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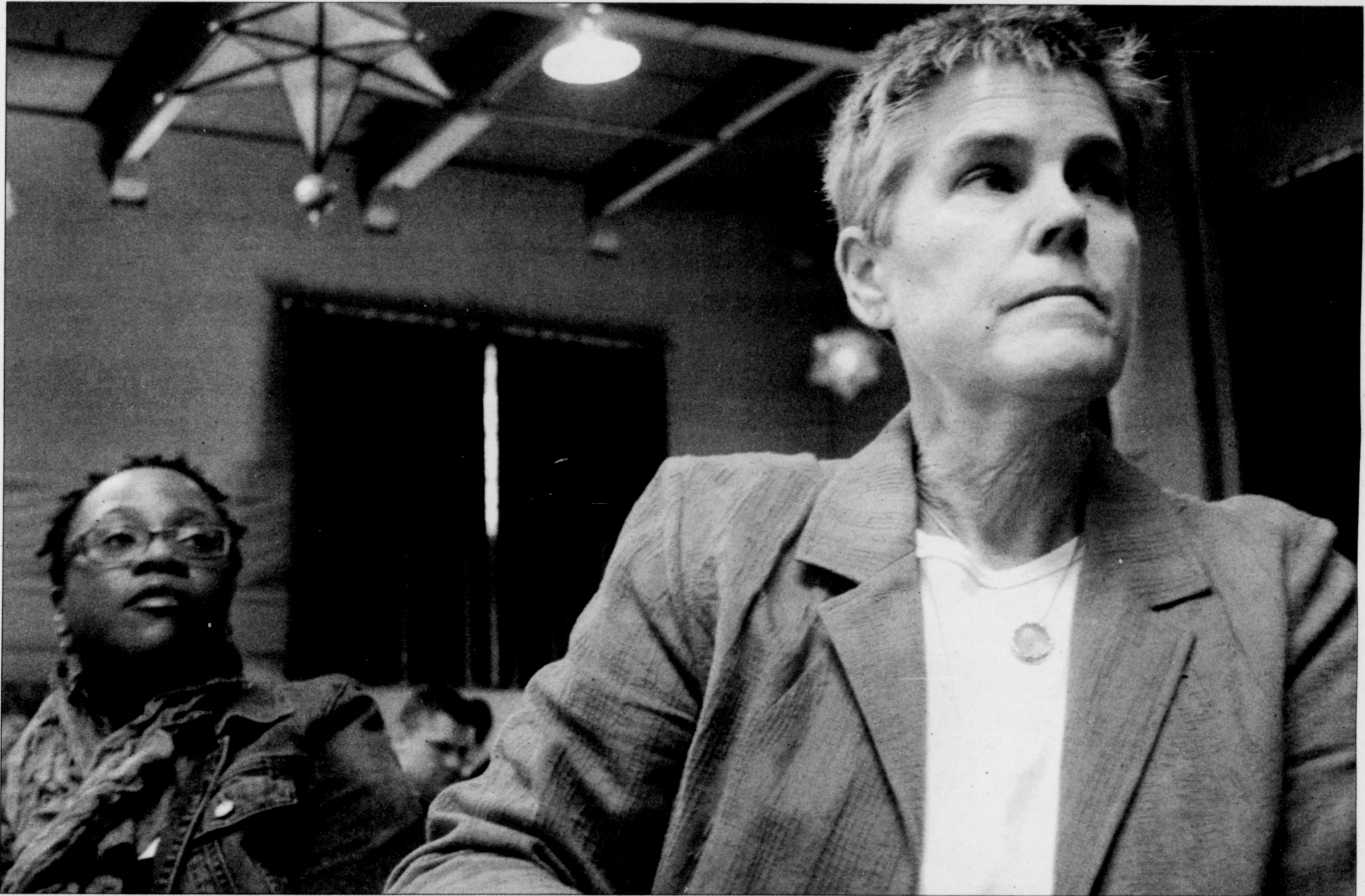


PHOTO BY MINDY COOPER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Sgt. Margaret Bahnson (right) of the Portland Police Bureau's Vulnerable Adult Unit, speaks out on the growing number of crimes committed against the elderly during a public forum last week.

Crimes Against Elderly

Advocates discuss tactics to stop abuse

BY MINDY COOPER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Multnomah County received 8,300 reports of abuse, fraud and financial exploitation committed against a growing elderly population last year.

"We are looking at ways to partner with the community on abuse prevention and

draw a road map for Multnomah County on how to prevent this abuse," said Mohammad Bader, manager of Protective Services and chair for the Interagency Community for Abuse Prevention.

Bader joined other community members and professionals from all walks of life last week for a full-day forum to discuss proactive methods to help victims and stop new offenses.

"We are looking at ways to enrich our area and respond to victims of abuse and their

families by building a network of organizations and individuals who are concerned about this issue," Bader said.

He added that he is happy to see the issue receive more attention, especially because the Portland area is beginning to see an increase in incidents, which rose by 2.5 percent from 2010.

In recent months, Bader said they have particularly seen an increase in financial abuse he attributes to the poor state of the economy.

"With age you seem to accumulate more resources, including pension, incomes and houses," he said. "And as more people are in touch with older and elderly adults with money and resources, this becomes an issue."

Abuse in long term care facilities and the non-reporting of crimes against the elderly are added concerns.

"People need to know it is okay to call and let us know what is going on," Bader said.

According to Multnomah County, 84 percent of crimes against the elderly went unreported last year.

"Our job is to educate people on the

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