### The Hortland Observer Celebrating Diversity

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## **Get on Board with Life Saving Defibrillators**

### Why not Portland Public Schools?

### BY CHRISTEEN JOHNSON

My son Eddie died February 23, 2005 while playing varsity a lot of information about this disbasketball for Grant High School while at Madison High.

Eddie was diagnosed with a heart condition in 2001 called Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy or HCM. He was banned from playing any sports for one year and then his doctor changed his diagnosis to hypertension and released him to play.

After an autopsy it was found that the doctor's first diagnosis was correct and Eddie went into was passed to require all school sudden cardiac arrest that districts to have AEDs in them.

evening in February. Since Eddie's death I found out schools. ease along with sudden cardiac

arrest and how Automated External Defibrillators(AEDs) have been to the City Council and it passed life saving in these cases.

My foundation's mission, since it was established in 2005, has been to raise awareness of undetected heart defects in athletes and youth. To deploy AEDs into the community, mainly schools. I helped with legislation with Rep. Mark Hass and a law

City Commissioner Randy Leonard who in turn wrote a resolution asking Portland Public Schools to put AEDs in all its

We presented this resolution unanimously. I attended a PPS board meeting the year my son passed and stated my concerns. I also met with the head of Safety and Risk Management and discussed this issue. To date PPS has refused to put AEDs in all the schools. Donations were offered so money should not be an issue. I also tried to contact the new

Superintendent and was told she

I presented my concerns to was too busy and someone else would get back to me and I have not yet been contacted. I have worked and continue to work tirelessly to save lives and families the devastation that my family has suffered from this loss especially if it can be prevented.

My concern is that Portland Public Schools seems to be reluctant in putting these units in all of their schools while all the surrounding school districts have done this immediately.

As you may know, just recently a life was saved at Bally Fitness by one of these machines which is one of many stories of survival in our community since my son's death

I am deeply saddened that after my son's death on one of PPS's courts, and out of all school districts, they are refusing these machines despite donations being offered. It leads me to believe that not only is PPS not taking the loss of my son's life seriously but also not concerned about the remaining children, teachers and staff that are in these school buildings with the potential to need these machines. I pray that another life doesn't have to be lost for PPS to get on board. One life was truly enough and three years is more than enough time to realize this. I am asking that others support me in asking the question "why?" I plead for your help with making the district accountable to citizens of this community they service and that contribute their tax dollars for these schools to continue to operate.

# **Revving up for a Dirty Campaign** First they charged Obama with being eloquent

### BY DONALD KAUL

First, they charged Barack Obama with being eloquent. Then they called him a celebrity. And now, finally, they're accusing him of being black.

Will these Republicans stop at ing the race card." nothing?

In truth, it would be an exaggeration to call John McCain's campaign tactics thus far "dirty." Tacky, certainly, but they have not yet risen or fallen to the level of "dirty." Although the ad lying about Obama blowing off a visit to wounded troops in Iraq so he could get a photo op comes close.

sults at the smart kid who's stealing his girl.

"Nyah, Nyah, you're an intellectual and your mother dresses you," that sort of thing. Kid stuff.

Dirty, I image, is not far away; it depends on the polls. If McCain falls are really going to see some nasty ads.

Right now, the McCain camp is content to go with the triedand-true Republican tactic of attacking its opponent's strengths.

able gift for phrase making? He is accused of being glib. So was Winston Churchill, of course, but never mind.

Is he able to draw huge, enthusiastic crowds wherever he goes? He is accused of being a celebrity, a fellow traveler of black.) Britney Spears and Paris Hilton. Is that weird or what? The Allegiance." (Black.)

Republicans were going to stress the fact that he didn't look much like the pictures of presidents on our money, the McCain camp was quick to yell "Race card, race card. He's play-

Oh please. Black candidates ---unless they're running for office in a predominantly black city or congressional district --- have no advantage in playing the "race card." For every person who votes for them because of their race, two or three will vote against them for the same reason.

If anything, whenever the Rightnow, it's more at the level McCain campaign says "race of a high school jock yelling in- card," it's playing the race card,

If McCain falls behind in the polls, you are really going to see behind in the polls, you some nasty ads.

> calling attention to the fact that Obama is black without actually having to say it.

People, most of them, don't like Does Obama have a remark- to admit their racism. They express it in other ways, largely by believing ridiculous rumors. Here is a sampling of the things people say about Obama and what they actually mean:

> --- "He's arrogant." (He's black.) ---"He's not patriotic." (He's

--- "Won't say the Pledge of

-- "He's a Muslim."



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Christeen Johnson is the mother of Eddie Barnett Jr. and the founder of the Eddie Barnett Jr. Foundation, Inc. Visit the foundation website at ebjrfoundation.org.

McCain people have a candidate who can barely fill a coffee black.) shop and they're trying to paint that as an advantage?

This is what Paris Hilton's mother---a McCain contributor by the way---had to say about that ad: "It is a complete waste of the country's time and attention at the very moment when millions of people are losing their homes and their jobs. And it is a completely frivolous way to choose the next president of the United States."

The McCain people even went so far as to show Obama hitting that three-point shot in front of the troops in Iraq. It was a marvelous moment and a great shot but the only reason you might want to call attention to an opponent's basketball skills like that is to emphasize that he is, well, black. Although, frankly, black guys tend to take it to the rim. It's white,

suburban players who settle for the J.

McCain's campaign scratches those itches and will continue to do so because he doesn't have much of a campaign without them.

However, more than the race card, the McCain people are playing the dumb card.

They think the American people are dumb enough to take seriously these trivial, empty "charges" they keep leveling against Obama (including that Barack's suggestion that we keep our tires inflated is somehow silly).

The dumb card worked for George Bush against Al Gore when the Republicans used Gore's smarts ("He invented the Internet---ha-ha.") against him.

Let us, in these dire times, hope it does not work again.

Don Kaul is a Washington correspondent whose opinion piece is made available by Then, when Barack predicted minutemanmedia.org.





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