

For the RECORD

A compilation of facts, large and small, about our community

- 2013 salary of Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian: \$72,000
- 2013 average salary of principal executive officials in the Bureau of Labor and Industries: \$94,685
- Percent of Oregon wage and salary workers with union membership in 2012: 5.7
- Percent of Oregon wage and salary workers with union membership in 2013: 13.9
- Average percent of union membership among Oregon wage and salary workers, 2004-2013: 15.43
- Oregon workers represented by unions but not members of unions in 2013: 15,000
- Average amount more that skilled union workers earn per week than non-union workers: \$200
- Oregon National Guardsmen deployed to Afghanistan in August 2014: about 900
- Number of new grants awarded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to Oregon for homeless assistance: 18
- Amount those HUD homeless assistance grants are equivalent to: \$2,400,180
- Estimated number of people experiencing homelessness from the point in time count in Oregon for January 2013: 13,822

Sources: Oregon.gov Open Data Portal, US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Oregon National Guard; Department of Housing and Urban Development; HUD 2013 Annual Homeless Report to Congress, Point in Time Estimates

Answers to puzzles on page 15

D	O	E	S	I		O	V	E	S		I	E	S	I
V	E	R	I	E		E	L	A	G		I	S	W	S
C	L	V	A	S	B		I	N	O	D	E		I	V
			O	B	I		C	A	T	E		I	B	E
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B	A	G	I	V		A	L	O	N	E				
M	I	N	D	S	H	I	E	G	D	S		D	B	A
V	I	O	V			H	I	W				B	E	E
A	N	B		S	E	B	I	T	C	L	A	V	I	K
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V	S	T	B	A	G				H	A	G	L	A	
B	E	I	T	A	O	E	E	I	C	E				
B	I	O	I		B	I	E	G			K	E	B	I
O	K	S	V		V	S	I	A			V	A	V	I
B	A	S	T		B	A	G	W			L	O	G	I

4	9	8	1	1	3	8	2	5
8	5	1	8	9	2	4	3	1
3	2	1	4	8	5	8	9	1
9	8	4	5	2	1	1	8	3
5	8	2	1	3	8	9	1	4
1	1	3	9	4	8	5	8	2
1	3	8	2	5	9	1	4	8
2	1	5	8	8	4	3	1	9
8	4	9	3	1	1	2	5	8

A spiritual awakening

BY SARAH HANSELL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

The first thing I notice about Betty Jo Griffiths is more than just her immediate smiling personality or her kindness.

"It's the joyful calm of her spirit. So much so that I forget what questions I have planned to ask that day.

Betty Jo's youngest child had just moved out when she was laid off from her job as a certified nursing assistant of about 30 years. The collapse of the housing market and recession left her unable to pay her mortgage and she lost her house, forcing her and her husband into a motor home for three years. Then she found that she had been living with a tumor for a year. She had a routine hysterectomy and died on the table for two minutes. If that wasn't traumatic enough, her motor home caught

VENDOR PROFILE

Betty Jo Griffiths

fire, leaving her and her husband living in a tent in Roseburg.

"That was the beginning of my spiritual awakening," she said. It was these tragedies, she said, that began to bring her to her current state of empathy, love and acceptance.

She's worked as a nursing assistant since she was 16, and she said she never felt the love from her family that she believes is the most important thing parents can give to their children – what she wishes she had shown her own children more when they were growing up.

"What's more important, buying your kids everything they want, or actually spending time and teaching them stuff? That's what's more important," she said.

She used to make assumptions about people who were in similar situations to the one she has experienced.

"I used to judge them," she said. "They must be homeless because they're on drugs or they just don't care."

Through her own personal tragedies and through her own spiritual growth with her husband, who is a minister, she has come to



PHOTO BY COLE MERKEL

not just accept others, but also empathize with them.

"I have learned that everybody has a story," she said. "And some are more tragic than others. And I understand addiction to drugs and alcohol because I've seen it, seen a lot of it."

She and her husband love to do as much as they can to help others who are struggling with homelessness, hopelessness and addiction. She says it's not uncommon for people struggling with addiction and hopelessness to come to the door of her and her husband's new motor home. Her husband will pray with them.

"They just need love," she says. "You don't have to give them everything, just let them know that they're worthy."

Now, Betty Jo's husband is working in demolition, giving them money to save up

for their future plans of having a farm that would be a safe place for families struggling with addiction, and she is selling Street Roots to meet daily needs.

"It's the best thing I've ever done," she said. "I didn't think I was going to be that good at it. But I'm pretty darn good at it. And I love what I do. I love being a vendor."

Betty Jo's joy is infectious. As she stands up as our interview ends, she gives me a hug.

"And how lucky am I? Truly blessed!" she said.

Before she left, she encouraged me to come see where she sells her papers, at the Alberta Co-op Grocery.

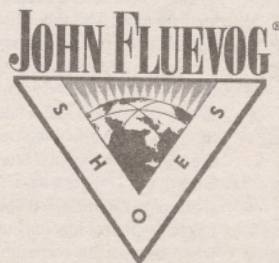
"Most beautiful people in the world are there," she said.

John Fluevog Shoes is donating 50 percent of sales to Street Roots!

When: Friday, September 19th, 4-9:00P.M.

Where: 1224 SW Stark St, Portland, Oregon

Indulge in the best shoes fashion has to offer & meet the Street Roots team...



street roots

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