

FILE COPY

# Opinion

## Letters

All signed letters to the editor should be 500 words or less and will be considered for publication if submitted by 1 pm the Friday prior to publication. Letters to the Editor are subject to editing. We reserve the right to not publish any letter.



# Racing revs hearts, loses lives

The smell of gasoline and the revving of engines, mixed with the pulsing of heartbeats and an adrenaline rush, compiled with

ported in Vancouver, Wash., just a few weeks ago, also from street racing.

### Say It Loud & Proud!

Salena De La Cruz  
*Opinion Editor*



Portland Police Chief Mark Kroeker held a news conference on Tuesday and stated that street racers will be charged to the full extent of

deep-seated desires to put the pedal to the metal. It seems like a scene from a movie, such as "The Fast and the Furious," but it's not. It's real life and people are dying because challenges are being made in a dangerous game of street racing.

the law. He added that at the very least reckless driving, a Class A misdemeanor, would allow them to tow vehicles and arrest offenders.

In the past six weeks Portland has seen six people die as a result of street racing. In the most recent, Trisha Thornton was in a car with her boyfriend Adam Ames when another driver came alongside them and the race began on Northeast Glisan and 139th in Gresham. It came to a screeching halt when Ames lost control and hit a pole, killing his girlfriend. Two deaths were re-

ported in Vancouver, Wash., just a few weeks ago, also from street racing. Portland Police Chief Mark Kroeker held a news conference on Tuesday and stated that street racers will be charged to the full extent of the law. He added that at the very least reckless driving, a Class A misdemeanor, would allow them to tow vehicles and arrest offenders. The most recent deaths were from spur-of-the-moment encounters rather than the organized events the police are used to. Last summer hundreds of people congregated on Friday and Saturday nights to race, illegally. However, due to winter rains they have since closed down. Most are reported as saying they are drawn to the scene for the adrenaline rush, the thrill of being chased by cops and party atmosphere. I say, you want a rush, go bungee-jumping.



You want to party, put your keys away. If you want to be chased by cops, you're sick if you want to end up in jail and meet Bubba. Currently, Gresham has a law that is to deter spectators as well. In the spring Portland hopes to put that same plan into effect. It is to go after the spectators. They hope to cite everyone who is involved in street racing, such as timers, flaggers, drivers and spectators. I'm all for the no guts no glory theory, but time for a reality check, people. This isn't the movies. The six dead people are

not going to get up and dust themselves off at the end of the reel. They have left this world and there are people that will miss them. Many people's lives have been forever changed because engines revved and gasoline fumes clogged in the air. Next time you're at a stop light and someone next to you revs the engine and gives you that look that he is ready to take on the world, smile, wave and shake your head no. The adrenaline rush is may seem worth it, but it's short-lived, and the loss of lives lasts forever.



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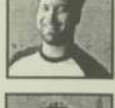


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The Clackamas Print is a weekly publication and is distributed every Wednesday except during Finals Week. The Clackamas Print Copyright 2001.

### Advertising:

The advertising rate is \$4.75 per column inch.

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# Should people street race?



**Mollie Frey**

Art Department secretary

"No... There is a time and place for everything and streets aren't for racing."



**Sam Dietz**

Major: Undecided

"In designated areas, yes."



**Paul Kester**

Major: Psychology

"I do it, but only when it's safe. When both people are agreeable."



**Eryn Henry**

Major: Corrections

"I don't think it should be done on any busy streets at all. I have a friend that broke his arm because of that."



**Kenniston Vogel**

Major: Criminal Justice

"On public streets, no. There are plenty of designated areas."



**Stephanie Neuhauser**

Major: Criminal Justice

"No, it's not right for people to street race. People can die... People that street race should be put in jail."



Photos and quotes compiled by  
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