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## IN THIS EDITION

***KIDS TO PERFORM PLAY AT LIBRARY FOR BLACK HISTORY MONTH  
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## AROUND THE CITY



### **Kids to Perform Play at Library for Black History Month**

The Downtown Eugene Public Library will host a free Black History Month play performed by and for children on Wednesday, Feb. 29, at 10:15 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. The show will tell the story of educator and author Booker T. Washington.

The students of Drinking Gourd Elementary School, ages five to eight, will perform and bring the young children in the audience onstage to participate in the play. This year's production will be the 19<sup>th</sup> annual Black History Month play performed at the Library by Drinking Gourd Elementary School.

For more information, please contact the Eugene Public Library at 541-682-8316 or [www.eugene-or.gov/library](http://www.eugene-or.gov/library).

### **Study Shows Benefits of Tai Chi**

Campbell Community Center was one of the sites for a study that determined Tai Chi has significant benefits for patients with mild to moderate Parkinson's disease. In an original article published in the Feb. 9, 2012, issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*, Oregon Research Institute scientist Fuzhong Li, Ph.D., and colleagues, report that a tailored program of twice-weekly Tai Chi training resulted in improved postural stability and walking ability, and reduced number of falls.

In the four-year project funded by the National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke, the investigators randomly assigned 195 patients to one of three exercise groups: Tai Chi, resistance training, or stretching. The patients participated in 60-minute exercise sessions, twice weekly for 24 weeks. The results showed that individuals who were in the Tai Chi group performed consistently better than those in the other groups with regard to balance and stride-length measures.



Recreation's Adult Services Program offers three different Tai Chi classes weekly, including Beginning and Continuing Tai Chi and Tai Chi for Arthritis. For more information, contact Tom Powers at 541-682-5318.

### **Working City Video Wins Pegasus Programming Award**

A four-and-one-half-minute video produced by Metro Television, with the City of Eugene, for the Working City TV series, has been awarded a 2011 Pegasus Award. The Pegasus Awards are the video industry's premier competition for recognition of exemplary work produced by non-broadcast professionals. This is the first Pegasus Award for Metro TV.

Public, Education, and Government (PEG) channels are provided at no-cost in Eugene, Springfield, and Lane County via Comcast's cable TV public rights-of-way use franchise. Lane Council of Government's Metro TV staff produce government programming, in conjunction with jurisdictional staff, which is aired on local channel 21; some programs are also webcast.

The program "RecEnroll" has received the Award of Honor for its outstanding production quality in the instructional category. The video, created as a segment of the monthly Working City series produced by the City of Eugene, is an educational outreach tool to further inform residents of Eugene of the ease of using the internet to sign up and register for Recreation classes. The City of Eugene has a commitment to reduce the use of paper and to make access to community members easier through internet-based communications. The RecEnroll program was originally funded by the City's Telecommunications Fund.

More info about the Pegasus awards is at <http://www.pegasusawards.com/>. The video can be seen at <http://vimeo.com/32157575> or <http://www.youtube.com/user/CityofEugene/featured>.

For additional information, please contact Kathy Madison at 541-682-6342 or Telecommunications Program Manager Pam Berrian at 541-682-5590.

### **Nature, Recreation, and Leisure Helps Former Prisoners Re-enter Community**

As naturalist and author John Muir once said, "Everybody needs beauty as well as bread, places to play in and pray in, where nature may heal and give strength to body and soul."



Nature, whether it is a rugged and remote wilderness terrain or a place to sit under a tree in an urban area, can evoke humbleness, clarity, time for reflection, and call to mind a sense of purpose. Spending leisure time in wild places can help relieve stress, facilitate independence and growth, allow time for self-discovery, influence positive perception of oneself, and replace old and negative labels.

For the past year, the Sponsors Mentorship Program, in partnership with the City of Eugene Outdoor Program at the River House, has offered monthly excursions to various wilderness and recreational areas for recently incarcerated individuals. Exposure to activities such as snowshoeing, kayaking, sailing, whitewater rafting, hiking, and crabbing can boost one's self-esteem, feeling of self-worth, confidence, and

trust in others; thus making the overall transition from prison to community more successful.

The Mentorship Program is designed to give these individuals time to step away from the re-entry process, even if for a short time each week, to reflect on their progress, evaluate goals and identify outlets to relieve stress. In connecting with a mentor, each former inmate can spend time focusing on recreation and leisure, whether in nature or in an urban setting, as a tool to create what is often a more holistic approach to re-entry into society.

For more information, contact Roger Bailey at 541-682-5329.