

The Building Block

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Season of Peace Gun Turn-in on December 8

The Sullivan's Gulch Neighborhood Association will partner with the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation at a "Season of Peace" Gun Turn-in Saturday, December 8, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Grace Memorial Episcopal Church, 1535 NE 17th Ave., Portland (between Weidler and Halsey streets).

This will be the first time Ceasefire has celebrated the winter holidays with a gun turn-in. It also continues a new format for our gun turn-ins in that it targets a single neighborhood.

Those who turn in operable guns will receive \$50 merchandise certificates from local merchants—a great way to start holiday shopping. Certificates of less value will be given in exchange for ammunition and BB guns. This is a no-questions-asked event, so gun donors need not worry about police questioning them about the source of the gun. Portland police will do all the gun handling as well as the destruction of guns after the event.



Among the certificates to be given in exchange for guns are ones from Fred Meyer, Lloyd Center, 76 Gasoline, New Seasons, Nike Stores, and the Trail Blazers.

The Dec. 8 turn-in will be the third in what we intend to be a continuing series with neighborhood association partners. Like the first, in St. Johns, it will also feature a toy gun turn-in, where play

guns may be exchanged for other toys. Last spring, we did a turn-in partnering with the Concordia and Vernon neighborhood associations.

Since 1994, Ceasefire has collected and destroyed more than 6,600 guns. In both the Concordia and Sullivan's Gulch events, we have worked with Northeast Portland Crime Prevention Coordinator Mary [redacted], who has been instrumental in connecting us with the neighborhood associations. Betse [redacted] represents the Sullivan's Gulch board, and Katie [redacted] led the Concordia Neighborhood Association in its effort at the spring event. ♦

Founder honored at vineyard supper

Helvetia Winery and a perfect Sunday afternoon were the backdrop for friends and supporters who gathered on September 9 at Ceasefire's annual winery event to honor Julie [redacted] with the 2007 Founders' Award. Julie, a founder of the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation, was honored for her selfless dedication to advancing the organization and its mission on so many levels. Ceasefire Oregon and the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation extend sincere appreciation to everyone who attended or donated in honor of the occasion. ♦

Building safe and healthy communities free from gun violence



Police chiefs make recommendations

In September, the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) issued a report titled *Taking a Stand: Reducing Gun Violence in Our Communities*. The report is a product of an IACP summit held in April, in which over 180 law enforcement executives and others participated. The recommendations focus on three main areas:

“*Keeping Communities Safe* by improving public understanding about the risks of gun violence, working with community leaders, and reducing easy access to firearms, especially for at-risk individuals.

“*Preventing and Solving Gun Crime* by stopping the flow of illegal guns, sharing information among jurisdictions, and training officers to respond to gun crimes, including tracing all guns.

“*Keeping Police Officers Safe* by reducing the firepower available to criminals, providing protective technologies, and improving training and support for officers in handling guns and situations involving guns and their aftermath.”

“Specific recommendations include:

- Requiring judges and law enforcement to remove guns from situations of domestic violence...

- Requiring that all gun sales take place through Federal Firearms License (FFL) holders with mandatory background checks

- Enacting an effective ban on military-style assault weapons, armor-piercing handgun ammunition, .50 caliber sniper rifles and other weapons that enable criminals to outgun law enforcement...

- Repealing the Tiahrt Amendment, which hinders investigation of illegal gun trafficking...

- Mandating safe storage of firearms by private citizens and providing safe facilities where gun owners can store their weapons

- Mandating reporting of lost and stolen firearms”

One of the most important insights to come out of the summit, the report states, “was the realization that law enforcement and the IACP cannot fight this battle alone. Law enforcement leaders need public support; they need partners in every community; and they need elected officials, in Congress and in state legislatures, to stop catering to special interests and instead act in the public interest to reduce the terrible, and escalating, risk of gun violence in America.” ♦

The Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation (COEF) works to reduce gun violence by educating the public and providing opportunities to dispose of firearms. Since 1994, we have provided for the safe surrender and disposal of over 6,600 guns. Our affiliate, Ceasefire Oregon, works to reduce gun violence by advocating reasonable gun safety legislation and opposing irresponsible bills.

Contributions to COEF are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Contributions to Ceasefire Oregon are not tax deductible because its primary function is to work on behalf of and against proposed gun laws. If you'd like to get involved or make a donation, please contact us. Please also send us your email address. We greatly appreciate your support. ♦



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Supporters endorse ASK Campaign

The ASK Campaign has been a part of the public education and outreach activities of the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation (COEF) for over four years. ASK (Asking Saves Kids) encourages parents to protect their children by asking a very simple question: “Is there a gun where my child plays?”

COEF is now taking the campaign to the next level by implementing a comprehensive ASK Campaign in Portland, in partnership with PAX. We will formally launch the Portland ASK Campaign at a press conference on November 29.

The Portland ASK Campaign will penetrate the more than 220,000 Portland households with a child under the age of 18. Billboards, transit advertising, and public service announcements will reach thousands of Portlanders each day. Celebrities and community leaders will be featured, thus raising community awareness about the dangers of firearms in the home, and linking the public to ASK resources and information. Education workshops, community events, and speaking engagements will reach parents on a grassroots level.

The national ASK Campaign was developed by PAX in collaboration with the American Academy of Pediatrics. It is endorsed by the American Medical Association, American Public Health Association, Children’s Defense Fund, National Education Association, and National Head Start Association, among others.

The Portland ASK Campaign has been endorsed by Governor Ted Kulongoski, First Lady Mary Oberst, Portland Mayor Tom Potter, Portland Police Chief Rosie Sizer, and many other community leaders. Organizations endorsing the Portland ASK

Campaign include the American Red Cross—Oregon Trail Chapter, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Housing Authority of Portland, Oregon Pediatric Society, Portland Parks and Recreation, Providence Health System, and YWCA of Greater Portland.

If your organization might be interested in endorsing or participating in the Portland ASK Campaign, please contact COEF. Organizations can participate in a variety of ways, including these:

- Distribute and display ASK materials, such as brochures and posters
- Include the ASK message in your newsletters
- Provide information and a link on your website to the Portland ASK Campaign website
- Include the ASK message in parent education, health education, and babysitting classes you offer
- Host an ASK parent-education workshop

Gun violence in the United States is a public health problem of enormous proportions. Nearly eight children are killed by guns every day in the United States. (CDC data as of 2003.) Guns can be found in 40% of Oregon homes. In 26% of those homes, a firearm is loaded, and 64% of those firearms are also unlocked. (DHS data as of 2004.) These guns represent tragedies waiting to happen.

You can prevent such tragedies by asking if there are guns in the homes where your children play and if those guns are safely stored. Please help us encourage parents throughout the Portland area to ASK.

For more information or to get involved, please visit the Portland ASK Campaign website at www.PortlandAsks.org or contact COEF at 503/220-1669. ♦



Youth suicide is a terrible problem in Oregon. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among Oregonians aged 10 to 24, claiming 67 young lives in 2004 and 61 in 2005. Firearms were used in 54% of those suicides in 2004 and in 69% in 2005.

Such tragedies are all the more heartbreaking because they are preventable.

Does your youngster have easy access to guns?

For information on youth suicide, visit the website of the Youth Suicide Prevention Program, Oregon Department of Human Services (DHS), <http://oregon.gov/DHS/ph/ipe/ysp>. ♦

1-866-SPEAK-UP

SPEAK UP is a national program that empowers students to report threats of school shootings and other weapon-related violence. Students can call this national toll-free hotline, 1-866-SPEAK-UP, and report threats anonymously. Professional operators answer calls in English and Spanish and contact the school and law enforcement.

In 81% of school shootings, the shooters told others about their plans beforehand. Make sure your kids know the hotline number. For more information, visit www.paxusa.org. ♦

Volunteer profile: Mary

Success is, more often than not, achieved by working together. We are happy to announce that Mary _____, the crime prevention coordinator with the Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement, has joined the board of the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation (COEF). Mary has been an invaluable resource for COEF's neighborhood gun turn-in projects.

Mary is a graduate of Portland State University, with a bachelor of science degree in the administration of justice and a master's degree in conflict resolution. A former basketball player, Mary originally came to Portland State from Seattle on a women's basketball scholarship.

Mary has worked as a corrections officer and corrections counselor for the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office and a contract facilitator for the Oregon Department of Human Services regarding child welfare. She has also worked with children and families at Self Enhancement, Inc., and she is currently a mentor for African American young girls who are placed in the foster care system. Mary and her husband, also a former basketball player, have one son. Mary has been a guest speaker in both Russia and New Zealand, promoting the family group conferencing model of reconnecting children with their incarcerated mothers.

With Mary's resources, COEF has been able to connect with both the Concordia and Sullivan's Gulch neighborhood associations to sponsor gun turn-ins. We enthusiastically welcome Mary to the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation Board of Directors. ♦

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Make copies of this newsletter and give them to your friends.

Building Block
Send COEF \$50 to "buy back" a gun.

School District Can Prohibit Employees' Guns at School

The Jackson County Circuit Court ruled on November 9 that the Medford School District can prohibit its employees from bringing guns onto school property. The court held that Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) 166.170 does not preclude the school district from enforcing its employment policy concerning guns.

The Medford School District's policy, like the policy in many Oregon school districts, "prohibits employees, district contractors and/or their employees and district volunteers from possessing dangerous or deadly weapons or firearms on District property or at school sponsored events." (Quotation is from the court's order.)

Shirley Katz, a teacher at South Medford High School and a member of the National Rifle Association, has a concealed handgun license, as do over 93,400 other Oregonians (number as of January 2007). Katz sued the school district, claiming that she had a right to carry her concealed handgun on campus and that she intended to do so. She asserted that the school district's policy violated ORS 166.170, and asked the court to prohibit the school district from enforcing its policy against her.


In 1995, the Oregon legislature enacted ORS 166.170, taking away from cities and counties their authority to enact ordinances regulating guns and thereby reduce gun violence in their neighborhoods. ORS 166.170 consists of two sections. The first provides, "Except as expressly authorized by state statute, the authority to regulate in any manner whatsoever the sale, acquisition, transfer, owner-

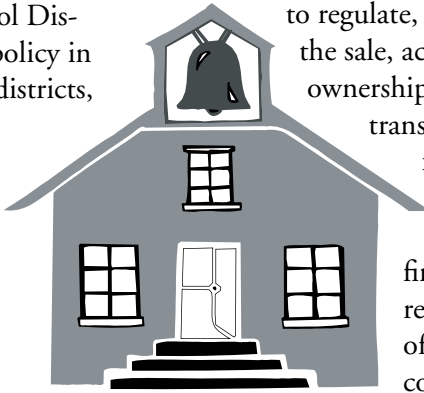
ship, possession, storage, transportation or use of firearms . . . is vested solely in the Legislative Assembly." The second section provides, "Except as expressly authorized by state statute, no county, city or other municipal corporation or district may enact civil or criminal ordinances, including but not limited to zoning ordinances, to regulate, restrict or prohibit the sale, acquisition, transfer, ownership, possession, storage, transportation or use of firearms . . ."

Katz argued that the statute's first section should be read independently of the second, but the court rejected that position, explaining that

the statute's sections must be read together, as the second implements the first. The court assumed that the statute applies to school districts, but did not decide that question. After closely examining the statutory language and dictionary definitions of "ordinance," and comparing the language to other Oregon statutes that refer to both "ordinance" and "policy," the court held that ORS 166.170 does not apply to the school board policy. Therefore, the court held that the school board policy prohibiting employees from carrying guns on campus does not violate the statute and can be enforced against Katz.

Ceasefire Oregon applauds the court's decision. Teachers with loaded handguns in classrooms put students in extremely dangerous situations. Many school districts throughout Oregon prohibit teachers from carrying guns because they have determined that kids are safest when teachers do not have guns on campus. The court


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correctly found that such policies do not violate state law.

Katz's attorney has said that the case will be appealed to the Oregon Court of Appeals. The Oregon Firearms Federation (OFF), which, according to the *Oregonian*, has paid Katz's legal bills to date, will likely finance the appeal. The Oregon School Boards Association, which drafted the sample policy used by many school districts, supports the Medford School District.

It is possible, of course, that OFF (self-described as "Oregon's only no compromise lobbying group") and other extremist elements of the gun lobby in Oregon will introduce a bill in the Oregon legislature to force school districts to allow employees to carry loaded handguns in schools. If you would like to be notified if such a bill is introduced, so you can effectively voice your objections, send your name and email address to Ceasefire Oregon at info@ceasefireoregon.org. ♦

In 1992 the United States had more federally licensed gun dealers than it had gas stations, but now only five states do: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Wyoming, and Oregon. The number of dealers holding type 1 federal firearms licenses plummeted 79 percent from 1994 to 2007 (from 245,628 dealers to 50,630), reports the Violence Policy Center (www.vpc.org/press/0708ffl.htm).

Fewer gun dealers means fewer potential sources for high-volume illegal gun trafficking. The Violence Policy Center notes that this sharp drop in gun dealers is an important victory in the effort to reduce gun violence. But today Oregon remains a state with more gun dealers than gas stations. ♦