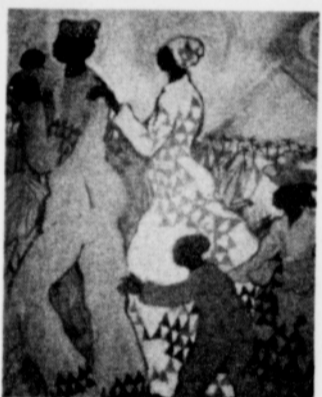


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What's on your list today?

LOCAL NEWS

Gang Task Force Energized

Advocates work together to end deadly cycle

BY CARI HACHMANN THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

In the wake of the gang-related homicide of Portland teenager Andre Peyton, leaders from the African-American community along with gang outreach workers and ex-gang members sat together for two roundtable discussions with Mayor Sam Adams and Police Chief Mike Reese to agree on strategies that will break the cycle of gang violence in Portland.

The demand for peace was announced after the sessions last week and members of the Gang Task Force promised to recommit themselves to providing resources to anyone who wants to leave the life of gang violence.

Adams called for the immediate re-introduction of the Youth Gun Anti-Violence Task Force, a model that was dismantled by the bureau three years ago due to lack of resources.

Leaders from both inside and outside the African American

community are united in asking for support from the circle of friends and family of gang members and affiliates, to get the message out to individuals most vulnerable to committing further violent acts of retaliation to "stop the violence."

On the streets, Chief Reese directed police officers to enforce more strict curfews in the upcoming days in order to remove opportunities for conflict of gang members and affiliates.

Aware that ending gang violence is no simple task, Mayor Adams urges all Portlanders from all walks of life to get involved and work together as a unified front to address gang violence in our communities.

On Sunday, Sept. 26, at 2:06 am, someone pumped bullets into a crowded intersection on Northwest 2nd Avenue and Couch Street, downtown, where 10 seconds of shots shattered car windows, ricocheted buildings, and then fatefully struck and killed Payton, a 19 year-old from north Portland.

Just an hour before, Payton spoke with his mother, Salena Harris, on the phone. She asked when he was coming home, and he told her, "Early...before the birds chirp". Prior that night,

she had been hesitant to let her son go downtown, but he wanted to hang out with friends. She promised to be waiting for him, told him she loved him, and heard the last words her son would say to her, "I love you more," and hung up.

Upon interviewing more than a dozen witnesses, detectives discovered that the homicide was gang-related and a number of gang affiliates were in the area during the time Payton was shot. Though they have yet to determine the relationship between the shooter and Payton, the incident appears to be sparked by a dispute between gangs.

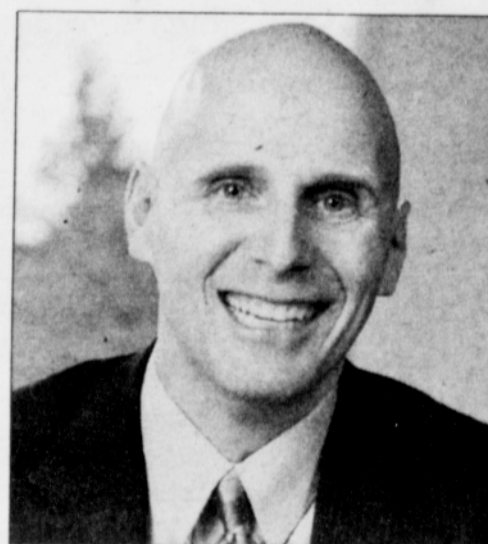
Portland Police Bureau, in cooperation with Crime Stoppers, needs your help in solving the case. No arrests have been made so far, and it is believed that more people have information or may be a witness to the shooting.

A combined \$2,000 will be offered by Crime Stoppers for information leading to an arrest and conviction of the person responsible for Payton's murder. The reward is double the usual amount because of the added support of the African American Chamber of Commerce and the Oregon NW Chapter of Black Law Enforcement Executives.

Local Leader at College Summit

John J. "Ski" Sygielski, president of Mt. Hood Community College, participated Tuesday in the first White House Summit on Community Colleges. The event addressed the critical role of community colleges as part of America's economic vision for the future.

Jill Biden, wife of Vice President Joe Biden and a community college educator, led the summit, which brought together com-



John J. 'Ski' Sygielski

munity college administrators, faculty, students, business and philanthropic leaders, as well as federal and state policy leaders.

The participants discussed how community colleges can ensure a more educated work, which will help American businesses compete in the global economy. President Obama has set a goal of leading the world with the highest proportion of college graduates by 2020.

Correction:

Barbara Neyland of ServiceMaster Building Services was incorrectly identified in a photo caption in our Sept. 29 issue. The Portland Observer regrets the error.