

The
PO



Heat Wave!

Health warnings are issued as temperatures reach near 100 degrees
See story, page 3



Into to College Life
Summer camp at PSU shows boys and girls the way to higher ed
See Metro, page 11

The Portland Observer 43

'City of Roses'



Volume XXXXI
Number 31



www.portlandobserver.com
Wednesday • August 15, 2012

Established in 1970
Committed to Cultural Diversity

years of
community service

Community Rights a Wrong

Victims of hate crime shown strong support

BY MINDY COOPER
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

After racist graffiti was sprayed Thursday on businesses and the Sons of Haiti Grand Lodge on North Mississippi Avenue, countless residents and neighbors have shown up to voice their support for the hate crime victims, who were heavy hearted.

Portland Police officers are investigating the death threats and racially derogatory messages as a hate crime. The graffiti was found on both the building and food cart next to the lodge—both run by African Americans.

Melva Lee Holmes, the Grand Worthy Matron of the Most Worshipful St. Joseph Grand Lodge, a sister group located at the Masonic temple, said the vandalism was heartbreaking.

"Someone came down very very early Thursday morning and put graffiti all around the hall and vendor carts," said Holmes, 72, a member of the local chapter since the 70s. "Nigger was written all around the side along with a Swastika and a statue of a man with a rope around his neck."

Although it was the first time anything of this nature has happened at the lodge, for Holmes, the whole experience was just awful, she said.

"When I got down here I was just so shocked. I was so hurt, and I did shed some tears because this order here has done nothing but good for the community," she said.

Holmes said, however, she has been extremely moved by the number of people who have extended a hand of support for the lodge, which has served as a home for celebrations, since moving to the neighborhood more than four decades ago.

"We do a lot and the best we can to help the community," she said. "We give baskets of food on Thanksgiving. We also do things for Boise school. Next week, we are going to help rally people to vote."

The lodge also hosts numerous weddings and celebrations throughout the year, as well as weekly Karate lessons for youth. "It is a shame someone would do this in the name of hate. My heart was so heavy because I can't understand who would want to do something like that," she said. "But the neighborhood has really rallied behind us."

Ross Daniels, a friend of the adjacent food carts and the lodge, agreed.

"These people are such boring people who can't think of anything else but to use ugly old stereotypes," he said. "Yet it

continued ▼ on page 9



PHOTO BY MINDY COOPER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Melva Lee Holmes, Grand Worthy Matron of the Most Worshipful St. Joseph Grand Lodge, said the recent vandalism to her group's Masonic temple on North Mississippi Avenue was heartbreaking. She expressed, however, deep gratitude for the community support received from throughout the neighborhood.