

NEWSBRIEFS**Request for assistance on the rise on Oregon's service hotline**

Oregon's assistance hotline has experienced a 47 percent increase in requests for basic services in the past six months.

211Info reports that the requests for rent assistance, food, utility assistance and low-cost health care are increasing in the Portland metro area. 2-1-1 Info recorded 62,000 calls for basic needs between October 2008 and March 2009.

The nonprofit referral service cites the unemployment rate of more than 12 percent across the state with the rise in demand for assistance.

211Info provides health and human service information at no cost to anyone who dials

20101 or 5030 22205555 if 20101 is not available on the caller's phone. On April 1, in response to growing demand for information resources and a recognized need for a single statewide referral network, 211Info and OR211 merged

Police shooting of homeless man raises allegations of profiling

The killing of a homeless man by a Vancouver, B.C. police officer has raised questions from family and legal advocates over whether Vancouver police officers profile homeless people.

On March 13th, two police officers stopped 58-year-old Michael vann Hubbard because they believed he was a suspect in a nearby auto break-in. When vann Hubbard took an X-Acto knife out of his bag, one of the officers shot and killed him.

The police department claims vann Hubbard advanced on the officers with the knife, but eyewitness accounts say he was standing still. Police confirmed that vann Hubbard did not commit the theft he was stopped for.

The police considered vann Hubbard a suspect because they believed his black backpack had been stolen from the car. However, David Eby, the acting executive director of the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA), said the police could have stopped dozens of white men with black knapsacks, but they targeted vann Hubbard because they thought he was homeless and thus guilty.

"The fact that the police officers picked him out as a potential car thief as opposed to all the people with black bags who were walking around nearby this guy indicates how the police still view homeless people as criminals," he said in a phone interview.

There have been a number of high-profile cases over the past decade in which Vancouver police officers have been accused of profiling homeless and low-income people and then using unnecessary force.

Rose City Resource

Call Eddy Barbosa at Street Roots at 503-228-5657 or write to pdxcrosecityresource@hotmail.com

The ROSE CITY RESOURCE

We the People
When it comes to your civil liberties,
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With Alejandro Queral, Joanne Zuhl
Linda Olson-Osterlund and Patrik Angstrom

Tune in to
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on
KBOO, 90.7 fm
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the fourth
Thursday of
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Vance: Embracing the Portland state of mind

BY ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Vance Schweigert described himself as having been "stuck up" and driving a Corvette when he was 18 years old. Life, and the kindness of Portlanders, humbled him.

He doesn't like to talk about it much, but 12 years ago his young wife died of congestive heart failure. "I lost it completely," he said. He sold their house, quit his job, got in his car and drove

VENDOR PROFILE
Vance Schweigert

aimlessly around the United States. Then his mother, who lived in Portland, became seriously ill. He came here to take care of her. It was like reliving the loss of his wife.

Vance prefers to focus on positive things these days, like how wonderful people in Portland treat him and how grateful he is for Street Roots and the kindness of his customers. He is particularly glad that Street Roots provides him with a way to pay for a room at night, especially after the shelters close each spring.

The economy makes it difficult to pay for nightly shelter. Vance told me that he used to get work through Labor Ready, which provides businesses with day laborers. He said that two years ago, everyone who showed up in the morning got work. Now, only about 20 percent of daily applicants get hired.

"Working outside is killer," the former



PHOTO BY ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ

Vance Schweigert

surfer told me. "I love it." And Street Roots customers are "kind to me." He said that they "treat me like a real person. Not like a bum." Vance especially likes to sell papers at the Farmers' Market because he is treated "just like any other vendor. They treat me with respect."

Vance would love to have you stop by and chat. He'd like to hear about "who you are, what you are about, and what you are doing." At one time, Vance drove a bus in Snohomish County, Wash. "Someone always sat up front and talked to me. I miss it." If you want to talk, you might find him at one

of the doors at Powell's, at Whole Foods, or the Farmers' Market. He wants you to know that he is a good listener. He extends a special invitation to all surfers and bus drivers. "Stop by and say hi!"

All the help and respect that Portlanders have given him has changed his attitude about life. "I don't look at the world hard any more." He had some difficulty expressing what this meant to him, but eventually he said, "I'm willing to do whatever it takes now ... I can't just walk by a person sitting in the gutter any more."

He said he now stops to see if there is anything he can do to help. Sometimes he'll tell people where they can find free clothing or a place to spend the night. On a recent night, he said, when it was cold and windy, he gave his coat to a young man of about 20 because he looked so horribly cold.

I've seen Vance standing outside Powell's wearing a long coat for about the past month. He wasn't wearing the coat today. He was wearing a white dress shirt under a dark blue sweater; black pants, and black boots that were pinching his feet. He gets most of his clothing free from the Mission, but had gotten the boots just that morning at Street Roots. They seemed to fit fine then, but he'd been standing on concrete for more than six hours.

I looked around. Vance didn't have anything to sit on. I mentioned to him that Tony, who had sold papers outside Powell's previously, used to bring a milk carton to sit on and take breaks. Vance never sits down on the job.

COMMENTARY**A panhandler by any other name...**

BY ART GARCIA
VENDOR COORDINATOR

Hello friend! I am calling this here piece of literature, "Panhandling 101" or I-5 or Route 66.

Seriously though, I would like to address this topic, panhandling, as so many people are now calling it. What follows is strictly my own opinion - Street Roots in no way influenced my thinking. Having said that, I choose to call a carrot a carrot. I mean to say it is begging, I don't care how you color it or what fancy "handle" (excuse the pun) you put on it, it is still begging.

Now, don't get me wrong. I am not at all frugal or am I against helping a person who is down on his luck. I just believe there should be some guidelines, so to speak, or rules, if you wish. I mean, I always tip waitresses or carhops and I'm glad to do so. They work very hard for their money and I don't think they get paid enough anyway, so they deserve to receive tips. Although now they get pooled, divided and taxed before reaching anyone's pocket.

Let us get back to what people now call "panhandling." The term originated in the 1890s when people used to carry a pan or tin cup with a few coins in the bottom to rattle when they shook them asking for money.

If you were to look in the dictionary for the definition of panhandling, do you know

what you would find ol' friend? "A person accosting another person and begging for money."

Moving along, I have in my searches found other ways that people panhandle or beg. For instance, I recall back a year ago when I went into this coffee shop out on Division only to learn that the proprietor thought that Street Roots was just a step above panhandling, all the while standing behind a counter where a can marked "tips" stood. Sure, it's all right for her to beg for money because she is selling you coffee. However she is doing nothing else to warrant anyone giving her extra money. The tip can was just there with invisible hands reaching out to someone who might be feeling a little guilty that day, or perhaps just there, and all those warmhearted, caring people who will help anyone because that is just their nature are going to drop money in the can whether they buy a cup of coffee or not. It's playing on their generosity.

Now some of you might be thinking, well so does Street Roots, play on people's generous nature, I mean. Remember now that most Street Root vendors are homeless, they don't own their own business. They are selling people a paper for a dollar that they first paid 25 cents for. That is a profit that they keep. They don't also have a tip jar

asking for more money.

In another venue I have found a panhandler, and this one I find more offensive than the last one. This is where I shop every evening on the way home. Safeway! I just can't believe it. Oh sure, they don't call it panhandling. They say it's for cancer research or another cause, which I support and believe in wholeheartedly, but not while I am buying my groceries. Remember what Webster's defines as panhandling: "Accosting a person and begging for money." Well, when the cashier asks me would I like to round up my change, I find that aggressive. I mean, that really puts a customer on the spot. Nobody wants to be thought of as a tightwad. So there you are waiting to respond while someone else is waiting to hear, maybe a child. So most times I say, 'sure,' even though I really can't afford it.

In wrapping this up, I would just like you to ask yourself before you give money to someone with his hand out; Who would I rather give money to if he or she were to knock on my door while I was at home? A panhandler/beggar who says they need money and they just can't find any work. Or would you buy a paper for a dollar from someone who chooses to work and earn his money. You make the call!

Semper Fi.

VENDOR WORK ADS

Bruce Heino: Available for yard work, general assistance, four-hour minimum, wage negotiable. Please call the Street Roots office or contact New Seasons at 33rd and Killingsworth.

Bill Atkinson: Yard work, moving, misc. Four-hour minimum, \$10 an hour. Call Street Roots office at 503-228-5657.

Vicki Sittinghawk: House cleaning, very thorough.

References. Call 503-287-4174.

Dan & Donna: Need odd jobs? Can do painting, yardwork, miscellaneous labor. Very dependable. Call the Street Roots office at 503-228-5657, 503-267-4794.

Handy man needs work: moving, painting, yard work, clean-up. If I can sweat and you can be doing something else, please call me at 503-803-2533.