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Radio show takes on youth violence

By JEFF REINITZ, Courier Staff Writer

WATERLOO --- Days after a shooting claimed the lives of two Waterloo residents, community members took to the airwaves to attack youth violence in the Cedar Valley.

"We've got to stop the madness, and we've got to break it somehow," said Lou Porter, president of KBBG-FM, whose public radio station hosted a two-hour drop-in and call-in show Monday night.

"If we don't, we will see more. Not less, more," Porter said.

The program coincided with a Monday night vigil for Anissa Schroeder, 18, of Waterloo, who was shot to death in a sport utility vehicle with her friend, Ronald Scullark Jr., 28, Friday.

Police said the two were shot in broad daylight as they drove down West Donald Street. No arrests have been made in the slayings.

Scullark and Schroeder were the second and third homicide victims in the city this year.

Guests on the radio show harkened to the days when neighbors would step in and set a young person straight if there was mischief when the parents weren't looking, and topics ranged from the need for recreation to the elevation of young men's pants.

Martez Creighton, 24, said local youths don't have enough male role models. Lacking that, they are attracted to the lifestyle of drug dealers who flash easy money and big cars.

One caller, Sauya Ammar, said more people need to take part in mentor programs.

"We all have to make that sacrifice," he said.

Evette Fantroy, 22 of Waterloo, is concerned black parents today aren't teaching their children enough about the struggle of the past.

"We've come away from who we are as African-Americans. We have forgotten our struggles, we have forgotten the things we have overcome and began to take so many things we had to fight for for granted.," said Fantroy, a graduate student at the University of Northern Iowa who was recently crowned Miss Black Iowa.

Lloyd Green, of the local Knights of Pythias chapter, said his organization plans to adopt at-risk middle school students as part of a mentoring program.

"We've got to make a concerted effort to reach out to these young people." Green said.

Porter plans to have future meetings to come up with a plan to address youth violence and take action.

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