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City Editor; 459-7575

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John Brecher/News-Miner

DOWNTOWN MARCH—Beverly Sourapas and her boyfriend, Bob Conley, participate in a march against violence in downtown Fairbanks Saturday afternoon. Sourapas's sister, Maxine Thibedeau, was shot to death in November 1996.

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DOWNTOWN MARCH—Beverly Sourapas and her boyfriend, Bob Conley, participate in a march against violence in downtown Fairbanks Saturday afternoon. Sourapas's sister, Maxine Thibedeau, was shot to death in November 1996.

Community rallies against violence

By PATRICIA JONES
Staff Writer

Footsteps from tennis shoes and fur boots crunched in steady rhythm on the packed snow and sand that covered downtown sidewalks and streets Saturday afternoon.

The 50 or so walkers mostly traveled in single file along narrow sidewalk paths, moving slowly to make a statement. Each step took the group closer to well-known locations where two Fairbanksans died in separate, senseless attacks.

"This ground is holy because the community walks upon it," said Rev. Scott Fisher, praying Saturday afternoon in front of the Cushman Street bus station. It's where 42-year old James Herbert was shot to death in February 1994 as he walked home in the early morning hours.

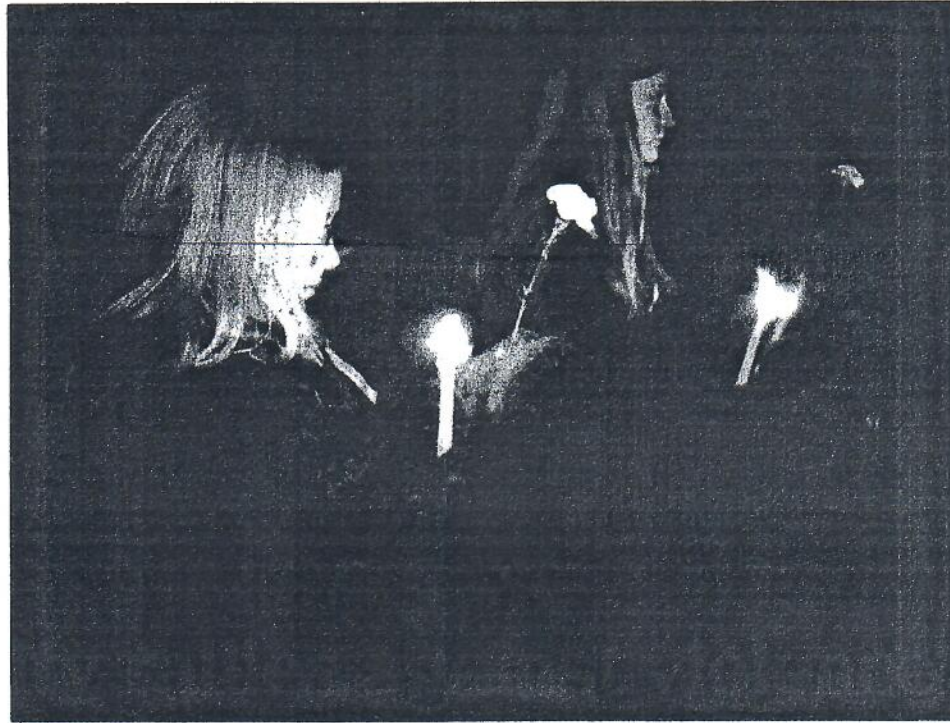
On an unusually warm day, the community members, participating in a march to protest violence, stood in a circle holding hands as Fisher spoke.

"I came here because James Herbert was a friend, but it caught me by surprise—the people who didn't know him, but came to pray," Fisher said. "People are here today because, as members of the community, we're all in this together."

The group then moved across Cushman Street, passing by the old green city utility building and the state parking garage. At Barnette Street, they turned south, walking by the courthouse to Ninth Avenue.

There, gathered again in a mitten-to-glove circle, family and friends called out the names of Herbert and other victims of violence, some sobbing, some just solemn.

The most recent victim was John Hartman, who was attacked at Ninth and Barnette on Oct. 11 as he walked home in



John Brecher/News-Miner

TAKING TO THE STREETS—Stacy McCahan, 16, left, and Dana Grindel, 15, walk with candles and flowers along Barnette Street during a candlelight vigil Saturday night protesting violence. A local anti-violence youth group called No More organized the vigil, which visited the site of John Hartman's fatal beating. More than 100 people, mostly teenagers, gathered for the walk from the Fairbanks Youth Center to the corner of Ninth Avenue and Barnette Street. Teenagers and young adults formed No More in the wake of Hartman's death to address violence in the community.

the early morning hours. He was kicked in the head repeatedly and sexually assaulted. Hartman died the next day.

"It's really getting frightening if you're afraid to walk down the street," said Virgie M. King.

King has started an effort through the Youth Advisory Council Committee to start policing neighborhoods. "We'll go

out and walk around different parts of the community, so something like this doesn't happen again," she said.

For Evalyn Thomas, Hartman's mother, Saturday was the first time she went to Ninth and Barnette, where her son was beaten to death.

"I've been avoiding it—taking the other way around, even though we live three

blocks away," she said. "I don't think we could have done this by ourselves."

Support from family and friends of other victims have helped her, Thomas said. "All these caring people have to stop this from going on again...that's why I'm here."

The town has changed in recent years, said Pam Bradley, See MARCH, Page B-2

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Fire hits borough building

Staff report

An electrical fire filled the second floor of the borough administrative building with smoke Saturday morning but caused only minimal damage.

Fairbanks North Star Borough employee Don Logan discovered smoke coming from a computer center when he arrived for work at 7:55 a.m. He shut down computer systems and called his supervisor and 911, according to a borough press release.

Fairbanks firefighters put out the small fire with a dry-chemical extinguisher and ventilated the Pioneer Road building, said Battalion Commander Scott Michaels.

The cause of the fire is not known. It started in a unit called

the event of a power outage, according to the release.

Damage was limited to that unit and is estimated at \$10,000. No data was lost, though there may be a delay in computer operations.

"The borough will be open for business Monday morning at 8 a.m.," Borough Mayor Hank Hove said in the news release.

About 12 hours earlier, Fairbanks firefighters responded to an incident at another borough-owned building: Nordale Elementary School.

Someone had discharged a fire extinguisher, spraying the chemical "all over everything," Michaels said. On the way out of the building through the gym, the perpetrator pulled a fire alarm.

Needled



liner, Sunday, November 9, 1997

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who didn't know any of the victims mentioned during Saturday's gathering, but wanted to be involved.

"Fairbanks used to be a place where you had to go looking for trouble to find it. We never worried about walking around here at any time of the night," she said. "I hope we now focus on violence—we all need to inspect our actions because we all contribute good and bad to the community."

Leona Allridge came Saturday to remember two-year old Donnell Winston, who was killed late last year during a sexual attack by a family member.

She also knew Maxine Thibedeau, who was shot to death in November 1996, and whose family carried signs with her photo on them during Saturday's march.

"What concerns me is that these are not the only family members who are affected by violence—there are the ones out there that we don't know about," Allridge said. "We have to send a message that enough is enough."

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