

Mississippi  
 Alberta  
 North Portland

# METRO

Vancouver  
 East County  
 Beaverton

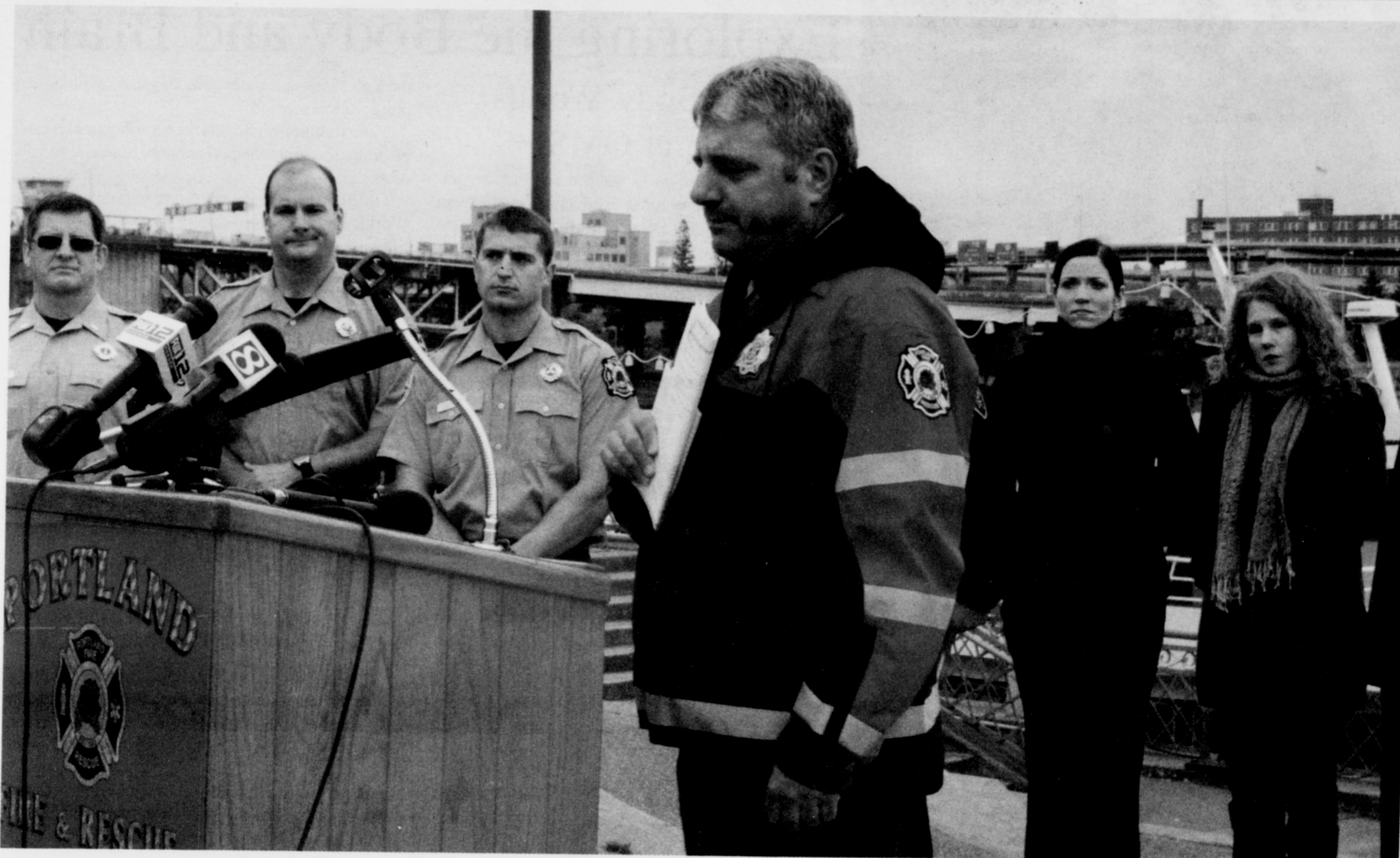


PHOTO BY MINDY COOPER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Paul Corah, Portland Fire and Rescue public information officer, spoke about the rising rates of suicides and the need for the community to work together to help educate and bring awareness about prevention methods, during a suicide prevention press conference on Thursday at Waterfront Park.

## Suicides on the Rise

Delivering a message of hope and prevention

BY MINDY COOPER  
 THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A car plunged through the seawall and disappeared into the Willamette River. Despite attempts by Portland Fire & Rescue divers to pull the woman from the vehicle, she was found dead once the rescue team arrived. The death, which oc-

curred last month, was determined to be a suicide.

According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, Oregon has the eighth highest rate of suicides within the country.

In 2010, 670 Oregon lives were taken as a result of suicide, and the numbers keep climbing.

In an effort to tackle the rising rate of suicides within the state, the non-profit organization Oregon Partnership is on a mission to spread a message of hope and prevention for residents and their loved ones.

According to Tom Parker, director of communications for the non-profit, Oregon Partnership works

diligently every day to promote healthy communities through drug and alcohol awareness, drug prevention programs and a 24-hour crisis line for treatment referrals and suicide intervention.

"Between the Portland Fire and Rescue and the Portland Police Bureau, a suicide attempt is re-

sponded to at least once a week," said Parker. "Oregon Partnership exists for one reason, and that is to prevent suicide."

Usually associated with problems that can be solved, he said the number of lives taken from suicide

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## 'Our Families' Campaign Embraces Diversity

Basic Rights Oregon builds support for LGBTQ issues

Leading up to National Coming Out Day, which took place on Oct 11, the local organization Basic Rights Oregon launched a public education campaign dedicated to raise aware-



Jeana Frazzini

ness on what it's like to live as a person of color who is also lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender.

Included in Basic Rights Oregon's 'Our Families' project are three videos and newspaper ads, which depict the struggles of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender minority families in an effort to educate the Portland community.

"Often times our communities seek to separate the two identities—you are either gay or transgender or a person of color," said Ariel

Cerrud, a member of Basic Rights Oregon's Our Families Project. "'Our Families' reveals that our strength lies in being all of who we are."

Basic Rights Oregon is the state's chief advocacy, education and political organization dedicated to ending discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. The group interviewed families from Latino, African

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