

Busted is no Bust

Tabloid prints arrest photos

BY AMANDA GREAR
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Have you been "Busted"? If so, people might have seen your mug in "Busted," a new tabloid newspaper that has been blasting photos of arrestees in the Portland area along with a list of their charges.

Publisher Ryan Chief of central Florida uses fun, rich colors, catchy stories and phrases, along with cartoon-like illustrations to catch the eye of people shopping in convenience stores like Plaid Pantry.

"It would be foolish to say

we don't utilize it as a tool to draw interest in our paper and prompt people to buy," Chief said, of his publication which only costs a buck.

He said the criminal content is motivated in part by his own "personal desire to look inside my local paper and see who had been in trouble."

Chief has received some flack in year since his publication has been out - distributed in several markets nationwide, mainly from "registered sex offenders," he said, but is quick to point to the outpouring of support he said he receives from community leaders.

"All I'm doing is conveying public information. I'm in the business of creating public

awareness," he said

According to Chief, a YMCA in another part of the county found an employee featured in the sex offender portion of the paper along with 24 of their members. In another location, a convenience store was robbed at knife point and the clerk was able to identify the perpetrator after seeing him in Busted for another crime.

But not everyone is a fan of the publication.

Public Defender Neal Weingart of Multnomah Defenders Inc. said he has "noticed inaccuracies." Having had some of his clients featured in this paper, he said some of the listed charges were completely different from the actual charges, which he said could become a potentially massive issue.



PHOTO BY JAKE THOMAS/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
"Busted" magazine gives its readers a cheap kick. But what does the magazine mean for people who have actually been busted?

"The information he's publishing is widely public information. He's not violating any criminal or civil laws, provided it's accurate," said Alexander Hamalian of Rose City Defense Consortium. "There's no difference than what they do on shows like COPS."

But Hamalian questions whether the publication actually benefits the citizenry at large. He said it is the job of citizens who value civil rights to make sure people understand publishers like this have a financial interest, not a civil interest.

But Chief asserts that his publication provides an extra level of accountability, particularly for first time offenders.

"Maybe, just maybe there's a slim chance they won't commit that crime again," he said.

The Diversity Institute and Portland Development Commission Presents

Jazz on the Mississippi

September 12, 2009

Don't call it a come back...

Event Time: (5:00pm-10:00pm)

Location: On the corner of Mississippi Ave. and Beech

FREE

Master of Ceremonies: Harold C. Williams Two

Main Stage Lineup

Featuring: A Special Guest, Gretchen Mitchell, Tahira/Memory

Farnell Newton, Band on "Q", Urban Arts Dance Company

Harold C. Williams Two AKA "The Chocolate Champ"

Hosted by: The World Famous and Portland Trail Blazers Own "DJ OG One"

This year, The Diversity Institute's "Jazz on the Mississippi" is the site of the official kick off celebration of the N/NE study/project sponsored by the Portland Development Commission. In this study/project, all citizens are invited to help the PDC identify resources for small businesses, housing, homeownership, and community livability projects in the North and Northeast urban renewal areas. The table is set...come join us and help.

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