



The Color of Night: Oregon's Murdered War Bride

Author: Dr. Max G. Geier

**February 14 at noon
2450 14th Avenue SE**

**Presented By:
Friends of the Albany Public Library**

This is a "nonfiction whodunit" that happened right here in Linn County! In 1941 Martha James was killed in her Pullman Sleeping Car berth, "lower 13" on a train passing southbound through Linn County en-route to Sacramento from Portland. A young Black man from South Central Los Angeles by the name of Robert E. Lee Folkes was accused and tried in Albany in the spring of 1943. In January 1945, after two years of appeals, Folkes became only the second Black man ever to be executed by the State of Oregon to that date.

Dr. Geier's presentation will focus on the Oregon State Police role in the investigation and the impact of this case on the civil rights movement and prohibition of the death penalty in Oregon. Dr. Geier's interest in the case originated from the realization that the jury was comprised largely of rural residents of Linn County, a majority of them women, in the first capital murder case in Oregon in which women were allowed to serve as jurors.

This topic is an outgrowth of Dr. Geier's research into the rural communities of the mid-Willamette Valley. He is particularly interested in the emergence of the grass-seed industry in Linn and Polk counties and vegetable production and processing industries of Marion and Yamhill counties.

Currently a Professor of History at Western Oregon University, Dr. Geier serves as department chair and specializes in the history of the Pacific Northwest and rural community development issues. Growing up on a farm in Minnesota, Dr. Geier went to graduate school in Washington and completed a Ph.D. in History in 1990. He has lived in Oregon since the late 1980s. Currently he lives on a 60-acre farm near Dallas, Oregon.



Want to read this book?



The book's full title is "The Color of Night: Oregon's Murdered War Bride, Train Workers, and Race, 1942-43" and will be published through OSU Press, Fall 2014

Article for Your Community – program is Feb. 14.

Murder on the Oregon Rails Presentation

Dr. Max Geier, Professor at Western Oregon University will discuss his upcoming book The Color of Night: Oregon's Murdered War Bride, Train Workers, and Race, 1942-43 on Friday, February 14, at the Friends of the Albany Public Library noon program.

This nonfiction novel researches the 1941 murder of Martha James on a train passing southbound through Linn County en-route to Sacramento. A young black man by the name of Robert E. Lee Folkers from Los Angeles was accused and tried in Albany in the spring of 1943. In January of 1945, after two years of appeals, Folkers became only the second Black man ever to be executed by the State of Oregon to that date.

Dr. Geier's presentation will focus on the Oregon State Police role in the investigation and the impact of the case on the civil rights movement and prohibition of the death penalty in Oregon. Dr. Geier's interest in the case originated from the realization that the jury was comprised largely of rural residents of Linn County, a majority of them women, in the first capital murder case in Oregon in which women were allowed to serve as jurors. This book published through OSU Press will be available fall 2014.

Currently a Professor of History at Western Oregon University, Dr. Geier specializes in the history of the Pacific Northwest and rural community development issues. He attended graduate school in Washington and completed a Ph.D. in History in 1990. Dr. Geier has lived in Oregon since the late 1980s and currently resides on a 60-acre farm near Dallas, Oregon.

Program starts at noon at 2450 14th Avenue, SE. All are welcome, coffee and cookies served.

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It is coming out through OSU Press, but is still in the final revisions stage. We're hoping it will be ready by later this year (Fall 2014). I think at the time we arranged this talk, we were hoping it would be coming out in Winter 2014, around the time of the talk.

The actual title is:

"The Color of Night: Oregon's Murdered War Bride, Train Workers, and Race, 1942-43".

Dr. Max G. Geier, Professor of History at Western Oregon University.

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Dr. Geier

I am Joyce Moreira, publicity chair for Friends of the Albany Public Library. I understand you have agreed to be our guest speaker for our February 14 noon program.

My charge is to develop a flyer about you and your program to send to our 240 members and a newspaper announcement.

Here's the details—location: Main Albany Public Library, Conference Room, 2450 14th Ave. SE, Albany. Audience size 70-100, older adults, retirees, well-educated library users.

Your Presentation Duration: 40 to 50 minutes, We can provide AV equipment if you wish.

Very friendly comfortable group to speak to! We provide coffee and cookies. President uses first 10 minutes for announcements.

Now can you tell me about your presentation "Murder on the OR Rails" and your biographical information and other personal comments, etc. I can include?

Please let me know your contact phone number and a good time to telephone you so I can interview you. The deadline date for the flyer copy is January 29.

I look forward to hearing from you,

Joyce Moreira, FOL Publicity

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