

# Rattled Drivers

continued **▲** from front

down, smile, let's just go," he says.

But on June 20, just after getting off work, still in uniform, Martin would run into something he had never encountered in his

life, a gun.

While waiting on a bus platform in the Lents Neighborhood on 82nd Avenue and Powell Street with another female bus operator, he said he was approached by a frantic man screaming that he had just had a

gun pointed at him. Martin directed the man to a nearby unmarked police car, but almost immediately a gun-wielding man came around the corner where Martin and the operator were standing.

Referring to that moment when the gun was brandished, Martin says with dread, "that gun only had a small barrel, but I tell you it felt like a cannon to

me." In that instant he says his mind raced as he thought about his daughter and girlfriend, as well as the safety of the driver next to him who he said was "freaking out."

The turmoil happened just a few feet away from a 7-11 convenience outlet. Martin later discovered there was store surveillance video showing an argument between two men inside the store, with one of the men leaving the store with a gun in hand pointed outward.

Though there were other witnesses and even a description of the gunman, no arrests were made.

once in the chest, and twice in the stomach.

The worker was rushed to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries and later identified as 40-year-old Fadi Hamad, a long-time Tri-Met employee.

Police continue to investigate the July 17 incident and have offered up to a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of Hamad's attacker.

"Any sort of attack like this is disturbing to us," says TriMet public relations officer Roberta Altstadt. "We take the safety of our drivers and riders very seriously."

TriMet's director of safety

*Any sort of attack like this is disturbing to us. We take the safety of our drivers and riders very seriously.*

— TriMet public relations officer Roberta Altstadt

A spokesperson for TriMet Transit Police said because no person was physically harmed, and because there were conflicting stories about what actually happened, a crime wasn't apparent or didn't occur and the investigation ended.

Since the incident, both Martin and the other driver have taken time off work. Separately, both have begun receiving therapy to begin working through the experience, Martin said.

The 48-year-old Martin said he now has constant, uncontrollable facial twitches, and still has trouble coping with the incident.

Per the advice of his therapist, he went into a 7-11 store just feet away from where the incident occurred as part of an exercise to heal the mental shock he had encountered.

There has been a long history of violent attacks on bus operators at Tri-Met, both verbal and physical although operators don't necessarily report them every time. Since October 2012 there have been three operators stabbed; two of those happened while coming out of the transit agency's designated break areas.

Last week, a bus operator was stabbed in broad daylight coming out of a Tri-Met break room on Southeast 94th Avenue and Foster Road. Police say the perpetrator immediately began hurling racial epithets at the driver and then stabbed him three times;

and security Harry Saporta said, "Sometimes an operator will experience a rider who is upset, especially over paying a fare. The operators are trained how to assess the situation and avoid a confrontation. They're instructed to request the assistance of a supervisor rather than have a situation escalate."

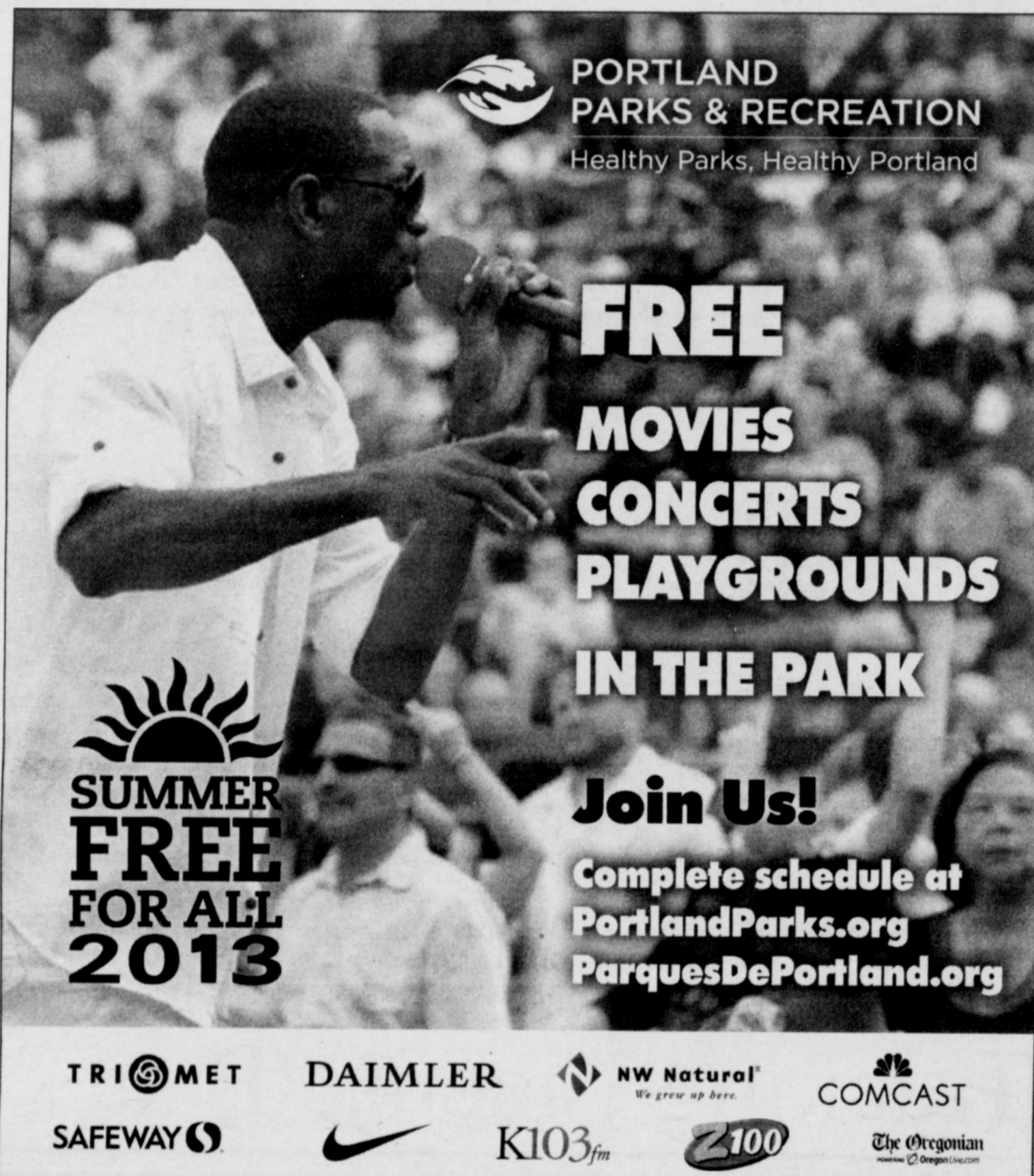
Last week's stabbing, however, was a much different situation, Saporta said.

"The operator happened to be in the wrong place, at the wrong time. Anyone in that area that happened to come in contact with the suspect could have become a victim," he said.

In light of the recent attacks, TriMet has increased security in certain hotspots, and say they have plans on joining citizens at City Hall soon in an effort to do something about homeless camps in the Lents Neighborhood, which they feel are a major source of concern for not only operator safety, but that of the general public as well.

Dan Martin is still off work and continues to attend therapy. He remains fervent in his belief that the acts he experienced on June 20 deserve to be explored deeper. He continues to work with his union in an effort to get a second look.

"I'm hugely disappointed. I thought I was a valuable employee," he says. "I've given them 110 percent every day that I work."



**PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION**  
Healthy Parks, Healthy Portland

**FREE**  
**MOVIES**  
**CONCERTS**  
**PLAYGROUNDS**  
**IN THE PARK**

**Join Us!**  
Complete schedule at  
[PortlandParks.org](http://PortlandParks.org)  
[ParquesDePortland.org](http://ParquesDePortland.org)

**SUMMER FREE FOR ALL 2013**

TRIMET DAIMLER NW Natural COMCAST  
SAFEWAY Nike K103fm Z100 The Oregonian

*Peterson  
Levine* PC

**ATTORNEYS**

*Local Lawyers for  
Your Legal Needs*

(503) 288-5522

3537 N. Williams Avenue, Suite 101

[www.petersonlevine.com](http://www.petersonlevine.com)

- Family Law
- Bankruptcy
- Criminal Law
- Expungements
- Animal Law
- Real Estate Matters
- Wills & Trusts
- Probate

