

# Unfathomable Acts

continued **▲** from front

too much and wait too long to get the proper care. "She's not going to shoot anybody, but what if she harms herself?" he said.

Martin says guns are a problem, but there is also a systemic and societal problem-- people feeling isolated.

Laura also feels the availability of mental health care is more important than gun control. A society without free or easy access to mental health care is like having uncontrolled guns, she said. "Humans can find ways to hurt other humans

display that in advance." Inexpensive access to services and removing the stigma of mental health issues would help individuals get help early on and help prevent acts like this in the future, he said.

Starks also believes the media should be less focused on demonizing the perpetrator and more fixed on telling the stories of the victims. He says media attention on the killer makes it possible for them to "go out in a blaze of glory" and "promotes violent activity".

Starks does not own a gun, but believes the right to bear arms is an important rule of the Constitution.



*'Right to bear arms a tragic interpretation of individualism,'*  
-- Danny Bell



*'There should be a lot more gun control,'*  
-- Marti Lituczy



*'We should be careful about who is able to buy a gun,'* -- Bonnie



Leslie King (right) and Tenille Beseda place flowers at the entrance to the Clackamas Town Center one day after a gunman entered the mall and opened fire on shoppers. Two people were killed and another was injured. Police said the gunman wanted to kill as many people as possible. (AP photo)

no matter what."

"It really saddens me that the allocation of our money and resources is being poured into the military and wars outside of our country, when we have some serious concerns here," she said.

Similarly, Micky Starks, 59, said "I don't think the issue is gun control," said. "I think the issue is access to mental health services."

We need to make changes to better the current mental health system, he said. "People are troubled, and most

Martin believes the American right to bear arms is archaic.

Danny Bell of Portland agrees, "We are good people, however, the misplaced idea of individualism is overriding the well being of our community and has manifested in episodes of violence where people are gunned down."

"This is a tragic symptom of a culture in America," said Bell, who is the publisher of a local quarterly called Beloved Community. "Take a deep breath," said Bell quoting President Obama. "Look at the continuum of violence in America."

Bell calls the right to bear arms an archaic application, a misplaced mentality, and a tragic interpretation of individualism. Two hundred years ago, when the constitution was formed in 1788, yes, people needed the right to defend themselves because there was no police apparatus, he said.

"This is the 21st century," said Bell, "We don't need automatic weapons. We are a country of the rule of law."

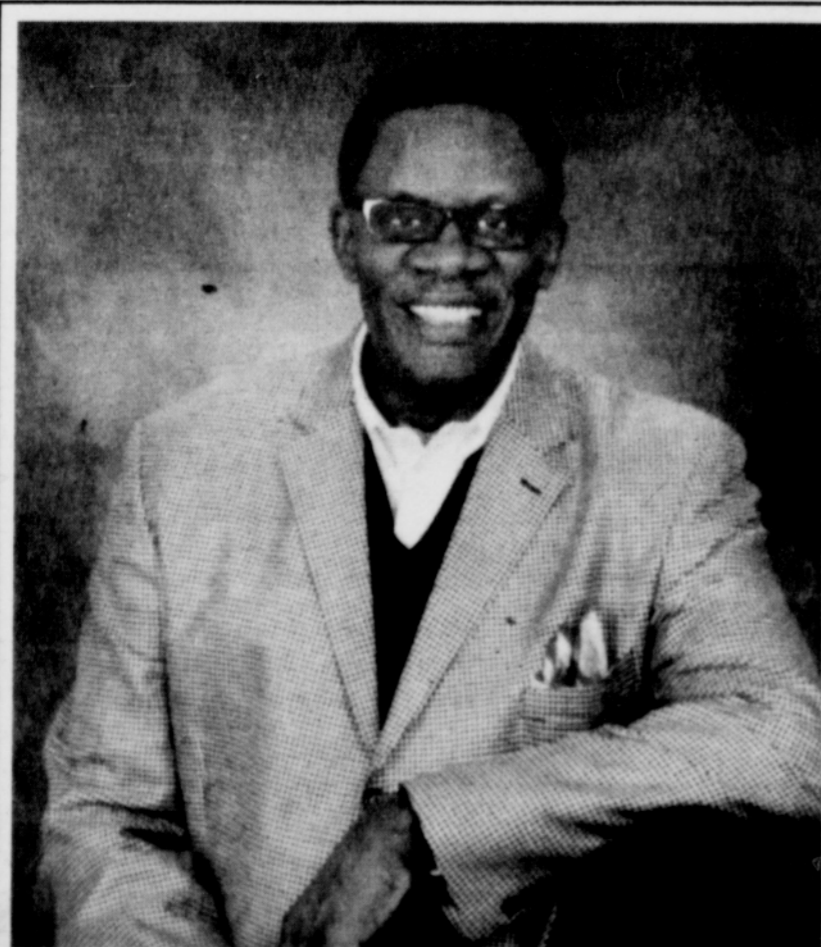
But how does the law prevent a person armed with a powerful killing machine from walking into a school or shopping mall and ending the lives of innocent children or adults without uttering a word? That's a tough question.

Bell didn't have the answer. However, in the spirit of Obama's words: what can we do but try? First things first, said Bell, "A change of attitude is required, an attitude of cooperation. No pointing fingers, "We have to agree to cooperate," he said.

Bonny, last name anonymous, 41, says she doesn't support taking away peoples' gun rights, but we should be careful about who is able to buy a gun. "We need to make sure the mentally ill don't get a bunch of guns in their hands," she said. She also believes the private sales of guns needs to be looked at.

Brandon, last name anonymous, 31, believes owning guns for self-protection should be kept legal, but there should be limits as to how you can get a gun, he said. He says the Clackamas shooting threw him off guard. He was in disbelief, "I didn't think people would go off like that," he said.

As far as the future of gun violence in America, "It's never going to end," he said. "But there should be a little regulation. Guns shouldn't be so easily accessible."



Dr. Billy R. Flowers

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loss:

- Develop good body mechanics through exercises to improve your posture.
- Eat a diet rich in calcium and vitamin D. Your doctor might prescribe a medication to help prevent further bone loss.

• Exercise regularly to help strengthen bones. Talk with a doctor to learn exercises you can safely perform.

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