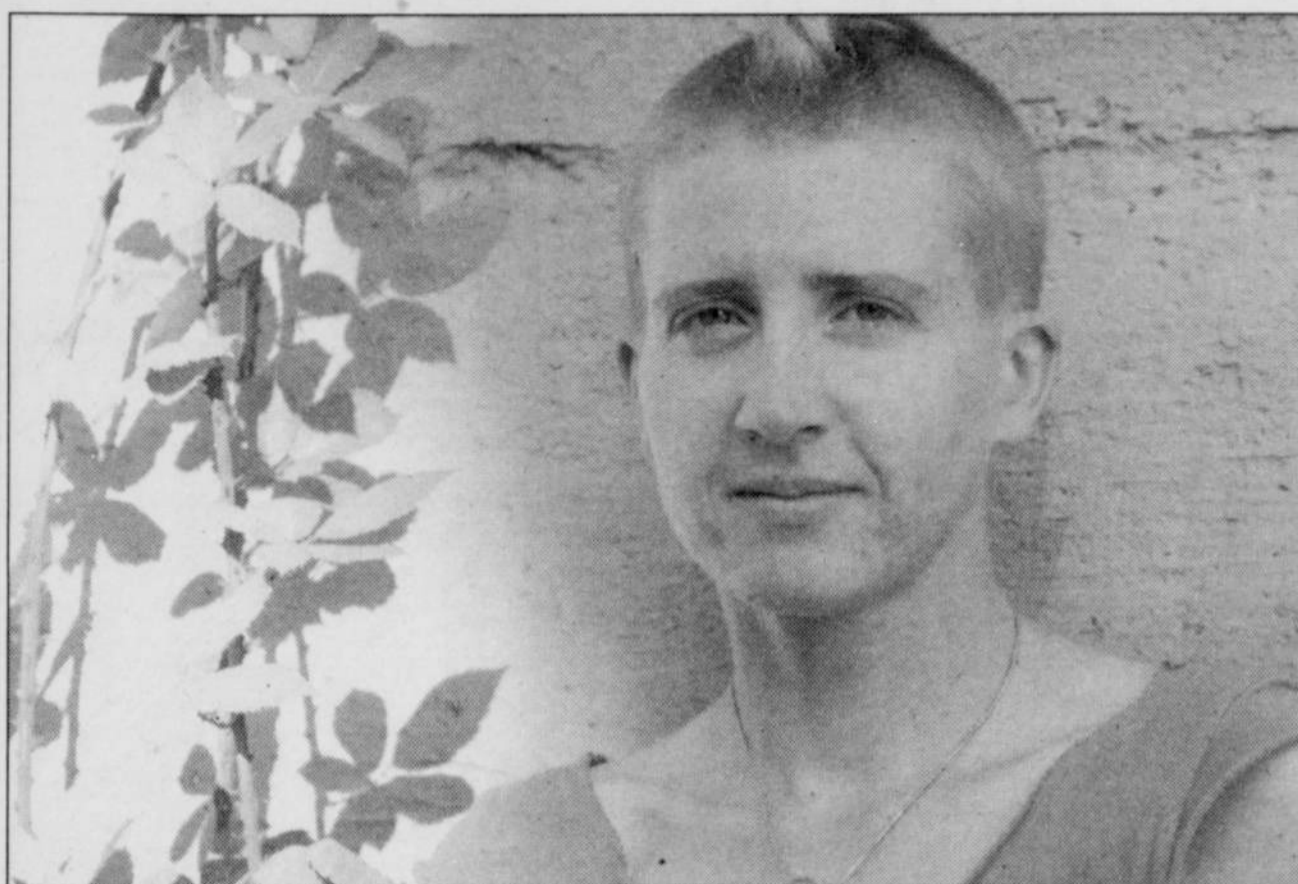


NORTHWEST news



April says street culture has lost its sense of community.

they've served me with is tickets," said April, who is bisexual.

She says her alternative appearance is sometimes to blame for the treatment she gets in public, as is her abrasive demeanor.

"People think I'm stupid because of my appearance. I usually get treated automatically like I'm a drug addict," said April, who served in the Army for four years. "I'm bipolar, so if you catch me on a bad day, I'm not that pleasant to be around."

Drugs have been a part of April's past, but she says she's trying to stay clean and better her life.

April is staying with friends but has been homeless on and off since she was 16, when she started shooting methamphetamine. She grew up in Montana.

"I ran away from home with \$2 in my pocket," she said. When asked why, April explained: "I have no impulse control. I have a mental illness. I go wherever my gut takes me."

Her instincts have led April to Heald College, where she plans to study business administration and eventually open her own automotive repair shop.

According to April, local street culture has let her down and lost its sense of community.

"Street culture is horrible," she said. "I get ripped off. A man spit in my face. When I was here 10 years ago, people looked out for each other."

April finds solace in writing and strolling the downtown streets.

"I like to walk a lot. I walk from midnight to

5 a.m., just to talk to people who most normal people wouldn't talk to," she said.

April observes divides within the queer community between the housed and the homeless.

"Everybody's created equal, whether we're gay or not," she said. "Why do we segregate within ourselves when we're already segregated?"

Boi Toy

Leronda knows more about the fantasies of straight men than their wives. He says prostituting in Portland has kept him in drugs, cash, a car, apartments and a cell phone—at least temporarily.

Sometimes Leronda is picked up by the very same men who gay-bash him in public.

"There are lots of psychos out there, but there are some people who are really cool and become my sugar daddies," said Leronda. He describes most of his clients as "dirty old men who want some little boy to be their toy."

Leronda, 24, came to Portland when he was 16 to flee his strict Russian family from Woodburn.

"My whole family doesn't like me because I'm gay, but I'm the only one out of them that doesn't have a [criminal] record," said Leronda. Of seven sisters and five brothers, he is accepted by only two of them.

Leronda turned to prostitution after a one-night stint as a stripper. He has stayed in shelters and slept in Washington Park last summer. He is living with friends while waiting for an apartment promised by a sugar daddy.

Leronda, who used to draw and take photographs, says he lost his artistic drive when he relapsed into methamphetamine use two months ago. For now, he doesn't want a camera for fear of losing it, like his 800 electroclash CDs stolen from shelters and lost while moving around.

Leronda wants to find work in the telemarketing or food service industries. His goals for the future are simple and honest.

"I just want my own place and a job and a nice, big dog," he said. **JO**



The following organizations are welcoming to the sexual minorities and homeless community.

Blanchett House
340 N.W. Glisan St.
503-226-3911
Serves homeless men with work-based recovery programs.

Bradley-Angle House
503-232-7812
www.bradleyangle.org
Serves homeless victims of domestic violence.

Central City Concern
232 N.W. Sixth Ave.
503-294-1681
www.centralcityconcern.org
Serves low-income and homeless adults and families, including those in recovery.

Join
3338 S.E. 17th Ave.
503-232-7052
www.joinpdx.com
Serves adults and families who are homeless.

New Avenues for Youth
1220 S.W. Columbia Blvd.
503-224-4339, ext. 203
www.newavenues.org
Serves homeless youth.

Northwest Pilot Project
1430 S.W. Broadway
503-227-5605
Serves low-income and homeless seniors.

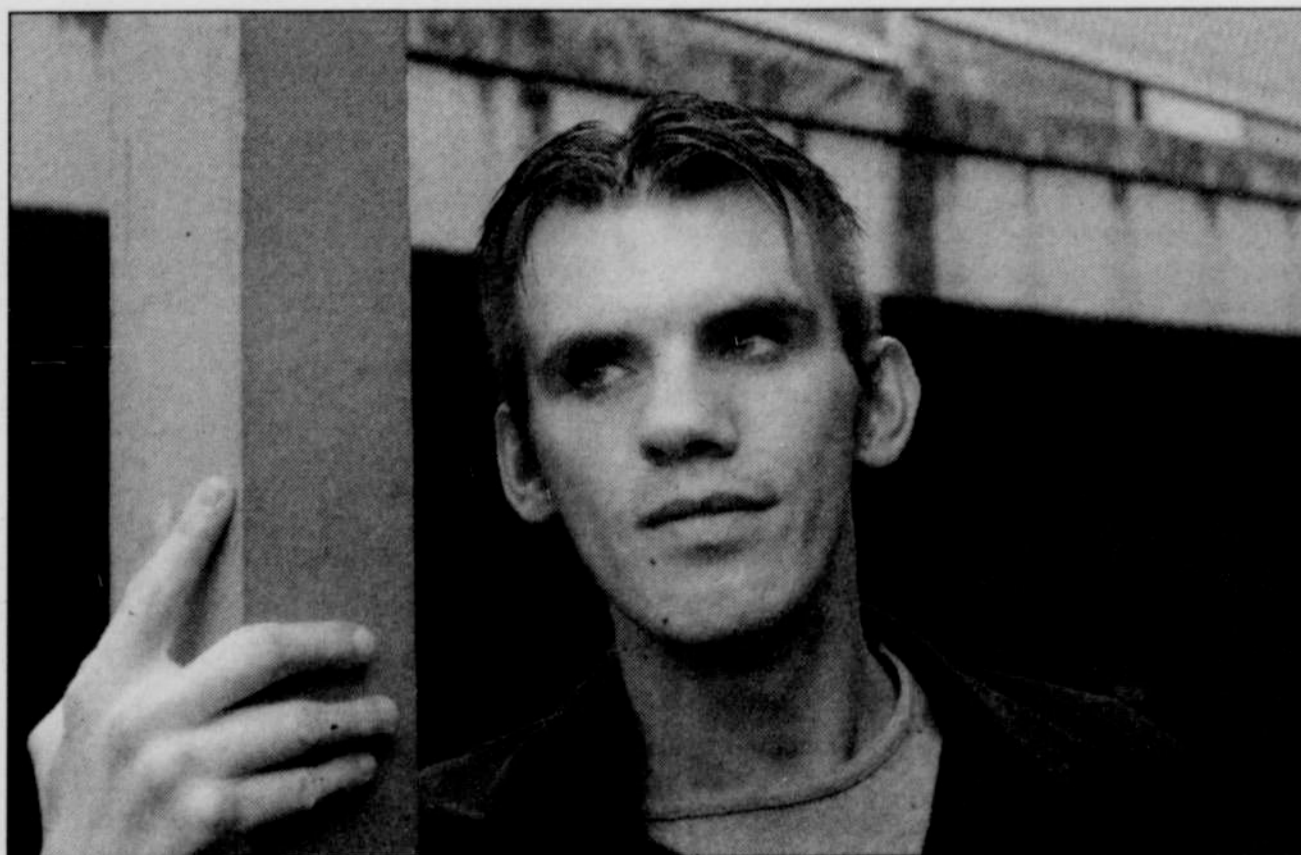
Outside In
1132 S.W. 13th Ave.
503-535-3801
www.outsidein.org
Serves homeless youth.

pear
801 S.W. Alder
503-228-6677
www.pearmentor.org
Offers art programs and mentoring for homeless youth.

Sisters of the Road Cafe
133 N.W. Sixth Ave.
503-222-5694
sistersoftheroadcafe.org
Serves meals and provides assistance to the homeless.

Street Roots
211 N.W. Davis St.
503-228-5657
www.streetroots.org
Nonprofit newspaper advocating for the homeless.

Trans/Identity Resource Centre
1030 S.W. 13th Ave.
503-535-3895
www.outsidein.org
Offers programs for homeless and queer communities.



Leronda is transitioning out of homelessness by accepting gifts from sugar daddies.



**sorry.
we don't do exotics.**

Rose City
VETERINARY
HOSPITAL

CRAIG QUIRK DVM
STEPHEN KOCHIS DVM
809 SE Powell Blvd
(near the Ross Island Bridge)
232-3105



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& ASSOCIATES

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