

Tea

By David Mair

The lemon at the
Bottom of my tea is pouting
it makes me sad

Drip

by David Mair

Sweat dripping from my
Mind why can't I find how to
Stop momentum's reach



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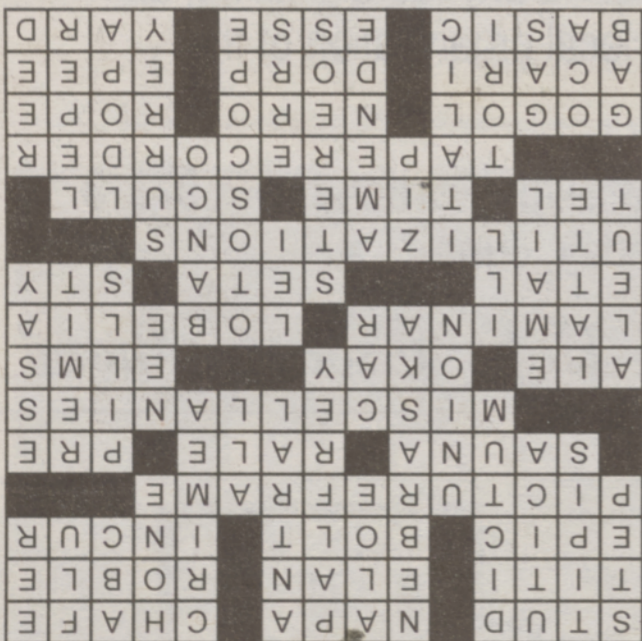
Changing Lives

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Answers to puzzles on page 15



8	6	3	7	2	9	5	4	1
5	2	7	4	1	8	6	3	9
4	9	1	6	5	3	8	2	7
9	3	5	1	6	4	7	8	2
6	4	8	9	7	2	3	1	5
1	7	2	8	3	5	4	9	6
7	1	4	3	9	6	2	5	8
3	5	9	2	8	7	1	6	4
2	8	6	5	4	1	9	7	3

**A New York
state of mind**

BY COLE MERKEL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Earl Bennett speaks frankly about homelessness, poverty, the American government and the need for social change. Perhaps he derives these perspectives from a lifetime of living in large and diverse cities, or maybe they come from a synthesis of the many publications Earl reads each week. Either way, his blend of self-assurance and optimism feels refreshing during our 20-minute conversation over a cup of coffee.

"Washington residents say homelessness is a Portland problem," says Earl, who has an apartment in Vancouver, Wash. and

VENDOR PROFILE
Earl Bennett

spends \$6 each day commuting between the two cities. "I try to tell them it's an American problem. Since it's an American problem, first we need to not elect Romney, then bring every state legislator up to Capitol Hill to have a housing forum to work with HUD and to open up more Section 8 vouchers throughout this country. People shouldn't have to sleep in front of doorways downtown. They shouldn't have to be harassed by the cops because they're homeless and walking the streets at night. The government needs to maintain housing and jobs."

As a native of Queens, N.Y., who came of age during the 1980s, Earl traces homelessness to several factors: Reaganomics, unemployment (as a symptom of Reaganomics) and drug addiction. "We need more drug intervention instead of lock-up," says Earl, holding his hand firmly on the table. "I never knew anything about meth until I came out to the West Coast — and I'm from New York City. There's no market for it in New York. At the same time, homeless people have to be willing to do



PHOTO BY COLE MERKEL

their part."

Having spent time in Washington, D.C., Earl also sees the benefit to providing a more cosmopolitan experience for people who are living in poverty. "The problem here is that homeless people have nowhere to go during the day," he says. "They hang out at drop-in centers or the library. Whereas in New York and Washington, D.C., we have museums — we're the museum capital. Ninety percent of the museums are free because they're run by the Smithsonian; even the zoo is free. Homeless people don't have to congregate in one place like they do here. I love museums. I just wish there was more for homeless people to do here during the day."

In his free time, Earl enjoys going to the library where he reads newspapers from across the country to catch up on what is happening in the political world. Some of his

favorite publications include the New York Times, Washington Post and USA Today.

While he has dreams of moving on, Earl is content with Street Roots for now. "One of the things I love about the newspaper is that it will keep money in your pocket. The economy is still bad right now, but when I sell, I know I can get money in my pocket every day, and I can pay some bills here and there. This is paying my rent, believe it or not, until I can get to a better job. But even the temp agencies are real slow. I'm going to be doing this for probably a good while."

If you want to purchase a paper from Earl, you've got to find him. "I go everywhere, Sandy Boulevard, Broadway, Martin Luther King, Beaverton, Clackamas — I don't sell downtown. I'm from New York, I'm not going to stand in one spot. In New York City, we move around." When you finally do find Earl, stop for a conversation.

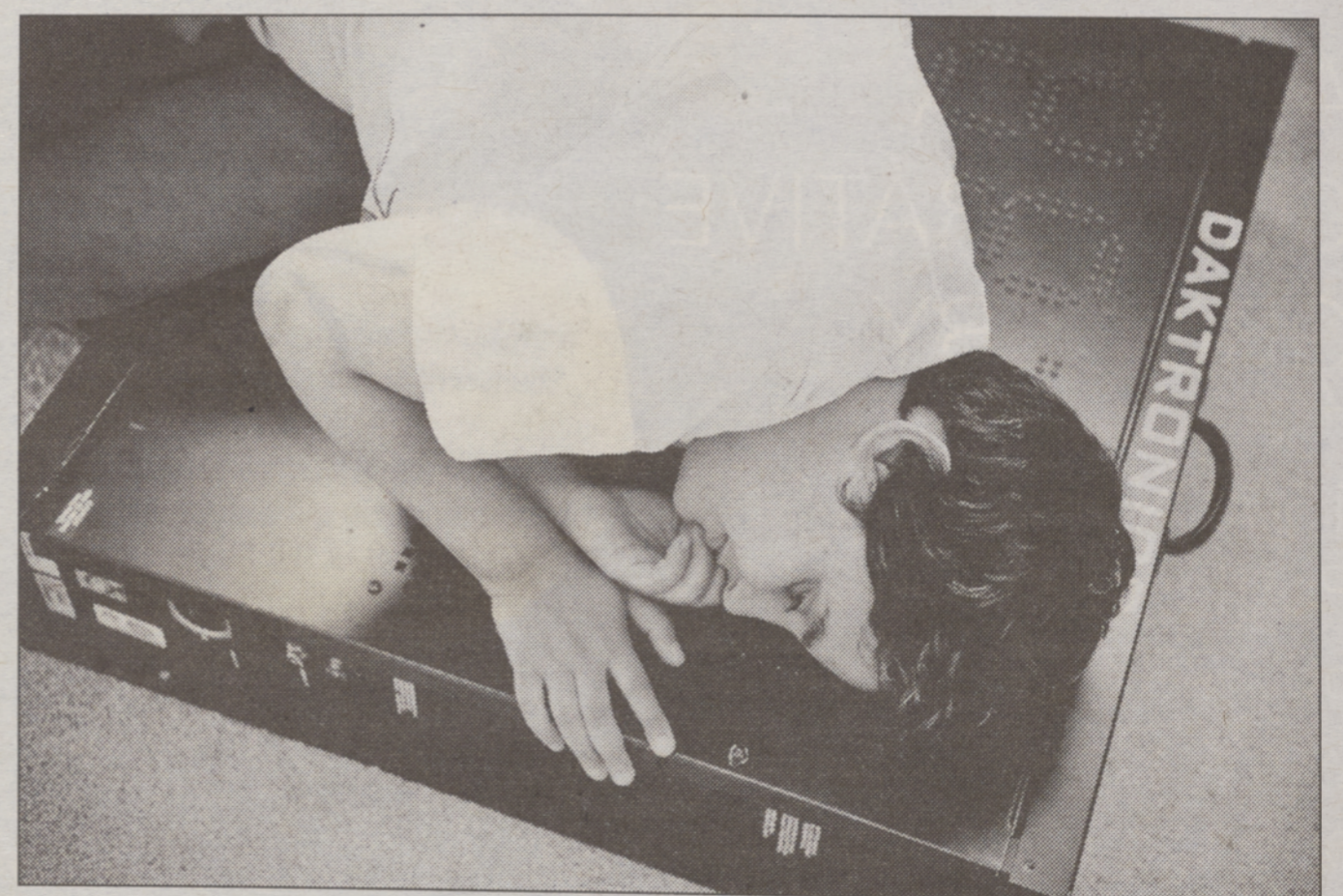
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Donations keep Street Roots and our vendors working by keeping our operating costs low.

- Paper cups
- Hygiene items
- Towels
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- TriMet bus tickets/passes
- Printer paper
- Shaving razors

CORRECTIONS

Street Roots strives for accuracy, but we're human. So we also strive to correct errors in our paper whenever possible. Please report any errors to our managing editor, Joanne Zuhl, at 503-228-5657, or write to joanne@streetroots.org



BY LEAH NASH

Leah Nash Photography Exhibit

A Different Kind of Normal: Stories of Asperger's Syndrome

Now through June 30

Autism is the fastest growing disability in the U.S. with an economic impact of more than \$90 billion. And according to the Autism Society of Oregon, Oregon state has one of the highest rates of autistic diagnosis in the country.

Photographer Leah Nash spent more than a year focusing on five individuals with Asperger's, exploring the diversity and complexity that exist across the spectrum. However, in the 2013 edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, the diagnostic encyclopedia of American psychiatry, the term Asperger's will be discarded altogether, replaced with the broader diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder.

For more information about i witness gallery or NCP visit
www.nwcenterforphotography.com. Leah Nash is available for interviews.

