

NEWSBRIEFS

Garbage, social inclusion center stage at Live Debris event

Live Debris presents installations and interventions about garbage and social inclusion, from Rio de Janeiro and Portland, Oregon.

The event will be Sept. 19-26. (All day, opening event on the 19th) between Burnside and Hawthorne along Portland's Eastbank Esplanade.

Live Debris 2009 is a series of international events sharing reuse traditions as a means of reducing stigmas around garbage, poverty and street culture.

Live Debris has taken place in Beirut, Lebanon, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and now Portland, Oregon.

Exchanging and comparing world perspectives on garbage and the people who work closely with it, Live Debris explores ways that collaborative reuse can affect how we see garbage and each other. This event is organized by Taylor Cass Stevenson of red semilla roja, with help from Portland City Art, the Black Rock Arts Foundation, Outside In, Chinook Book and Oregon Electric Group.

The event opens Sept. 19 at 9 a.m. with a free breakfast. Bring a mug if you want coffee. From noon to 1 p.m., there will be a Trashastic garbage-related performances and from 1 to 2 p.m. a Trash Mash-Up Parade. There will also be a clothing exchange and participants are asked to bring used clothes, and a sewing station where people will be transforming old T-shirts into bags. People are encouraged to bring T-shirts for this project.

Other events include: Interactive Garbage Weaving (bring clean trash), Public Paste-Up wall (make a contribution with paper), Public Crafting Party (bring a craft project), Live painting with local artists.

Documentary on undocumented youth premieres at Hollywood

The new Portland documentary "Papers" about undocumented youth and the challenges they face as they turn 18 without legal status, premieres 7 p.m. Sept. 26 at the Hollywood Theater, 4122 NE Sandy Blvd.

Community screenings will follow across the city and country, beginning in October.

There are approximately 2 million undocumented children who were born outside the U.S. and raised in this country. These are young people who were educated in American schools, hold American values, know only the U.S. as home and who, simply by turning 18, become "illegal" immigrants.

65,000 undocumented students graduate every year from high school without "papers" and the door to their future slams shut. As the documentary filmmakers learned, it is against the law to work or drive. It is difficult, if not impossible in some states, to attend college. Currently, there is no path to citizenship for these young people.

Graham Street Productions is producing this film in partnership with Film Action Oregon. The filmmakers are also working in association with El Grupo Juvenil (the "Papers" Youth Crew), which has been actively involved in the production.

Tickets for the premiere are available through Hollywood Theater, and online at www.papersthemovie.com.

Students ride for sex trafficking victims

"Bike For Shelter" event to raise money to open a shelter for Portland's survivors

BY ERICA BOULAY
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Andrea Vedder first became interested in helping underage victims of sex trafficking while in high school. A 60 Minutes special on the plight of young female sex slaves in South Asia got the former Reed College student interested in someday opening her own shelter for survivors of sex trafficking.

On Sept. 27, the organizing efforts of Vedder and a group of Reed College and Portland State University Students will come to culminate with the "Bike For Shelter" bike ride to raise funds for Transitions Global shelter for child sex trafficking victims.

Esther Nelson, volunteer program manager at Portland's Sexual Assault Resource Center says that, "SARC identified and served 31 minor victims of sex trafficking in the last year."

"It's surprising to me the degree to which this is happening right under our noses," says Reed College junior Matt Steele, who has taken on the role of volunteer coordinator for the student-organized ride.

Steele says he's not only gained valuable life experience in bringing such an event to fruition, he's gained a deeper appreciation for volunteerism.

"Like so many issues in the world it's so easy to ignore or become apathetic, but there are so many legitimate causes in the world, if everybody just picked one, things would be so much better!"

The plight of the world's 27 million victims of sex slavery is one such pressing cause. It is estimated that 30 percent of shelter youth and 70 percent of street youth are victims of formal commercial sexual exploitation, not including the many children who engage in other forms of survival sex. (Estes R. & Weiner N. "Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico.") When looking for data on the severity of the situation for child sex workers in Portland, says Nelson, "We need look no farther than the vast number of Portland's youths in shelters."

A Portland native, Vedder remembers the pressures students faced in high school and shudders to think that her own classmates may have fallen prey to violent pimps. When she learned in January that the state Department of Human Services had to pull funding to Transitions Global (run by a

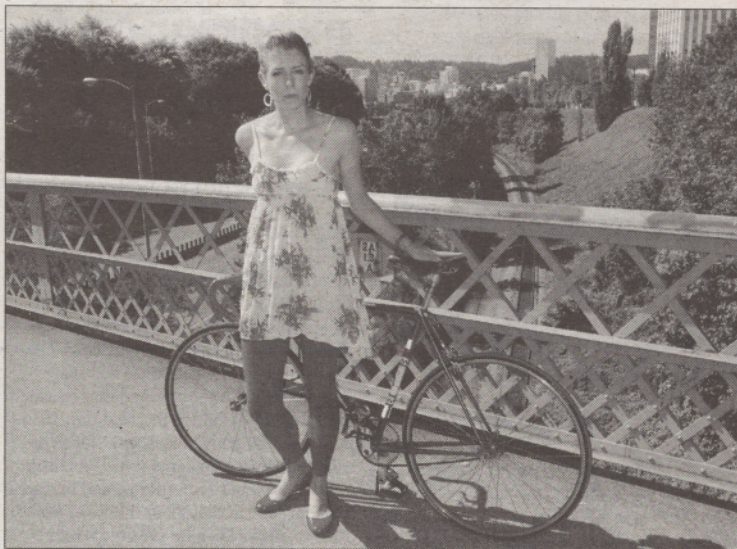


PHOTO BY ERICA BOULAY

Reed College student Andrea Vedder heard that funding was being cut for a shelter for sex trafficking victims, and decided to take to her bike to raise money for the cause.

To ride in "Bike For Shelter" or to learn more about the efforts to bring the Transitions Global shelter to Portland, go to www.bikeforshelter.org and visit the fundraising page.

For more information or assistance in finding appropriate resources, call: Sexual Assault Resource Center:

503-640-5311

National Human Trafficking Hotline: 888-373-7888

Oregon Human Trafficking Task Force:

Keith Bickford: 503-251-2479

family from Hillsboro) in light of recent budget cuts, Vedder decided to do something to protect the kids from where she grew up.

"Bike For Shelter" is a 27.7-mile bike ride to fund a shelter for underage sex trafficking victims in Portland. The first of its kind in the U.S., the Transitions Global shelter would provide holistic rehabilitation to 22 children at a time, providing a wide-range of resources including life-skills training, medical and counseling services. "They let the girls be kids again," says Vedder.

According to the Center for Missing and Exploited Children, the average age of first involvement in prostitution in the United States is 12 to 14, and today finding a refuge for such young victims is difficult. Many of the children have run away or have been orphaned, have become addicted to drugs,

and/or suffered severe trauma. Women's shelters and juvenile correctional facilities do not replace the rehabilitative care the Transitions Global shelter provides.

"Our community is currently lacking a shelter with trafficking-specific, trauma-informed care and wrap around services tailored to the needs of sexually exploited youth," says Nelson. "There are a handful of residential centers, shelters, and therapeutic foster homes that do their best to offer what these youths need. However, often that is asking the impossible of these centers and homes which were not created to provide this specific type of care."

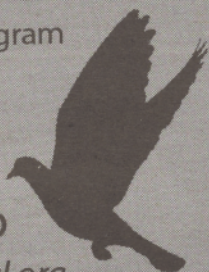
Community response has been overwhelmingly positive, organizers say, and "Bike for Shelter" is on its way to reaching the \$1 million goal. Many people have donated their time and Vedder is exceedingly thankful. She is also happy to note that more than half of current "Bike for Shelter" registrants are men. Everyone involved, says Vedder is "standing up for someone in trouble, someone whose voice is ignored, and together we will make an impact on the progress of this shelter!"

"There was a time when women's shelters weren't common," says Vedder, who hopes more shelters for child sex trafficking victims will open up soon. Vedder would like to see "Bike for Shelter" become an annual event. "It would be awesome if this gets so much attention that a place for boys is created as well," Vedder says.

"I hope this shelter sets a precedent for the nation," Steele says.

FINDING NORMAL

A documentary film by
Brian Lindstrom
about Central City Concern's
Mentor Program



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www.findingnormal.org

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