

Cold Case Murders Confronted

CONTINUED FROM FRONT

term, but sometimes even a death sentence. Witnesses or informants have historically run risks with police officers that might not give them the protection they need after providing critical information, or risks within communities of being targeted for betraying neighbors, family members, or locals who have committed crimes.

The campaign billboard features the consequences of this long-term “No Snitching” culture – a row of black women holding up the photos of their sons, daughters, and other family members who have been killed with no one being held accountable.

Like thousands of other black families across the United States, they are left to pick up the pieces after the loved ones in their lives are killed or disappear. There is no information that leads to the killer, and the case goes cold because no witnesses are willing to come forward.

Of the grieving women on the billboard, one is a familiar face for the many local vigils and meetings she has attended. She is Lucy Mashia, a Portland mother whose son, Leonard James “L.J.” Irving was murdered over two years ago.

“I just want to know why,”



PHOTO BY OLIVIA OLIVIA/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER
Taunya Mayo lost her son Dion Anthony Matthews Jr. in a homicide only a few weeks ago. Still in shock, she wonders if she will ever find justice.

Mashia asked, during a memorial meeting earlier this year of victim families after another young black man, D’Andre Dickerson, was murdered. “The suffering is hard for me, when I still don’t have any answers, when I still have to ask when someone out there knows

how my son died and who killed him.”

“I’m not afraid of them,” Mashia said. “I am not going to live in fear or gangs and no one else here should either.”

Her sentiment is not unique – at the same vigil, several mothers,

sisters, even daughters expressed the same concerns. The room went silent, as a new grieving family joined Mashia and others down the same dark path of wondering: who killed their son?

Last week, the Enough is Enough PDX group met publicly to unveil their new “SNITCH” campaign but also to discuss the issue at heart – what can they do to get more information about loved ones’ violent deaths, and how can they do their part in ending a cycle of violence the room described repeatedly as senseless and meaningless.

“What good is it to take my son from me? What good is it to a talk about these young people like gangsters or gang violence statistics? That is someone’s baby you’re talking about,” pled Kimberly Dixon, who lost her son Andreas Dixon Jones two years ago. “I carried him for 42 weeks, and no one held a vigil but me – but he was not a statistic. He was a human. He was my child. My son.”

Dixon, who looked steadily into cameras and the faces of local reporters hoping to get her message out there, later comforted a new mother along with the rest of the group. Dixon is also the committee chair for Enough is Enough PDX, so she

has consistently been one of the first people to reach out to newly bereaved mothers along with Antoinette Edwards, director of the Portland Office of Youth Violence Prevention.

The newest grieving mother in attendance, Taunya Mayo, lost her son, Dion Anthony Matthews Jr., only a few weeks ago. Still in shock, she wonders if she too will never find justice or the killer of her 23-year-old son.

“It’s just being a decent human being, to let people know if you saw a person killed,” she said. “Someone had to have seen my son get killed and I can’t imagine living with that and saying absolutely nothing.”

Multnomah County Deputy District Attorney Eric Zimmerman also spoke at the meeting, explaining how often “there is not a soul to be found” when authorities seek leads on killings, even with multiple witnesses.

So far this year, there have been 28 homicides in Portland this year.

Dixon said it’s not just a problem for the mothers in the room, either, “It can happen to anybody,” she said, “so we all have to work to get information to these families. There are obstacles, it is difficult, but it must be done.”



“Dedicated to providing excellent service and superior care of your loved one”

Funerals • Memorial Services • Cremation • Preplanning

www.terryfamilyfuneralhome.com

Funeral Home staff available 24 hours

503-249-1788

2337 N Williams Ave
Portland, Or 97227



Bring in ad to redeem for a FREE
“Putting My House In Order”
Pre-planning guide.

ACCURACY



Trained to Hate but
Designed to Love

Written by Terry Malley

ORDER YOUR:
“Train to Hate but designed to Love”
Hat-T-Shirt & other merch at myurbankingdom.com

You can order this book at any local book store,
[just give them this ISBN number or the Authors name- “Accuracy”

ISBN 978-1-5049-1795-7 www.trainedtohatebutdesignedtolove.com

Purchase your book at:

Amazon * Google * Barnes & Nobel * AuthorHouse.com

Available in November

For more information please write to this address:

4784 N Lombard St Suite B # 157, Portland, OR 97203