

The Building Block

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Neighborhood gun turn-ins ahead

Two neighborhood gun turn-ins, one in northeast Portland and the other in Hillsboro, are planned by the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation for May 12, 2007, the Saturday before Mother's Day.

Bolstered by the success of the first such event, last May in St. Johns, Ceasefire is initiating a new concept for gun turn-ins, which its planners hope will be a model for the future. Instead of staging several turn-ins simultaneously throughout the metropolitan area on one designated date, the organization will take its gun turn-in expertise to neighborhoods that are looking for an easy way to dispose of unwanted guns.

People want to get rid of guns for a number of reasons, including these:

1. Many young, lively, curious children live in the neighborhood. Neighbors want to protect them against the dangers of gunplay. In Oregon, 40% of homes have firearms, and many of those guns are kept unlocked and loaded.
2. Getting rid of a gun left behind by a deceased family member or a relative who has moved could prevent a suicide or an unintentional injury or death.

3. There is no guarantee that a carelessly secured gun won't be stolen.
4. The neighborhood has recently experienced a rash of incidents involving gunfire. There have been injuries and even deaths. Neighbors want to prevent more gun violence.



A Portland Police officer examines a gun at the May 20 gun turn-in.

Police and volunteers, led by Ceasefire board member Jean [redacted], collected 108 working guns at the St. Johns gun turn-in May 20, which was inspired by students and staff members from Open Meadow High School. Shawn of Ceasefire is a volunteer teacher at the school. The students staffed a toy gun turn-in, held simultaneously in another

location in St. Johns.

Rose City Chevrolet generously hosted the actual gun turn-in, providing lunch and refreshments as well as moral support. The result was that Ceasefire collected more than double the number of guns expected and issued 43 IOUs for Fred Meyer \$50 gift certificates and 18 IOUs for 76 gasoline. Cost of the turn-in was about \$7,000.

Ceasefire hopes for similar success at the gun turn-ins next spring. If you want to contribute \$50 to "buy back" a gun, please contact Ceasefire. ♦



Ceasefire meets with Chief Sizer

At a meeting with Ceasefire board members on October 5, Portland's new police chief, Rosie Sizer, agreed to host a lunch for the heads of major law enforcement agencies in the Portland metropolitan area to discuss their legislative priorities.

Diana _____, representing the Ceasefire Oregon board, said that the gathering will brainstorm problems and solutions for gun violence in the Portland area and possible legislative remedies. In other words, "What types of support does law enforcement need from us, locally and nationally?"

Among topics likely to be discussed are existing laws relating to domestic violence, carrying concealed weapons, and the background check database. Child access prevention is also a concern.

Julie _____, president of the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation, and board members Rodney and Julie _____ also attended the meeting with Chief Sizer to discuss future gun turn-ins and the need for continued involvement in the turn-ins by the Portland Police Bureau. Chief Sizer expressed her strong support of the turn-ins and offered to appear at a

press conference announcing the next one.

Rodney _____ asked the chief to consider a request from Augustana Lutheran Church to use metal from the Ceasefire firearm collection to forge a 30-pound clapper for the church's new 600-pound peace bell. "Our theme verse," says the pastor, the Rev. W. J. Mark Knutson, "will be from Isaiah 2:4—'God shall judge between nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they study war any more.'" The guns that are collected at Ceasefire turn-ins are given to the police to destroy.

The Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation is the educational branch of Ceasefire; Ceasefire Oregon uses non-tax-deductible contributions to advocate and lobby for legislation concerning guns and gun violence. ♦



The Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation 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 nearly 6,400 guns. Our affiliate, Ceasefire Oregon, works to reduce gun violence by advocating reasonable gun safety legislation and opposing irresponsible bills.

Contributions to the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law. Contributions to Ceasefire Oregon are not tax deductible because it lobbies for 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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School shootings prompt debate

On August 24, Christopher Williams, 27, went to Essex Elementary School in Vermont, and when he could not find his ex-girlfriend—a teacher—he shot and killed one teacher and wounded another. Earlier, Williams had killed the ex-girlfriend's mother. On September 27, Duane Morrison, 53, took six girls hostage at Platte Canyon High School in Bailey, Colo., molesting them and holding them for hours before fatally shooting one girl, then himself. Two days later, Eric Hainstock, 15, took two guns into his Cazenovia, Wisc., school and shot and killed the principal before being captured and arrested. On October 2, Charles Roberts, 32, took 10 girls hostage in an Amish school in Nickel Mines, Pa., killing five of them before killing himself.

All these shootings took place within the first few weeks of the new school year. All the shooters used assault weapons. The common factor in all of these horrific incidents is guns. Violent individuals are not taking over schools and murdering innocent students and faculty with knives or other weapons; they are using guns.

On October 10, President Bush convened a conference intended to seek solutions to the epidemic of school shootings and violence. He did not invite any grassroots gun violence prevention groups to participate. In a press release, Violence Policy Center Legislative Director Kristen Rand made the following statement: "The fact that guns are not on the agenda only confirms what was already obvious: The Bush Administration is in complete denial regarding the catalytic role that guns play in school violence. How is it even possible to have a discussion about preventing school shootings without talking about guns?"

In a separate release, Barbara Hohlt, executive director of States

United to Prevent Gun Violence, the coalition of independent state-based gun violence prevention organizations, said, "Excluding the gun violence prevention community from a conference on school violence makes no more sense than calling a conference on brain disease and failing to invite brain surgeons."

Other industrialized nations have zeroed in on the availability of guns and implemented meaningful gun control policies. Those policies prevent many needless shootings. But the widespread access to firearms in this country has yielded nothing more than an endless string of bloody shootings, at schools and elsewhere. President Bush's conference will do little to prevent more violence.

The United States needs a national dialogue about gun violence. Congress, however, has been downright hostile to efforts to prevent gun violence, helping to create a culture in which gun violence is becoming more prevalent and commonplace. In September the U.S. House of Representatives passed a bill making it more difficult for law enforcement to crack down on rogue gun dealers. This summer the House voted to repeal a law requiring child safety locks to be sold with all guns. Congress has been moving in exactly the wrong direction. Perhaps we'll see some change as a result of the recent elections.

As our society grapples with the difficult issue of how to deal with violent, disturbed individuals, we need sensible laws in place to reduce the risk that those individuals will have access to guns.

Shootings and deaths occur on a daily basis in all parts of our country. This is not just an issue in big cities or the poor parts of town. Eight children die every day from gunfire. All of this violence is destroying our nation. It needs to stop now. ♦

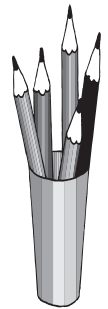
Ceasefire works with students at Open Meadow High School

The Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation is entering our third year teaching Open Meadow High School students about community and violence in the United States. For the past two years, students have participated in discussions and evaluated our country's cultural values about guns and its tolerance for gun violence. Students are provided a safe atmosphere to share their personal stories of gun violence while also discussing how they can help make their community a safer place.

Last spring several Open Meadow students staffed the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation's toy gun turn-in, which took place May 20 at the St. Johns Racquet Center. Children turning in unwanted toy guns received new toys and sports equipment. Special thanks to the U.S.

Professional Tennis Association for providing a free tennis clinic and to adidas for its charitable gift of new sports equipment.

The Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation continues to lead the Open Meadow group during the 2006–2007 school year. This year students are creating two public service announcements about safe gun storage and children's access to guns in the home. Each class opens with students discussing current events, pending legislation, and personal experiences with guns and violence. Students compare and contrast U.S. values and attitudes about guns and gun policy with those in other countries, including Canada and Australia. ♦



Volunteer profile: Liz

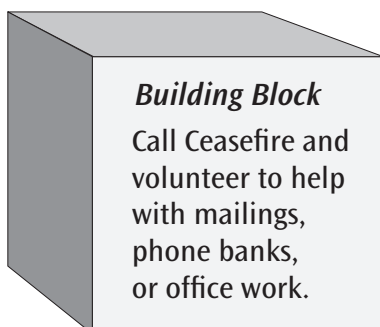
A longtime volunteer with Ceasefire Oregon and the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation, Liz has participated in many aspects of Ceasefire programs. She has volunteered at several gun turn-in sites, has worked many mailing parties, and worked the telephones for the recent winery event. We are delighted that last month she joined the board of directors of the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation.

Last year Liz retired from a 24-year career as a physician's assistant. She is married, has three grown children, and is a grandmother of eleven.

When asked what it was that brought her to Ceasefire Oregon, Liz cited her childhood in Kentucky, where hunting was part of the culture and provided food for her large extended family. With firearms in every home, her family was affected by an extraordinary number of gun-related deaths: a cousin who was Liz's age died accidentally while cleaning his guns; another death was an incident of self defense, and two relatives died in violent fights.

Notwithstanding these tragedies, it is to honor her mother's memory that Liz has stepped up to work with Ceasefire. Her mother committed suicide with a hunting shotgun at age 48.

Our thanks to Liz for sharing her story. We look forward to her continued participation. ♦



Building Block

Call Ceasefire and volunteer to help with mailings, phone banks, or office work.

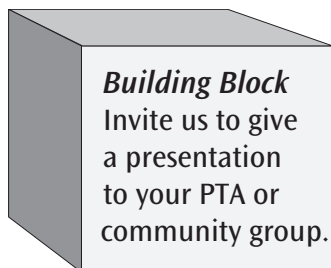
Ceasefire offers info at community events

Every year the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation attends several community events that provide opportunities to reach out to the public. We come supplied with information about safe gun storage, the deadly mix of kids and guns, the increased risk of suicide in homes with guns, options for weapon turn-in, and current Oregon gun policy. At each event a Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation volunteer staffs a table and disseminates appropriate information to kids and adults.

Two of the most popular events are the Safe Kids Day, sponsored by the National Safe Kids Coalition, at the Oregon Zoo each May and the PGE Score One for Safety event, which takes place before a Portland Beavers baseball game each July. This year we also attended the Portland Rose Festival and several Portland Police Bureau precinct open houses.

These events are important to our outreach efforts and serve as an excellent reminder to people, parents in particular, about how accessible guns are to our kids, whether the guns are in their homes or in the homes of the relatives or friends they visit. These events provide a wonderful opportunity for parents to have candid discussions about guns with their children. Parents are often surprised by their child's attitude or knowledge about guns. And on occasion, interaction at our table is the first discussion a parent and child have about guns.

If you know of a community event that Ceasefire should attend, please call us at 503/220-1669. ♦



Please help us in Salem and D.C.

Like most grassroots advocacy organizations, Ceasefire Oregon has been shifting its communication efforts to email. It is very important that your opinion be counted during crucial times for our cause in Salem and Washington, D.C. We promise not to bombard you with countless email messages.

Ceasefire Oregon will not share your email address with anyone or any group other than the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation. We will inform you of important legislative proposals concerning guns that affect Oregon. The simplest no-cost thing you can do to reduce gun violence in Oregon and across the nation is to send us your email address and respond when we send you an email alert. Please send your name and email address to ceasefireoregon@gmail.com. ♦

Supporters wine and dine for Ceasefire

The Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation's annual family picnic at Helvetia Winery has proven to be a great gathering for supporters to learn about our current education projects and our future plans. More than 30 supporters attended this year's winery event, held on August 6. The event provided everyone an opportunity to meet key volunteers and discuss the condition of gun violence in Oregon and across the nation.

Each year the winery event is successful only because of the generous donations from our guests and Helvetia's donation of wine sale proceeds. Once again we would like to thank Kit for the great music. We also thank all those who attended, and we hope to see more of you there next year! ♦

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From 1999 through 2003, an average of 29,498 people in the United States were killed by firearms each year. Fifty-seven percent of the deaths were suicides. An average of 12,684 people per year were killed by firearms in situations other than suicides.

As of November 8, 2006, a total of 2,839 U.S. troops had been killed in Iraq since the U.S. invaded that country in March 2003. From 1999 through 2003, an average of 3,021 children and teens in the U.S. were killed by gunfire per year. Why does the United States tolerate the fact that gunfire kills more children in this country each year than U.S. troops killed in Iraq?

From 2001 through 2005, an average of 64,380 people in the United States suffered nonfatal injuries as a result of gunfire each year. By contrast, as of September 30, 2006, a total of 20,687 U.S. troops had been wounded in action in Iraq.

Gun violence in the U.S. is an enormous public health problem. Here's how you can help reduce gun violence in your community:

- ❖ If you own a gun, consider getting rid of it. If you keep the gun, store it unloaded and locked in a gun safe. Lock up ammunition separately.
- ❖ ASK if there are guns where your children play and, if so, whether they are stored safely. Help us spread the ASK message.
- ❖ Make a generous financial contribution to Ceasefire Oregon or the Ceasefire Oregon Education Foundation.
- ❖ Send us your email address and respond when we send you email alerts.
- ❖ Volunteer. We need all kinds of volunteers, including office assistants, fundraisers, grant writers, event planners, people to help with large mailings, board members, and speakers. Tell us how you'd like to help.

For more information, please visit our website, www.ceasefireoregon.org. ♦