



'City of
Roses'

The OP



New Orleans' Woes

*Spike Lee returns to
Gulf Coast*

Page 10

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Wednesday • August 25, 2010

Volume XXXX, Number 33

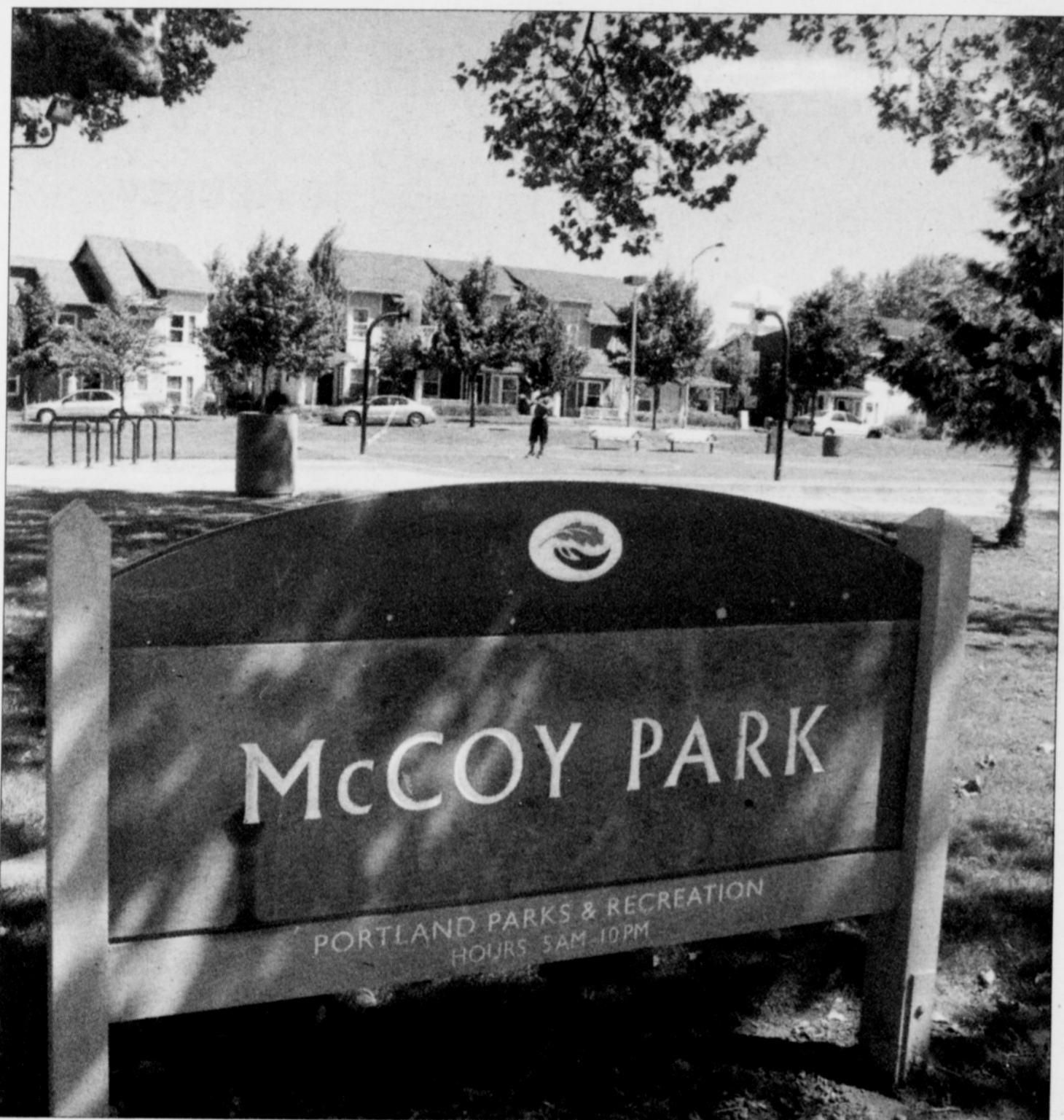


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Anyone excluded from the New Columbia housing development in north Portland would automatically be banned from adjacent McCoy Park under a new ordinance passed by the Portland City Council.

No Sanctuary

Park ban targets trouble

BY JAKE THOMAS
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

The repercussions of two summer shootings at New Columbia has resulted in a new city ordinance that excludes anyone from the neighborhood's adjacent park who have also been banned from the housing development.

New Columbia is an innovative housing development in north Portland that blends rental and owner-occupied properties on the remains of Columbia Villa, a World War II era public housing project.

Residents of the neighborhood, which was reopened in 2005, have strived to get past a troubled past that included gang violence, and chart a positive course for the experimental community. But the recent shootings raised a fresh concern that past gang activity was returning.

Before the ordinance was passed last week, people who were excluded from New Columbia could easily migrate to McCoy Park, a nearly four acre park in the center of the housing development. It meant that someone could be banned from New Columbia, which is operated by the Housing Authority of Portland, for peddling drugs, attempting to establish a gang presence, or generally decreasing the livability of the area, and then simply take a few steps to McCoy Park, which is operated by Portland Parks and Recreation, and be in the clear.

"In other words, they have been able to use McCoy Park as a sanctuary or safe haven and remain in the middle of the community that they've just been excluded from," said Mark Warrington, public safety manager for the parks bureau, at the City Council hearing for the ordinance.

Mike Schmerber, a north Portland police officer, told City Council that there are several individuals who have been excluded from New Columbia for weapons violations, robberies, and gang ties, who have been able to find sanctuary in the park.

Exclusions have been useful for police, said Schmerber, because they can arrest people banned from New Columbia for trespassing, instead of

continued ▼ on page 8

Mayor Goes After Illegal Guns

Gang violence prompts action

In response to nine shootings in which three people were shot and injured over a three day period last week, Portland Mayor Sam Adams has proposed a set of ordinances intended to keep illegal firearms out of the hands of offenders and off the street.

Police suspect the shootings in north, northeast, and southeast Portland were gang related. Eight of them occurred in the course of 24 hours.

Adams said he began preparing the initiatives shortly after taking over the Portland Police Bureau last spring. They would impose a curfew for juveniles who've violated gun laws in the past, create the new crimes for failing keep firearms from children and failing to report the loss or theft of a firearm, increase the penalties for the possession of a loaded firearm in public, and ex-

continued ▼ on page 7

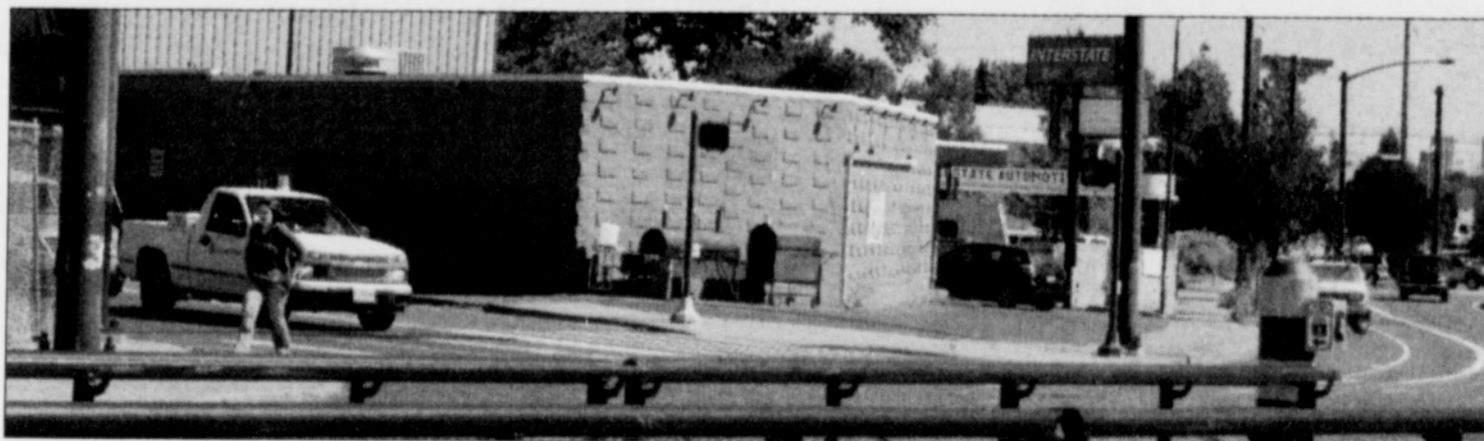


PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Police said a man was shot in the face around 1 a.m. on Friday in the vicinity of North Interstate Avenue and Skidmore Street. It was the ninth suspected gang shooting over a wide geographical area of north, northeast and southeast Portland over a three day period.