

SUPERHEROES GET REAL

BY FIGHTING IMPORTANT ISSUES



Featuring

ZETAMAN



By Joshua Baird
The Clackamas Print

responsibility of defending Portland's homeless population from the frigid nights and hunger. Armed with blankets, socks and food, he travels around Portland by night and provides those men and women with the necessities to make it through another night.

"They are happy to receive them," Zetaman stated in an e-mail.

The royal blue clad superhero has based his costume on Superman and Zorro, but his real heroes are his grandfather and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

What could lead a man or woman to becoming a superhero?

"I guess some free time Internet searching, a want to do good things combined with a lousy work schedule. As far as recommending [becoming a superhero] to others, I would not. It is a very difficult thing to do because it opens a person

up to a lot of ridicule," Zetaman said.

"First if I saw the costume I'd think, 'We must be in Portland.' If I saw what they are doing I'd be really happy that they are out there doing something, and I would do anything I could to try and help. I do community service in my own way; I fed the homeless around town for Thanksgiving, which feels better for me than to sit around eating a big dinner and feeling guilty," Kassi Havens, a Clackamas Community College student said.

According to the World Superhero Registry, yes there are so many superheroes out there that they are being registered; three things need to be accounted for in order to be considered for membership.

The first is what many would consider obvious, a costume. The World Superhero Registry states on its Web site, "The pur-

pose of a costume is not simply to protect the identity of the Real-Life Superhero from criminals that might seek revenge but to make a statement both to the evil-doers that you fight against and to the world at large: you are not simply someone who happened upon crime or injustice and made an impulsive decision to intervene."

The requisite costume has become something of a symbol for comic book fans and "Reals" alike. From the iconic Superman logo, to the basic jeans and T-shirt that accompany Wolverine's metal claws, costumes are how superheroes are identified worldwide.

"I think it's a good thing because you don't get people who are just trying to get attention; they are actually trying to have fun while helping people," said Havens.

Zetaman, however, has run across his share of the bad ele-

ment in the Real Life Superhero community. Like with anything the Superhero community attracts people who actually want to make a change in the world, as well as the less than savory types who are just interested in getting five minutes in the spotlight.

The other two rules are a bit more complicated than cutting up your mother's bed sheets and wearing tighty whities on the outside of your pants. The first is heroic deeds; a Real must be able to prove that they became a Real-Life Superhero for the benefit of mankind.

The final step is listed as personal motivation. The Web site indicates that in order to be registered "a Real-Life Superhero cannot be a paid representative of an organization"

In other words next time you see a spotlight in the sky at night, keep in mind that a Real is out doing their part to make the world a better place.