

TV Networks Take Case of Asia Bell

With most crimes, the community can solve it. We need to stop being fearful of each other. We need to start coming together.

—Perlia Bell, mother of murder victim Asia Bell-James.

continued from Front

Naturally, the issue of Tryone regaining his sight and the family finding justice for Asia stuck together.

"I'm glad it's picking up because it's been a long time," Deronia said. "I became close to Asia before this happened. We lost somebody that was simply an all around good person. It makes me feel sad and sometimes, I get angry - but I'm not trying to be negative about it."

For Perlia, dealing with issues of violence is all too familiar. Her brother, Kern McClure, was beaten to death in 1996. The case is also still unsolved. And just a week before a "Stop the Violence" rally last February, her 20-year-old nephew Wilando Bell was shot to death after confronting a gunman who'd robbed a liquor store. Her other nephew, Willie Bell, was shot in the arm during the same incident. Dominique Sanders, 25, was eventually charged in the killing.

"Maybe we can get somewhere and get some stuff resolved," Bell said. "I hope it weighs on their hearts and they'll want to do something about it."

She sees that there are two kinds of people—those who are witnesses, and those who claim they "didn't see nothing" out of fear for their own personal safety and the possibility of being thought of as a "snitch." A lot of people, she said, simply don't want to get involved. According to the Portland Police

Department website, there are more than 280 unsolved homicide cases in the city since the 1970s.

"They're shutting their blinds and closing their doors to life," Bell said. "That's why we have so many cases unsolved. With most crimes, the community can solve it. We need to stop being fearful of each other. We need to start coming together."

Bell has led a number of gatherings and marches in remembrance of her daughter and others affected by violence.

"We need to work together. It takes numbers for change," Bell said. "Portland is grieving and we don't heal. Everyday there's a shooting or stabbing and we just sit in front of our televisions and watch the news, but that's as far as we go. If there's a car show or a basketball tournament or a wet t-shirt contest, the streets are full of people - but when you have a march against violence, there's only a handful of people there."

Asia Bell's story can be found on the America's Most Wanted website at www.americasmostwanted.com.

The family was filmed for a "Families in Crisis" segment for the Maury Povich show on Tuesday, and the episode is expected to air on Tuesday, Oct. 25, although the date and time is subject to change. The Maury Povich Show airs weekdays at 9 and 11 a.m. on Portland's KWBP channel 32 or cable channel 3.



Asia Bell-James



Perlia Bell (from left), Tyrone James, Deronia James and Hollis Strickland are the mother, husband, aunt and brother of murder victim Asia Bell-James.

PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/ THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

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Military Recruits Latinos

An analysis of news media reports shows the U.S. military is turning to Latinos to make up for the rapidly falling recruitment and enlistment numbers.

The website diversity.com reports that recruitment among blacks, who make up nearly a quarter of active-duty forces, despite making up only 13 percent of the U.S. population, has dropped by 40 percent since the beginning of the Iraq War.

It quotes findings from the Star Ledger in New Jersey that shows the Pentagon has turned to Latinos to make up the difference. Hispanic men represent 16 percent of the 18-

24 age group in the country. Pentagon officials have made it known that they are looking to double the number of Latinos enlisting and are focusing hardest on areas with large populations and low enlistment rates.

In addition to the stepped up-recruitment plan, the military also is heavily advertising the citizenship potential through enlistment. Shortly before the beginning of the war, the Bush administration signed an executive order allowing noncitizen, permanent residents to serve in the military and to apply for citizenship in a fast-track basis.

Portland to Mexico Flights Added

Mexicana Airlines has announced the addition of two weekly flights from Portland.

Beginning Dec. 1, a flight will now be operating from Portland to Guadalajara and continuing to Mexico City seven days a week.

Mexicana Airlines is Mexico's leading airline with the most extensive international routes. From its operations hub in Mexico City, it flies to more than 50 destinations in North America, Central America, South America and the Caribbean.

Moviegoers Help Food Bank

Local Regal Cinemas and moviegoers helped fight hunger by donating 89,882 pounds of food during the Cans Film Festival.

Thousands of people brought three cans of food to Regal theaters on Sept. 22 in exchange for

a free movie ticket and popcorn. "Cans Film Festival gives people a chance to help fight hunger while having a great time," said Rachel Bristol, executive director of the Oregon Food Bank.

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