


A Culinary Fundraiser for  
**Transition Projects**



Thursday, February 20  
6:00 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.  
Urban Studio  
935 NW Davis Street

Transition Projects Tickets available at [soupforthesoulpdx.com](http://soupforthesoulpdx.com)

## A natural salesman, with a touch of mystery

BY ANN-DERRICK GAILLOT  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Every morning at 5 a.m., Street Roots vendor Shaun Followell wakes up, carefully packs up his gear and heads to the Starbucks on 15th Avenue and Fremont Street to sell papers. After a couple of hours, he hops on the bike he

### VENDOR PROFILE Shaun Followell

made himself and rides downtown to the Street Roots office to pick up more. He then heads back to Northeast to the New Seasons at Williams and Fremont to sell papers again until he sells out or leaves to go volunteer at Bike Farm, a nonprofit that focuses on bicycle education. There he will fix bikes, sometimes alone, sometimes sharing his mechanical expertise with an eager student.

"I get a real sense of satisfaction out of fixing one up and getting it back to where it works really nicely and looks good and all that," he said. "I enjoy doing it, it's a good project, and lets me kind of fulfill that side of me, that creative side."

Every day Shaun follows this simple yet full schedule, finding joy in his customers and the bikes he builds, even with the ever-looming threat of unforgiving weather and an even more unforgiving job market.

A veteran of the Navy, a land surveyor by trade, and a skilled bike mechanic, Shaun is both a people person who will look you straight in the eye and a man of few words with an air of mystery about him. Originally from a small town of about 2,000 people in Indiana, Shaun has lived in Portland for the past 12 years, drawn by the city's natural splendor.

"The air's a little bit cleaner here than



PHOTO BY COLE MERKEL

other places. I breathe better and feel better here." He also enjoys Portland for the city's small-town feel. "Portland isn't really a city. It's kind of big for a small town but that's really what it is in some ways. I can't go anywhere without running into somebody I know."

Shaun has been with Street Roots for only the past couple of months, but has taken to it naturally. Despite his dedication to selling the paper, however, Shaun admits he makes only enough money to cover his most basic of needs, such as food.

"It's fun talking to people though," he says with a shy smile. "And it's a good paper."

Before joining Street Roots, Shaun, an ITT graduate, says he worked as a land surveyor and helped build the yellow and green MAX lines downtown in 2006-7. Having been a working man for most of his

life, Shaun turned to Street Roots after a decline in the city's infrastructure projects left him struggling to find a steady job. Despite that, Shaun continues his mechanical work, both by volunteering at Bike Farm and reading technical books in his spare time.

When I press Shaun to tell me what he would like his profile to tell Street Roots readers, he thinks for a moment and answers, "All I can say is thanks for buying the paper and being a regular supporter."

As for the future, Shaun's hopes are straightforward and earnest.

"My only real hope is that I can lift my income up a little higher than it is and kind of live a little more comfortably."

If ever you pass Shaun outside his turfs at New Seasons and Starbucks stop a minute to say "Hi."



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### VENDOR WORK ADS

Bicycle delivery by Farmer Shaun. Small packages \$2 a mile, large loads \$5 a mile. Extreme tasks and impossible feats on a case-by-case basis. Ask about bulk rate specials. 971-222-9938.

Need a worker? Can do almost anything, light or heavy. References supplied. \$10 an hour, four-hour min. Ask for Cassidy Morse, 503-228-5657 (SR office), or 503-875-6504 (cell).

If you want to learn more about your favorite vendor, check out the past year of Street Roots profiles at [news.streetroots.org](http://news.streetroots.org)



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Answers to puzzles on page 15

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