded in 1969. It is recognized by the City of Portland, is a member of the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods, Inc., and its members represent Eliot on other committees.

Eliot Board

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Committees:

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- Livability Team Chair - Jody Guth - jodyguth@gmail.com 971-320-8594

Eliot Monthly Meetings

Meetings of the Eliot Neighborhood Association are held on the third Monday of each month at 7:00 pm St. Philip the Deacon Church, 120 NE Knott Street (due to COVID-19 mandatory guidelines, check agenda online for Virtual Meeting information at https://eliotneighborhood.org/category/meeting-agenda/). It’s a great opportunity to meet your neighbors, stay informed, help build a stronger community, and have input into city decisions that may effect you.

All meetings are open to the public. All meetings are currently held via ZOOM.

- Land Use Meeting - July 11th, 7:00-8:30pm
- Neighborhood Meeting - July 18th, 7:00-8:30pm
- Land Use Meeting - August 8th, 7:00-8:30pm
- Neighborhood Meeting - August 15th, 7:00-8:30pm
- Land Use Meeting - September 12th, 7:00-8:30pm
- Neighborhood Meeting - September 19th, 7:00-8:30pm

For agendas and more information, see www.eliotneighborhood.org

Eliot News

Eliot News is published four times a year by the Eliot Neighborhood Association. It is mailed free of charge to every address in the neighborhood. It does not have an ISBN or ISSN.

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Rights to articles are retained by the author. Opinions of the authors do not necessarily reflect the official positions of the Eliot Neighborhood Association. Letters to the editor, suggestions or comments: news@eliotneighborhood.org

ELIOT NEWS AD RATES

The Eliot News has a circulation of about 3,700 and is mailed quarterly to all of the homes and businesses in the Eliot neighborhood. Ad deadlines are 3/8, 6/8, 9/8, and 12/8.

Category	Size	1x	2x	3x	4x
1/16 Page	4.9” W x 1.8” H	\$42	\$76	\$104	\$126
1/8 Page	4.9” W x 3.8” H	\$84	\$152	\$208	\$252
1/4 Page	4.9” W x 7.8” H	\$168	\$305	\$416	\$504
1/2 Page	10” W x 7.8” H	\$355	\$645	\$880	\$1,067
Full Page	10” W x 15.8” H	\$710	\$1,291	\$1,760	\$2,134

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Letter from the Editor

By Elliott Armstrong

Many individuals within the Eliot neighborhood community are sharing their thoughts! Recently, following the Safety and Livability Meeting at the Matt Dishman Community Center in March, nearly 40 Eliot neighbors and community partners participated in a Zoom call in the first Neighborhood Safety and Livability Collaborative to further discuss ways to address some of the problems that the Eliot neighborhood faces every day. It’s safe to say that vandalism, drug markets, homelessness, theft, and disturbing behaviors are on the rise. These problems are pervasive throughout Portland. We are experiencing declines in mental health, in community, in enforcement of our laws, in traffic safety, and in relations with the Police. This Zoom call was a great next step and chance for neighbors and partners to get to know each other better.

Many of us are concerned and want to work together to feel safe in our own community. In the Zoom call, when asked what would make Eliot feel safer to you, these were some of the responses. Being able to go the playground at Dawson Park, no more gun violence, less drug activity, slower streets, would like to feel safe to have my teen kids coming and going from our house, all streets walkable, more police presence, knowing more neighborhood residents, slow down traffic on Stanton, coordinated reporting to city, holistically addressing open air drug markets, if everyone on this Zoom chose one thing we can all do to improve the atmosphere of the area and build a relationship with folks at

the park, traffic calming, block captains, active presence of Portland Street Response to provide non-police supportive services. Most of the Zoom participants agreed that we need to work together as a community for various solutions to these topics.

Neighbors and community partners are actively working together to present a Safety Summit that will occur over the summer. The goal is to unite the community with solutions to reimagine public safety in Eliot. Speakers at the summit will include representatives from the city including Portland Street Response and the PPB Neighborhood Response Team to address mental health, addictions, and housing. Other (See Letter From the Editor, page 7)

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Your Eliot Real state Report from...

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51 NE Ivy St	3	1	1972	\$525,000
32 NE Graham St	4	2.1	2535	\$739,000
Pending Listings				
535 NE Stanton St	2	2	2216	\$635,000
22 NE Cook St	3	2.1	1792	\$678,000
23 NE Cook St	3	1.1	1971	\$680,000
113 NE Fargo St	3	2.1	2042	\$699,000
232 NE Fargo St	3	1.1	3212	\$749,000
Sold Listings				
2850 NE Rodney Ave	2	1	1832	\$587,000
607 NE Stanton St	4	2	3085	\$610,000
112 NE Fargo St	4	2	2496	\$750,000

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INTERNATIONAL REALTY

(Harriet Tubman, from page 1)

Hands Raised / Mercy Corps), both former school board chairs, rushed to fill Harriet Tubman Middle School with black bodies knowing full well that if ODOT’s (Oregon Department of Transportation) plan to expand the I-5 Freeway moved forward, we could not remain in the building.

They knew they could get more money if the vacant building was occupied. So, they doubled down on displacement and used the affluence of the Sabin and Irvington communities, the melanin of the King and Boise-Eliot Humboldt communities, and Harriet Tubman’s name as a bargaining chip to secure an unprecedented \$120,000,000 from Governor Kate Brown and the State.

They forgot that the job of elected public servants, at the most basic level, is to ensure a safe learning environment where teachers can provide all students —students of the global majority in particular — access to a high quality, culturally relevant education.

Harriet Tubman Middle School has been in crisis since reopening in 2018 despite all the frameworks, resolutions, and policies passed by the school board, and next year — for the fifth year — we will be in start up once again.

It’s clear we were never meant to succeed.

The disaster capitalists and their cronies have seized the opportunity to take advantage of the district-induced crisis in order to turn Portland Public Schools into their own personal ATMs. They care more about money and Harriet Tubman Middle School — the building — than the students inside of it. They want our money to fund their nonprofits, charter schools, and line their own pockets at the expense of our children and their future.

Relocation is to Harriet Tubman Middle School as modernization is to Jefferson High School, as displacement was to Vanport, and as gentrification is to Albina.

They’re using new euphemisms to obscure the same old systematic forced removal of Black families, which is just a euphemism for gentrification, which is just a euphemism for white supremacy.

Who is Harriet Tubman Middle School & Jefferson High School really being relocated and modernized for?

The past is not the past: it’s still with us and Portland Public Schools has never fully come to terms with the role they have played and the role they continue to play in this ongoing process.

Does Portland Public Schools and the Albina Vision Trust’s master plan ex-

tend so far into the future that both organizations are unable, or unwilling, to see what’s happening right in front of them?

How can they talk about building a Center for Black Excellence while turning a blind eye to the Black excellence that walked out of their school’s week after week?

How can they talk about building Centers for Black Student Excellence while Harriet Tubman Middle School burns to the ground?

Portland Public Schools has always been an imperialist capitalist white supremacist cis hetero patriarchal system. So make no mistake: it’s not broken and is doing exactly what it was designed to do, which is to place profit over people and planet.

Racial equity, climate justice, and social justice has never been the color “Greene” Herman and Michelle, stop giving the white folks on the school board “De Pass.” because Black capitalism, at the end of the day, is still capitalism where wealth is generated for a few at the top by exploiting those at the bottom, and that wealth never trickles down.

But if we’ve learned anything from history, we understand that we — not them — are the system, and we have the power to determine how the system operates, and we haven’t been using our power to its fullest potential.

My students and I are here to make history, not repeat it, which is why I fight for my students, and they fight for me (In Lak’ech), and we will do so by any means necessary because we understand that schools are a microcosm of society, and if we want society to get better, then what we do inside the classroom has to be better than the world outside of it.

Portland Public Schools, the chickens have finally come home to roost, and in this moment, history will not absolve those who stand on the wrong side of it. When a young Black child asks if you care and you answer with silence, it tells us everything we need to know. To say nothing says something, and your indifference and apathy has taught my students to trust their own moral authority — to do what’s right — and they understand it’s always the right time to do what’s right. Their defiance is a courageous act of love. Their indignation, unbending will and rebel spirit: a beautiful gift that brings honor to our school and to Harriet Tubman’s name.

For now, my job at Harriet Tubman Middle School is done. My students stand on the right side of history, and I stand in solidarity with them. They’re not asking for your permission, neither am I. We’re taking back Portland Public Schools, and this is why we’ve already won.

school that the superintendent and school board “granted” to the community. No. It was the result of mass meetings, boycotts, and threatened boycotts of school, of disruptions of school board meetings — leading, only reluctantly, to the PPS hierarchy agreeing that there should be a middle school in Portland’s African American community — and named after a woman, who, herself, was an icon of resistance to established authority and defiance of unjust laws. The Black United Front fought not only for the establishment of the school, but also for this and other Portland schools to have a curriculum that told the truth about U.S. history, that respected our students’ lives, and that regarded young peo-

ple as intellectuals, as artists, as activists. At the time of the struggle to create Tubman Middle School, both of us were teachers at Jefferson High School; we cheered on the inspirational organizing of the community to right historic wrongs.

Today, it seems that the school district is showing contempt for this history — and is treating our grandson and his classmates’ education as expendable. Many HTMS students gave powerful testimony at the recent School Board Meeting about the crisis and the need for the district to take action, including Nimah Crews, Radah Wiley Sood, and Chloe Wolfson. Xavier has lost six teachers this year — from resignations, from leaves of absence, but also from school district decisions to suspend teachers for actions that, ironically, mirror those that led to the creation of the school to begin with. As longtime Portland educators, as community members, and as grandparents of a Tubman student, this is intolerable. Clearly, teachers do not leave at this rate unless the situation at the school is untenable.

Here is what we believe PPS administrators should do:

1. Effective immediately: Reinstate Bryan Chu and Mike Salmon. As students have testified, Mr. Chu and Mr. Salmon provide curricular homes and safe spaces. At a time when many teachers have left and students are rebelling against the number of substitutes, we need teachers, like Mr. Chu and Mr. Salmon, in the building.

2. Effective immediately: Bring content specialists into classrooms. We understand the substitute shortage, so we expect the district to think outside and inside the box to find content specialists to fill the class-

rooms. Which TOSAs and district administrators can move to Tubman to give our students eight weeks of education? Which retired teachers can be brought back to the classroom? Which schools of education have student teachers who can provide extra support to classroom teachers?

3. Spring 2022: Administrative team. We want the district to secure an administrative team that has a proven local track record to rebuild Tubman as an institution of learning with a strong administrative and teaching staff.

4. School Year 2022–2023: Increase the number of teachers to ensure lower class sizes. Our teachers deserve more planning time as well as time to work with students in smaller settings because Tubman students’ education has been disrupted twice: first by the pandemic and again by a school district that has contributed to making Tubman a school in crisis.

We are not critical of administrators at Tubman. From our vantage point, it is the district administration that has behaved irresponsibly and has put at risk the education of our grandson and his fellow students. We expect a reply in writing from PPS administrators.

Sincerely,

Linda Christensen (Director of the Oregon Writing Project at Lewis & Clark College — lmc@lclark.edu;

Bill Bigelow (Curriculum Editor, Rethinking Schools Magazine; Co-Director, Zinn Education Project — bill@rethinkingschools.org;

Gloves Off, Joe!

By Brian Greer

Okay, we get it. Throughout your career, you have characterized yourself as a person willing to make sincere efforts to embrace bipartisanship. You have even tried to do that during your Presidency. But it cannot be done if the other party refuses to engage. It is like a football game in which one team refuses to go on the field, and instead wrecks the stadium and kidnaps the referee. And, by the way, “subpoena” means “under penalty” but how many of the refusers have been penalized?

In five months, the mid-term elections will be the ultimate watershed moment. Anything short of a resounding Democratic victory, including a filibuster-proof senate, is likely to be the final nail in the next-but-one generation’s collective coffin as Mother Nature responds to her rape with climate catastrophe, pandemics, and other global defences. The

same will happen in the United States to those who are not shot at their school desks or while grocery shopping.

Stop pulling your verbal punches. People who, following intense legal scrutiny that threw up essentially nothing, refuse to accept your democratic election and commit or promote violence on that pretext are guilty of treason. Those who spread lies, whether knowing them to be lies or not undertaking due diligence in checking their veracity, are enemies of the people. This comment applies particularly to those who make a lot of money thereby. Assuming my information is correct, Tucker Carlson is paid \$35,000,000 a year by Fox; by comparison, Judas Iscariot got a measly 30 pieces of silver.

You are a Roman Catholic who does not

(Gloves Off, Joel, on page 6)

A Letter to Portland Public Schools

By Linda Christensen and Bill Bigelow

Dear Portland Public Schools administrators,

Our grandson, Xavier King Hertel, is a 7th-grade student at Harriet Tubman Middle School. We are dismayed and angered by how PPS is handling events at Harriet Tubman. District administrators seem to be treating personnel issues there in a cavalier manner, with little regard for the welfare or education of Tubman students and staff.

It is worth beginning with some background. The very existence of Harriet Tubman Middle School is the product of struggle from Portland’s Black community, led by the Black United Front. This was not a



Support local food producers at the King Farmers Market!

Back for its 13th season at NE 7th Avenue & NE Wygant Street, the [King](#)

[Farmers Market](#) has a selection of local farmers, ranchers, fishers, cheese-makers, food artisans, nurseries, flower growers, live music, and hot food vendors each **Sunday from 10 am to 2 pm** through November 20th.

How to Research Your Home

By Don Iler

You move into an old house, and you wonder who used to live here? What customs did they follow? What holidays did they celebrate? What languages did they speak? So much of life is lived in the home, and these questions left me wanting to know more about our home and the stories it could tell.

I embarked on a journey the past few months to research the history of our house after a chance visit with a descendent of a former resident and some conversations with neighbors. Although I got lucky with a lot of the information I learned, you too can find oodles of history about your house, like who lived there, what they did for work, where they went to church, and even details on the house’s structure itself over the decades.

Here are some step-by-step instructions to find out more about the history of your home:

To do the research, first, you’re going to need a Multnomah County Library card. If you live in Eliot, your closest library is the Albina Library, conveniently located a block away from Dishman Community Center on Knott near MLK. Having a library card and speaking with librarians will make your quest a lot easier.

1. Check and see if your house is in the “History of Albina” book by Roy Roos. The Albina Library has a copy of the book. Many homes and commercial properties in the neighborhood are profiled, but some aren’t, which

was the case for my house. The book does include a general history of the neighborhood, focusing on its early development. It’s a decent read if you want to get nerdy about the neighborhood’s history.

2. Figure out your pre-1934 address. Portland renamed and renumbered its addresses in the early 1930s, so your house’s address likely hasn’t always been the same. To find your old address, go downtown to the Central Library (take the 4, 6 or 44 bus so you don’t have to worry about parking). On the third floor, they have a copy of an old but hard to use address book that correlates the old and new addresses. It’s kind of wonky to use, but it works. Alternatively, if you don’t want to go downtown, you can use the library’s online database of Sanborn maps. The Sanborn maps are old fire insurance maps that show what was on every plot of land in the city including porches, additions, sheds, garages, etc. Look at the maps for 1928-1950. Find your house plot, and the number below your current house number is your pre-1934 house number.

3. Find out who lived in your house. Again, this will require a trip to the third floor of the Central Library to use old city directories. They have directories from 1901-1985 and from 2011 on. From 1928 on, all you need is the address. For those printed before 1928, you need the last name of the person who lived in the house, making them slightly less useful unless you can find other clues. Use your old address for the pre-1934 directories.

The directories will tell you who lived at the address, and if you look up the person’s last name in the front of the directory, you can find out their profession and where they worked. The 1949 directory even includes the type of car owned by the family who lived there. Some years are missing, for example, the World War II era directories weren’t printed due to supply chain issues during the war.

4. Search the *Oregonian* and *Oregon Journal* databases on the Multnomah County library’s website. You’ll need your library card to access the database, but it’s free to access once you’re logged in. Type in your address using quotes and try multiple ways, for example “123 NE Whatever” then try “123 NE Whatever St.” Don’t forget to also look up the old address. Make sure you use quotation marks otherwise you’ll get a lot of garbage. You’ll pull up fun stuff, most likely birth announcements, weddings and funerals, and the occasional news story when someone in your house did something newsworthy. You’ll also find old classified ads or when it was up for sale or when they were offering rooms for rent. You can use that information to piece together more of your home’s history. Once you get a few residents’ names you can search them as well.

5. If you really want to get in the weeds, the census records hold a treasure trove of information and luckily, it’s oftentimes easier to look by location than name. You can see who else was living in the house, where they were born, what languages they spoke,

and when they became a naturalized citizen. The 1940 census also tells you how much they made, and where they were living in 1935. The 1940 census is easy to access on the census.gov website and is easiest to search by location than by person’s name. For other years, you can use genealogy websites to see the census data. You also can see who lived on the block and how it changed overtime. The 1950 census data was just recently released and is a treasure trove of information as the Eliot neighborhood was in the middle of a big transition.

6. Look at the Portland City Archive website. The city took a lot of random photos over the years. Maybe your house came up in a meeting at some point. A lot of the images are posted on the website, and if not, you can submit a request to have them post the images if you find a record in the archives. I was able to find photos of Morris and Stanton streets in 1965, and although they did not include a photo of my house, I got to see what the street looked like back then along with some neighbor’s houses.

7. The Oregon Historical Society, besides having an awesome museum that is free to Multnomah County residents, also has an archive. You can search their archive online and see what comes up. I found some really interesting oral history recordings on their website that had some cool info about my house.

8. Portlandmaps.com is also a good

(See **Research**, page 7)

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(This old House from page 1)

area around Portland contained 30 native villages at the time Lewis and Clark traveled through the area in 1804-1805.

When the city of Albina was first platted out in the 1870s, Morris Street formed the northern boundary of the new city east of the Willamette from Portland. While Albina continued its development, and additional tracts of land in the neighborhood were developed, the land between what is now Williams and Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard, and Morris and Fremont streets, remained undeveloped. A farmer, Harvey Hogue, did not want to sell the land to developers eager to turn his farmland into lots for houses and businesses. When the land finally sold in 1901, lots in the Williams Avenue Addition were snapped up quickly by buyers. One of those buyers was the family of George and Elizabeth Petersen, who built a plain, four-square house, our current home, in 1904.

George Petersen emigrated to the United States from Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, with his parents in 1874, moving around from Minnesota, to South Dakota, to Washington, settling with communities of German immigrants wherever they went. This period was the highpoint of German immigration to the United States, and many cities had large German immigrant populations.

In 1891, George Petersen moved south from Bellingham, Wash. The pastor of his church had put him in contact with the Ehret family in Portland, with whom he found lodging. In addition to finding a place to stay, George met his wife, Elizabeth Ehret and they married in 1891. Elizabeth had been born in Ohio; however, her parents were from Germany, her father Adam Ehret from Baden, her mother, Christina Koch, from Oldenburg. George and Elizabeth had three children together, Ruth, Walter, and Oscar.

The Petersens lived in several houses in Albina, one on Mallory and another on Garfield, before buying the house on Morris Street. This was common for many immigrant families in the neighborhood, with newcomers rooming with longer residents, then renting houses from other immigrant families before saving up to build their own house, according to Roy Roos’ *History of Albina*. *Roos also said that local churches often served as hubs for newly arrived immigrants, a place to find housing, jobs, and community.*

At the time, Albina was the polyglot landing spot for many different immigrant groups. Irish, Germans, Swedes, Volga Germans, Norwegians, and Finns all settled in the neighborhood. The 1910 Census shows that Morris Street between Rodney and Williams was populated mostly by immigrants from Germany, Ireland, and Sweden. Writing in 1985, Ruth Petersen Moore, recalled that she grew up speaking German at home, not learning English until she was five when her mother’s brother came to live with the family.

At the time, German speakers were numerous in Oregon, especially in Portland. According to census data, in 1900, nearly five percent of the population in Portland had been born in Germany, and in 1910 nearly one in 10 Portlanders were either immigrants from Germany or the offspring of Ger-

man immigrants, with 3.6 percent of the total population born in Germany. Germans in 1910 made up 17.1 percent of all foreign-born Portlanders and were by far the largest immigrant community in the state at the time.

As immigrants from Germany, the Petersens would have felt right at home in the neighborhood. Several German language churches were just around the corner from them. The family was very active in the German Methodist Episcopal Church; the building still stands at the corner of Rodney and Stanton. The church conducted services in German well into the 1930s, and George was a Sunday school teacher there. Ruth said the family attended band concerts in the park, much like how families to this day enjoy summer concerts in Dawson Park.

George Petersen worked as an iron molder at the Oregon Railroad and Navigation Company’s (now Union Pacific) Albina rail yards near the river under the Fremont Bridge. The rail yards were a hive of activity at the beginning of the century, employing hundreds of workers as railroading was a much more labor-intensive operation than it is now. On his walk to the railyard, he would have seen a streetcar on its way to St Johns chugging north on Williams. On Russell, he would have seen an electric streetcar on its way to the Steel Bridge and downtown. Russell would have been a hive of commercial activity, with shops, clubs, taverns, and offices, stretching from the railyard up to what is now Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Williams too would have been busy, with commercial development lining the street from Broadway to Killingsworth, sparked by the boom in streetcars in the city. Blocks that are now vacant, parking lots, or freeway, would have had homes filled with families, many of whom also worked at the rail yard.

Ruth attended Washington High School, now Revolution Hall, at SE Stark and 13th, the first one built in the city east of the Willamette. She wrote it took a good 30 minutes to walk there each day, which she did unless it was raining or snowing, in which case she paid the nickel fare and took the streetcar. One of the highlights of her childhood memories was the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition, and she recalled collecting many souvenirs from the exposition and visiting again and again on Saturdays during the last few weeks before it closed, as it was free to children. The exposition was located in what is now the industrial area in Northwest Portland and was responsible for the biggest population boom in Portland’s history up until that time, with many moving to the city as a result of the exposition.

Ruth said the house on Morris Street was the first one the family lived in that had lights, running water, and an indoor toilet. The family kept chickens in the backyard, and when the house was listed for sale in 1944, it noted the backyard’s potential for having a large victory garden.

In high school during her summer vacation, Ruth got her first job at the Meier and Frank department store downtown. The next year, in 1911, she got hired as a clerk at a department store much closer to home, Kennard and Adams, on Williams near Russell. The department store was located in a building next to the Hill Block whose famous onion dome tops the gazebo at

Dining and Drinking in Eliot		
<u>Breakfast/Coffee/Cafés</u>		
Compass Coffee Roasting	3290 N Vancouver	(888) 723-2007
Dawn Patrol Coffee	670 N Russell	(971) 271-8151
Le Bontemps Café and Catering	2716 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 327-8162
Little Gotham Coffee	722 N Page St	
Pine State Biscuits	125 NE Schuyler	(503) 719-5357
Soul Lift Cacao	2601 NE MLK Jr.	(503)719-7519
Tiny’s Café	2031 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 467-4199
TwentySix Café	2723 NE 7th	(503) 284-6033
<u>Bars/Taverns</u>		
Bill Ray’s Dive	2210 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 287-7254
Cartside Tap House	1825 N Williams	(503) 327-8234
Cliff’s PDX	128 NE Russell	(503) 327-8234
Ex Novo	2326 N Flint	(503) 894-8251
Labrewatory	670 N Russell	(971) 271-8151
Sloan’s Tavern	36 N Russell	(503) 287-2262
Waypost	3120 N Williams	(503) 367-3182
Whey Bar	2225 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 284-3366
White Eagle Saloon	836 N Russell	(503) 282-6810
<u>Groceries and Markets</u>		
Chuck’s Market, J&S Grocery	2415 N Williams	(503) 281-6269
Jerusalem Rose Market	2948 NE MLK Jr.	
Knott St Grocery	2709 N 7th	(503) 284-7490
Merkato Ethiopian Food Store	2605 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 331-9283
New Seasons Market	3445 N Williams	(503) 528-2888
Shop N Go Mini Mart	2858 N Williams	(971) 506-5875
<u>Lunch/Dinner/Food Carts</u>		
Back Porch Provisions	1825 N Williams	(503) 523-9212
Better Half PDX	25 NE Fremont	(971) 347-3152
Izakaya Kichinto	102 NE Russell	(971) 255-0169
Jerusalem Rose Market	2948 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 805-2963
Killer Burger	325 NE Russell	(503) 477-6881
Ko Sisters Seoul Food	1825 N Williams	(503) 267-3918
Let’s Roll Sushi PDX	1825 N Williams	(503) 716-0126
Lottie and Zula’s	120 NE Russell	(503) 333-6923
Monkey Thai	3441 N Vancouver	(469) 922-9751
Mumbo Gumbo PDX	1825 N Williams	(503) 999-0819
OX	2225 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 284-3366
Pastas	3441 N Vancouver	(503) 832-8197
The People’s Pig	3217 N Williams	(503) 282-2800
Pepe Chile Taqueria & Catering	3441 N Vancouver	(503) 281-3340
Pocket Pub	2719 NE 7th Ave	(503) 287-3645
Popeye’s	3120 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 281-8455
PP Thai Food Cart	1825 N Williams	(503) 896-8855
Queen of Sheba	2413 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 287-6302
Shwarma Express	1825 N Williams	(971) 312-9702
Sizzle Pie	125 NE Schuyler	(503) 234-7437
Smokin Fire Fish	668 N Russell	(503) 432-8661
Sparky’s Pizza	2434 NE MLK Jr.	(503) 282-3000
Tamale Boy	668 N Russell	(503) 477-6706
Thai MLK	2222 OR 99E (MLK)	(971) 915-9246
Yaba Yabaa Mediterranean	1825 N Williams	(503) 754-8667

Dawson Park. The building that Kennard and Adams was located in was destroyed in 1971, when the city, Emanuel Hospital, and the Portland Development Commission (now Prosper Portland), condemned, demolished and cleared many city blocks around the hospital for a proposed hospital expansion that never materialized. That block has remained empty since its destruction 50 years ago and is currently a vacant field.

George Petersen died of cancer in the house in 1935, with Elizabeth moving to a care home for the last few years of her life. Their youngest child, Oscar took over the house, renting it out for a few years, before returning to live in it during World War II with his family.

In 1944, Oscar and his family moved out and sold the house, making them the last of the Petersen family to live on Morris Street.

By World War II, Albina and the Eliot neighborhood had begun to change from an immigrant melting pot, to a diverse, working-class neighborhood. However, forces were at play beyond the control of those living in the neighborhood. In the 1930s, the Homeowners Loan Corporation created maps of the housing stock of most major American cities, grading them by a color code. The Eliot neighborhood was given the least desirable grade, and colored in red, because of the “infiltration of subversive races” and described as

(See *This Old House*, page 6)

(This Old House from page 5)

“the nearest approach of a slum district in the city.” These redline maps lead to decades of racist housing policy by federal and local governments, and underinvestment in many communities, whereby neighborhoods described as undesirable because of who lived there could not receive loans, funding, or services to fix homes and buildings in the neighborhood creating a negative self-fulfilling cycle.

In 1945, a group of young women shared the house, my guess they most likely worked in war industries in the city, and as housing was hard to come by in the city, it was not uncommon to find many people sharing a house. Ruth Dilley and Margie Winger were looking for a roommate in 1945 and were hit by a car while walking down Williams by Stanton. They sustained minor injuries in the accident.

In 1947, George and Ruth Shafer lived in the house with their children and would live there for the next 10 years. George worked as a mechanic and sometimes as a driver. In 1947 an exasperated sounding Ruth wrote to the Oregon Journal newspaper asking if there was anyone out in the country who could take her three boys, ages 5, 7, and 9 off her hands for the summer. In 1949, the city directory lists them as owning a 1938 Buick. The Shafers had four more children while living on Morris Street.

In 1957, the house was listed for sale for \$5,200, approximately \$53,000 in today’s money when adjusted for inflation. Clevestine and Shirley Wesson moved into the house. The Wessons only lived in the house for two years, and their story later ended in tragedy. Clevestine murdered Shirley in the parking lot of the former Walnut Park Fred Meyer at Killingsworth and MLK in October 1970. He shot the mother of nine children three times with a pistol while she held her three-month-old child in her arms. Clevestine later plead guilty to second degree murder.

From 1960 to 1962, Mrs. Adeline Jeffries is listed in the city directory as living here. It is also during this time that a change appears on Morris Street, going from most homes being occupied, to over the next decade having three to five vacant homes on the block according to the city directory.

Because it was redlined, and because of racist real estate practices, and prejudicial policies by city hall, the de-

mographics of the neighborhood changed as it was the only one Black Portlanders could live in at the time. The 1940 census shows no Black families living on Morris Street, and ten years later, the 1950 census shows one. The flooding of Vanport in 1948, and the destruction of the neighborhood around the eastside of the Broadway Bridge (the former center of the Black community in the city) to construct Memorial Coliseum, pushed many families into neighborhoods further north, to around Morris Street. As white families left the neighborhood, Eliot began to be conceived, especially by the white population, as the city’s Black neighborhood. In *The Portland Black Panthers: Empowering Albina and Remaking a City*, authors Lucas N. N. Burke and Judson L. Jeffries wrote that “by 1950 Albina had transformed into a neighborhood that the broader white community conceptualized spatially as a black urban ghetto,” even if whites still outnumbered Blacks two-to-one in the neighborhood in the 1950 census.

From 1963 until 1970, our house on Morris Street stood vacant, an unused house in a neighborhood that city officials wrongly described as “blighted” or a “slum.” Photos from 1965 of Morris and Stanton streets taken by the city show a neighborhood with well-kept homes and nice-looking cars parked on the street. While the state condemned and destroyed homes to build I-5, condemned and destroyed homes for a never built Prescott Freeway on the eastside of the Fremont Bridge, and condemned and destroyed homes for a never constructed expansion of Emanuel Hospital, new activists in the neighborhood confronted this state-sanctioned destruction and the segregated environment created by government officials. These activists created new programs and new institutions to help the community, and they were aided by generous people in the neighborhood.

In my next article I will explore the next 50ish years of the house and how the Black Education Center got its start here through the generosity of the Palmer family and the hard work of local activists Joyce Harris, Ron Hern- don, and Frank Wilson, and how the center educated and empowered children and the community. I have spoken to new and old neighbors about their memories of this house but I believe there are many more stories that should be included. If you have a story of 63 NE Morris and would like to share, email me at donciler@gmail.com.

challenge of cleaning the Democrats’ own stable, which can only be done when money is no longer making a mockery of any semblance of representative democracy. And you will need to show leadership in persuading other world leaders that reversing climate change is the only campaign worth fighting. War has always been an atrocity, but now more than ever.

As we go to press, the public hearings into the attempted coup are under way, providing confirmation and detail for what was already known. Historians fifty years hence – if there are any left to write – will characterize the 2021 attempt to destroy American democracy, along with the war in Ukraine, as blips against the background of the climate apocalypse. The effects of that will become even more apparent this year, so, for humanity’s sake, get the gloves off, and come out swinging.

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Pandemic Retrospective

By William Warwick

We seem “done” with Covid even if it isn’t done with us. The new reality that is emerging is a tentative return to “normal” with a “once burned, twice shy” concern about the emergence of new variants or other pathogens. What DC is proposing is cautious opening with vulnerable individuals taking precautions they choose without burdening the rest of us. Current statistics suggest that roughly 40% of the population contracted Covid, meaning 60% of us haven’t. The question that raises is, are 60% still “vulnerable?” The answer seems to be that active monitoring and testing and anti-viral treatment of symptomatic individuals is adequate to deal with future infections. In other words, we must accept that a certain number of people will still contract Covid, and that a much smaller number will die from it.

On a gross statistical basis, 40% of the country’s 330 million have contracted Covid and of those, about a million have died, for a fatality rate of 7 per 1000. More than the flu, on average, but flu deaths will be in addition to future Covid deaths, and both will fall disproportionately on the elderly. Also, both infections are expected to continue to flare up periodically, including Omicron-like surges in the future. Apparently, this is the “new normal.” Hopefully it will lead to a gradual return to in-office work, improved child-care and educational facilities, and radical restructuring of medical care so hospitals have adequate surge capacity and plentiful protective gear for the next pandemic. That may be a tall order so long as hospitals have a profit motive that discourages those investments. My elderly self hopes that local hospitals are listening!

An Open Letter to Donald Trump

By Brian Greer

Dear ex-President Trump, You and I are alike in many ways. We are both citizens of what you and most American politicians, like to call the greatest country in the history of civilization. I would be prepared to use that characterization also, if it is to be based solely on military and economic domination. However, if other criteria is used, the claim is laughable. I have in mind data on, for example, wealth inequality, people living on the streets, those with mental problems, lacking care, victims of drug dealers like the Sacklers, people without enough to eat, gun deaths, civilians of other countries killed by American forces ... how many indicators would you like?

Neither of us have served in the armed forces. I missed “National Service” in the United Kingdom by a few years. I hope that if I had been required to do that I would, as a conscientious objector, have pursued the medical service option. You, on the other hand, were prevented from doing what many considered their patriotic duty at the time by a crippling physical impairment that still interferes with your golf game.

As another example, neither of us is a Christian. However, we are non-Christian in different ways. I am an atheist, though I prefer to use the more positive word “humanist.” You are among the millions who call yourself Christian, but I always remember that Jesus, like

Marx, is not responsible for the actions of people who call themselves followers. When you stood in front of that church in Washington holding up a bible, it is a pity that you did not open it up to Matthew 5:5 and to all of us “Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.” While not a believer in the divinity of Jesus, I much admirer many of the sayings attributed to him. For example, the story of the rich man who wanted to know how to be saved, whom Jesus told to sell all he had and give to the poor. Indeed, if you think about it all, it is clear that Jesus was a socialist. What a loser! Don’t you prefer saviors who weren’t crucified?

We are both rich. Again, there is a difference in how we would interpret that. My definition of rich is that I have never been hungry, never slept without a roof over my head, always had access to education and medical care, a loving family, friends, and community. Beyond those basics, I have enough surplus means to enjoy books, art, and travel. In terms of humanity, I am part of the top 5%, maybe even the 1%. Those who strive for more than what I am privileged to have are, in my opinion, addicts to be pitied. You on the other hand, are rich only in the sense of the word, to “earn” money means to do some work that benefits others, such as is done by the people who pick up the trash outside my house every week, or who drive buses and trucks, or who nurse terminally ill Covid

(See Trump, page 7)

(Gloves off, Joe! from page 3)

allow your personal views on abortion to overrule your constitutional duty. Would that the same could be said of Catholics on the supreme court. In my opinion, as someone from a country (Ireland) where, until recently, the Catholic church routinely overruled the elected government, Catholics on SCOTUS should recuse themselves from any case involving abortion.

Speaking of that issue, I have respect for those who oppose abortion on moral grounds, provided they are pro-life. By “pro-life” I mean that they also oppose capital punishment, war, guns, police killings, and the creation of dire poverty through pathologically extreme capitalism.

So, I do hope that the November results offer one last chance for the planet. Bear in mind that there will still remain the

(Research, from page 4)

resource. You can see any permits or complaints recently about the house and they have some other random stuff on there like plumbing permits from the 1930s and 1940s. The plumbing permits will tell you the name of the house owner at the time of repair.

9. Google your address. When I googled my address, I found our house listed in an inventory of Black historical buildings in the city conducted in the 1990s, called “Cornerstones of Community: Buildings of Portland’s African American History.” If it’s been sold recently, you might even see some old real estate photos of what it looked like in previous sales.

10. Talk to your neighbors. It’s good practice to be neighborly and say hi to folks walking down the street, but it also can give you valuable oral history about your house. In speaking with neighbors walking down our street, I learned the names of the folks who used to own our house. From there, I googled their names to piece together more of the history. Your neighbors will probably know more about your home than you do and it’s just a great way to meet folks and learn about the neighborhood.

11. County property rolls. I haven’t



Boarded up shop fronts on Williams before they were demolished in 1971 for the never materialized Emanuel Hospital expansion. Photo courtesy of Don Iler

(Trump, from page 6)

patients, or do their best to teach children to become useful members of society. So much of the money you control you have conned from people whom you despise who, for reasons beyond my comprehension, still continue to support you.

We both have many friends around the world. Mine are intellectuals and scholars, people who think deeply about the nature of the human condition, and with whom I can, for example, discuss the relevance of “1984” to 2022. Your bosom pals are dictators (for which you have often expressed your admiration), and people who are extremely rich in your meaning of the term. Actually, I suspect that you belong to an exclusive club called “the four horsemen of the apocalypse.” Your fellow-members Putin, Bolsonaro, and Modi share your insight that notions of justice, truth, and compassion are not for real men.

Both of us have limited understanding of what it is to be a Black person in this country. While you have labeled yourself the least racist person around, I make no such claim. As many have pointed out, you have rendered a great service in exposing the reality of white supremacist ideology. Likewise, I suspect I am guilty of some degree of anti-Semitism at a subconscious level, though I would maintain that opposition to the policies of the Israeli government should not be referred to by the same word as armed attacks on people because they are Jewish.

looked at them yet, but one of the librarians at the Central Library said they just came into possession of the county property rolls on microfilm dating from pre-1950. They are indexed by name, so you first need to know who owned your home before using them, so first use the directories at the library.

12. Check the county’s property tax system website. It only has records going back the past decade but it gives you an idea of recent ownership.

13. Read up on the history of the neighborhood. Eliot Neighborhood started out as the heart of the City of Albina before it was absorbed by Portland. Albina and the Eliot neighborhood have a fascinating history, showcasing a lot of what is great and awful about our city’s history. Chances are as you learn about your home’s history, it will mirror the changes the neighborhood saw over the years. Because of the role the neighborhood played in local immigrant, and Black history, there are fascinating layers of history here and lots of local history books at the library can illuminate those layers.

I hope this helps anyone interested in their house and if you want to talk more about local history, feel free to contact me at donciler@gmail.com.

Above all, we are alike, and the same as every other human, in being mortal. I have children, but unlike you, will probably never have grandchildren. In a way, I am grateful for that, as the world they would grow up in is likely to be tragic. You on the other hand, appear oblivious to the extent to which you personally bear responsibility for the future misery of your own descendants. That you remain so apparently healthy is remarkable but be assured you will die someday. Perhaps it is a consolation to you that you will be talked of long after you have returned to clay. However, being posthumously talked about is not a great achievement in itself (the reader will have no trouble thinking of examples).

In fact, you were written about long before you were born. By some remarkable power, Johnathan Swift in 1710 described you very insightfully in his essay “The Art of Political Lying” (www.thedailybeast.com/how-jonathan-swift-attacked-fake-news). Swift started by citing a much earlier source, the Roman poet Ovid, who wrote this description of our present condition:

With idle tales this fills our empty ears; The next reports what from the first he hears; The rolling fictions grow in strength and size, Each author adding to the former lies.

Have you selected an epitaph? I suggest “In life he was Donald J. Trump, and now he lies still.”

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EARTH QUAKE TECH

(Letter From the Editor, from page 2)

safety partners include local pastors, parks department, PBOT, and outreach workers. For the time being, efforts are underway from the city of Portland to present advocacy trainings to the Eliot neighborhood on how to deal with drug activity, homeless encampments, and disregard for traffic safety. There are ways that work in addressing these issues. The City of Portland is actively working with this collaborative group to provide trainings on just what to do in these situations to achieve results and is the precursor to the Safety Summit that is in the planning stages.

When asked what things they liked about the Eliot neighborhood, respondents were consistent in saying the people, their neighbors, and its diversity. Others love the beautiful gardens, getting to know their neighbors, Dawson Park, family events like Love is Stronger and the Concerts in the Park. Some enjoy the beautiful over-

grown trees or the walkability and all the nearby restaurants and shops. Marjorie, a new resident of Eliot likes the charm of the homes and gardens and has experienced friendliness. This neighborhood is rich in its history. I’d encourage some of you to follow in Don Iler’s footsteps and perhaps research the history of your home. In the next issue, he is writing about the last 50 years of the history of his home on Morris including that it was the site of Portland’s first Kwanzaa celebration.

For those members of the Eliot community that feel ignored by the city know that efforts are underway to help all of us feel safer. There is hope that this community can unite and bring about change. Get to know your neighbors so you can look out for each other and trust that there is a map being drawn that will cross fruitful paths with the city and our neighborhood. Some of this change is long overdue.



Your Eliot Neighborhood Bike Shop

2249 N Williams Avenue
503-287-7116
metropoliscycles.com

Cut out this ad for \$20 off a tune-up



Our New Mission

Meyer Memorial Trust

accelerates racial, social and economic justice for the collective well-being of Oregon's lands and peoples.

Learn more at mmt.org

Event information may be out of date due to COVID-19 restrictions. Confirm details with event organizers.

Community Events

Land Use and Transportation Committee (LUTC) Meeting

St Philip the Deacon 120 NE Knott St
(for virtual meeting info see agenda at <https://eliotneighborhood.org/category/meeting-agenda/>)
7:00pm 2nd Monday of each month

Eliot Neighborhood Association Meeting

St Philip the Deacon 120 NE Knott St
(for virtual meeting info see agenda at <https://eliotneighborhood.org/category/meeting-agenda/>)
7:00pm 3rd Monday of each month

Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods

4815 NE 7th Ave
www.necoalition.org, 503.388.5004

Meetings:

- ♦ *Safety and Livability Meeting*—6:30pm, 3rd Monday of month
- ♦ *NECN Board Meetings*—6:30pm, 3rd Tuesday of month
- ♦ *Community Police Relations Committee*—5:30pm, 3rd Wednesday of month
- ♦ *NECN Land Use Transportation Committee*—7pm, 4th Wednesday of month

Entertainment

Civilian Studios
2210 N Lewis Ave
503-476-2716

Fisk Gallery

3613 NE Martin Luther King Jr Blvd
Wednesday-Friday 12-6pm
Saturday and Sunday 12-4pm
fiskgallery.com 661-733-3521

Open Signal

2766 NE MLK Jr Blvd
opensignalpdx.org 503-288-1515

PICA

15 NE Hancock St
Pica.org 503-242-1419
TBA Festival: Sept, 16 - Oct. 3rd see website for details about specific shows/exhibits

Union Knott Gallery

2808 NE MLK Jr Blvd, #2
971-207-1231 By Appointment

The Waypost

3120 N Williams Ave
thewaypost.com 503-367-3182

White Eagle

836 N Russell St
mcmenamins.com/WhiteEagle
503-282-6810

Wonder Ballroom

128 NE Russell St
wonderballroom.com 503-284-8686

Recurring Events

Mondays - 11:00 am-12:30pm Healthy Eating Class at Garlington Health Center
- 7-9pm reading group at Black Hat Books

Tuesdays - 4-5pm Book Club Garlington Health Center
- 7pm Trivia at The Waypost

Wednesdays - Karaoke at The Waypost

Thursdays- - 11:30am-12:30pm Walking group at Garlington Health Center
- 1:30-2:30pm Music Meet Up at Garlington Health Center
- 6-8pm FIRST THURSDAYS Game night at Garlington Health Center

Saturdays - - 2pm Public Speaking class at Black Hat Books

Sundays - - 12:00-1:30 pm Refuge in the Park at Dawson Park 2926 N Williams
[@refugeportland](https://www.facebook.com/refugeportland) on Facebook

Did we miss something?
Email news@EliotNeighborhood.org to submit something for the next edition