

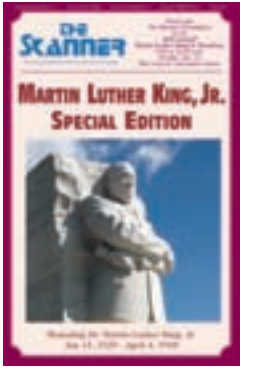


THE SKANNER

CHALLENGING PEOPLE TO SHAPE A BETTER FUTURE NOW



INSIDE:
Martin Luther King Special Edition



Anti-Gang Project

Connected grows from 100 men to 100 women -- for kids

By Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

The Connected program, which in 2011 sought to bring 100 men out to a major gang hotspot every Friday night as a way to build positive relationships with young people, is branching out.

Now, organizers say, they're turning their efforts towards organizing 100 women to reach out to youth as well – particularly gang-influenced girls.

The effort comes as a spate of suspected gang shootings over the weekend saw bullets flying into a home and into a car with children inside.

The Portland Police report a string of incidents Sunday started with a drive-by just after 2 p.m. at a residence on Southeast 72nd Avenue where young kids were at home; about 15 minutes later shots were fired at a home on Southeast 162 Avenue; and a third drive-by was reported just before 3 p.m. at Southeast 143rd Avenue.

At 3:06 p.m. shots were fired from one vehicle into another near the intersection of North Williams Avenue and Fremont, injuring one of the children inside the car, but not seriously.

A fifth shooting was reported Monday night near North Iris Way and Swenson Street. Police are investigating whether all the incidents are related; injuries were reported but none were life-threatening.

Last summer, Connected showed data indicating reported crimes dropped in the Lloyd Center area by 24 percent after just a few months of Friday night walks through Holladay Park by the group's volunteers.

The park had been considered a major hotspot for violence even before 14-year-old Shiloh Hampton was shot to death there last April; investigators say he had no ties to gangs and was an innocent bystander in the line of fire. According to the Portland Police, the city had eight gang killings in 2011 and more than 100 gang squad call-

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SURVIVOR



PHOTO COURTESY RED CROSS NORTHWEST REGION

From left, Leonard Lamberth, Diane Lamberth, Tiffany Lamberth, and center front, Latay Hammick. The family will be at the Red Cross MLK Blood Drive Monday, Jan. 16, to thank donors and remind them of the value of giving blood and signing up to be an organ donor.

Young Girl, Family Battle Sickle Cell

Education and volunteer efforts coordinated by Red Cross

By Nate Warren of the American Red Cross Pacific Northwest Blood Services Region Special To The Skanner News

Latay Hammick is ready for graduation as she finishes up the eighth grade at Vernon School.

She is excited for her freshman year of high school, still undecided on which school she'll attend, but she is ready for new adventures.

For Latay and her family,

there's more to be excited about than a new school year. It's also been over a year since Latay has needed blood transfusions at Doernbecher Children's Hospital, where she had her last medical emergency.

When Latay was born, she was diagnosed with sickle cell anemia, a disorder that causes red blood cells to form an abnormal crescent shape. Because of this rare shape, sickle cells are fragile and only last about ten to twenty days in

the bloodstream, while healthy cells typically survive for about 120 days.

This means patients like Latay are chronically short on their red blood cell count. Since these cells play a critical role of transporting oxygen throughout the body, they must be replaced. To help relieve symptoms of anemia in sickle cell patients, blood transfusions are necessary.

When she was two years old, Latay had open heart surgery. Many pints of donated blood

were used for a successful operation. "It took a few hours, and while the sickle cell blood was coming out, she had pints of good blood coming in," said Tiffany Lamberth, who is Latay's mother. "When a sickle cell child goes into the hospital, it's called a crisis. Latay usually stays there for three to five days."

Leonard Lamberth, Latay's grandfather, sits on the board of the Sickle Cell Foundation

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DHS Tries to Turnaround 'Foster Crisis'

New effort to keep Black, Native American kids out of state care

By Lisa Loving
Of The Skanner News

It could well signal a sea-change in Oregon's troubled foster care program for children.

Responding to dismal statistics – and heartbreaking personal stories of broken families – the Oregon Department of Human Services is launching a major initia-

tive to reduce the number of children in foster care statewide.

Using an advertising campaign and a website of volunteer opportunities, DHS officials announced in December a "call to action" they hope will move the state out of its foster care "crisis."

"We know we can do better at safely keeping children at home or with a relative," the agency's website says. "We have relied too

much on foster care as our primary option for protecting children."

Raise Me Up's new Facebook page includes links to media coverage, volunteer events and training opportunities around Oregon, all focusing on reducing the number of kids in foster care.

One recent posting is a commentary

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