

Dog Fighting Scandal Rings Home

Investigators say schemes are hard to break up

BY SARAH BLOUNT
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The underground world of illegal dog fighting is in the national spotlight with the federal indictment of NFL star Michael Vick. But Portlanders who were paying attention to former Trail Blazer Qyntel Woods a few years ago were probably already aware of this clandestine crime.

Woods was convicted of staging dog fights at his house in 2004. He pled guilty to first-degree animal abuse and was given community service, ordered to pay \$10,000 to the Oregon Humane Society and was soon dropped by the Blazers.

The humane society played an instrumental role in Woods' conviction when their investigators assisted federal authorities in criminal investigations involving dog fighting and other forms of animal cruelty.

Kenneth Miller.

Miller's body was found on the sidewalk in front of Leon Scott's north Portland home. While pursuing her first priority of investigating the homicide, she came across six dogs with visible facial and head injuries and scars all over their legs and chests — the unmistakable signs of dog fighting.

Scott now awaits trial on murder and drug charges, and dog fighting charges due to their accidental discovery.

A sentiment, echoed by the humane society and Multnomah County Animal Control, is that authorities and the general public don't know much about dog fighting, and that the cruelty to the animals is something people really don't want to know too much about.

"If you don't see it, it's not there," Daul says. "The other aspect is dog fighters are very secretive about it.

If you don't see it, it's not there. The other aspect is dog fighters are very secretive about it. It's a small circle.

— Molly Daul, Portland Police homicide detective

Sharon Harmon, the group's executive director, says the agency is currently involved in two local dog fighting investigations, but because dog fighting rings are mostly conducted underground they are hard to bust.

"They (dog fighters) are involved in gambling, drugs and money laundering, and they're good at hiding it," Harmon said.

Portland Police homicide detective Molly Daul received bureau training on dog fighting but says she wasn't prepared for the situation she encountered last February, when called in to investigate the death of James

It's a small circle."

The few cases of known dog fights are rarely penetrated by law enforcement, Daul explained, since news of the clandestine "matches" are usually spread through the mail and there's no informant present to obtain a felony conviction.

She says those who are present are not all gang members or sports celebrities.

"It's usually an event, with popcorn, hot dogs, kids and family," she said.

Daul says dog fighting, in which the animals are often maimed and killed, may be repul-



David Lytle of the Oregon Humane Society shelters Walter, a pit bull and German shepherd mix. Pit bulls are the most common breed used in dog fights, with the losing dogs often killed or abandoned on the street.

PHOTO BY SARAH BLOUNT/
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

sive to most people, but because this blood "sport" dates back at least a hundred years, family members have long encouraged acceptance through the generations.

Only in the past 20 years, she said, has it been viewed as a crime, prompting dog fighters to retreat underground.

She believes cases like Vick's, which bring the grisly scenes she has personally encountered into the national consciousness, are long overdue.

Daul stresses the importance of people speaking up when they suspect dog fighting activity. Especially since the lack of resources limit how far Portland Police officers can go to help the dogs they encounter.

"As far as I'm concerned it's in every city in the United States," she said. "It's important the public knows it is still going on and is still popular."

Principal Remembered Fondly

Bernard Harvard, principal of da Vinci Middle School and a beloved northeast Portland educator, died Saturday.

The 41-year-old joined Portland Public Schools in 2000 as a performing arts-music teacher at Madison High School. He also taught at Humboldt and Alameda elementary schools.

He leaves behind his wife Wendy and their five year old son Gabriel who is autistic.

Harvard, a native of New York City started performing at the age of 16. He then went on to receive his bachelors and masters from Mansfield University of Pennsylvania. He was also the lead vocalist for Portland group Soul Search.

On Sunday, when students and parents learned about the death of Harvard, they gathered at Alameda playground, where Harvard was the



Bernard Harvard

former vice principal.

The cause of death is still unknown, but according to Portland Public School officials, Harvard had complications following knee surgery.

Custodians get \$14.5 Million

The 280 local custodians who were laid off from Portland Public Schools after their jobs were outsourced to a private contractor will be compensated for the violation of state labor laws.

U.S. District Judge John Jelderks signed off Monday on the school district's settlement offer of \$14.5 million. The order follows the agreement announced in April, giving each

custodian around \$37,000 each before taxes.

In 2002, the school district voted to outsource custodial work to save money.

The Oregon Supreme Court ruled in 2005 that the district violated the law when it hired Portland Habilitation Center workers to replace the union custodians.

More than 100 custodians who were laid off have been hired back.

Subscribe! 503-288-0033
Fill Out & Send To:
The Portland Observer
Attn: Subscriptions, PO Box 3137, Portland OR 97208
subscriptions are just \$60 per year
(please include check with this subscription form)

NAME: _____
TELEPHONE: _____ ADDRESS: _____
or email subscriptions@portlandobserver.com

Portraits as Memorable as Summer.

Portrait Package Special

Package Includes: **Only \$995**

- One-10 x 13
- Two-8 x 10's
- Four-5 x 7's
- Four-3 x 5's
- 32 Wallets
- PLUS 6 Free Personalized Portrait Cards
- 40 Card Designs!

You're welcome to bring an extra change of clothes.

No sitting fees or charges

PORTRAIT Innovations
We've totally re-invented the studio experience.

The Streets of Tanasbourne
2219 NW Allie Avenue, Suite 1460
Hillsboro, OR 97124
Hurry, Call for an Appointment Today!
503.645.9900
Studio Hours: Tuesday - Sunday 9 a.m. - 6 p.m.
www.PortraitInnovations.com

SEARS APPLIANCE OUTLET STORES

Save 15-50%* everyday on new, one-of-a-kind, out of carton, discontinued, used, scratched and dented merchandise. Hurry in, while supplies last.

SALE JULY 26 - AUG 8

- 40% OFF** ALL Refrigerators
Water Filters available
- 50% OFF** ALL Dryers
Regularly retail priced \$599 or more
- 40% OFF** ALL Treadmills
Regularly retail priced \$499 or more
- 40% OFF** ALL Built-in Wall Ovens, Cooktops, Microwaves

DEMO DAYS
EVERY SATURDAY AND SUNDAY

- See how new product features work
- Ask & learn about the latest technologies
- Special demonstrations all day long

Saturday/Sunday Special
50% OFF Ultra Plus Laundry detergent Regularly priced \$19.99 #9835

SAVE EVERY DAY 15-50% OFF regular retail price
75% OFF* MATTRESSES AND BOXSPRINGS

*Savings off regular retail price. Excludes Fisher & Paykel, GECS and special purchase. Intermediate markdowns have been taken. Limited to stock on hand. Outlet in-store purchases only. Items pictured are just a few examples of the hundreds of great values. Actual merchandise varies by store. ©2007 Sears Brands, LLC

Kenmore, Fisher & Paykel, Amana, Whirlpool, MAYTAG, KitchenAid

Sears Appliance Outlet

4500 NE 122nd Ave.
Portland, OR 97230
(503) 257-4732
M-Sat 9-9, Sun 9-6