

For the RECORD

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

- Number of Oregonians annually diagnosed with HIV: 280
- Percentage of Oregonians living with HIV/AIDS living in Multnomah County: 55
- Total number of weekly boarding passes for TriMet Buses and MAX in July 2014: 1,955,000
- Complaints against public officials filed with the Oregon Ethics Commission in 2014 to date: 75
- Number of registered lobbyists in Oregon: 678
- Money spent on lobbying the state legislature by the City of Portland in 2013: \$348,048.75
- Number of Oktoberfest events happening in Oregon this year: 8
- Percentage of Oregonians who claim German ancestry: 20
- Number of apple varieties produced in Oregon: 21
- Tons of apples that were produced in Oregon in 2012: 64,000
- Number of GMO apples currently approved by the USDA: 0
- Number of GMO apple varieties undergoing approval by the USDA and opposed by the U.S. Apple Association: 1

Sources: Cascade AIDS Project 2013 Annual Report; Trimet; Oregon Government Ethics Commission; Portland City Auditor; Guide to Oregon; Oregon Department of Agriculture; Moveon.org

Answers to puzzles on page 15

Б	Г	У	Л	Е	З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	К
О	М	Е	И	З	Г	У	Л	Е	Г	Е	В	И
В	О	Г	У	Л	Е	З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И
Б	Г	У	Л	Е	З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	К
А	О	И	В	О	И	Е						
Б	Е	З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	К	З	Б	Е
Е	И	Е	Б	В	Г	Е	Б	Е	Г	Е	Л	
В	О	Л	В	И	С	Г	Г	В	Д	Е	И	
В	Г	Е	З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	К	З	
З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	К	З	Б	Е	Д	
Д	А	В	И	К	З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	
Е	Д	Д	В	З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	К	
В	Г	Е	З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	К	З	
З	Б	Е	Д	А	В	И	К	З	Б	Е	Д	

9	3	2	1	8	4	0	1	5
1	4	5	0	0	1	3	2	8
0	8	1	3	5	2	0	1	4
2	0	4	5	3	8	1	0	1
3	1	1	4	0	0	5	8	2
5	0	8	1	2	1	4	0	3
1	1	0	2	4	3	8	5	0
4	5	0	8	1	0	2	3	1
8	2	3	0	1	5	1	4	0

An artist at heart

SARAH HANSELL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Kenneth Nickell has been drawing and writing since he could get his hands on art supplies.

"They couldn't give me coloring books. Just blank paper and crayons, and I went to town," he said.

He started drawing at age 2, and the first story he ever remembers writing was a "Terminator"-esque screenplay called Droids. It was about a boy who becomes a brilliant scientist as an adult, whose enemies travel back in time to his childhood to destroy him before he can grow up.

"It was terrible. It was really, really bad."

Since then, Kenneth has worked on everything from screenplays to comic books

VENDOR PROFILE Kenneth Nickell

to T-shirt designs.

He grew up in rural Oklahoma, and spent his childhood working with his parents' Beachcomber boats business. He later moved to Arlington, Texas. He ran with a "bad crowd" and got into some trouble as a teenager, he says.

"After high school, a very good friend of mine was shot in the head in front of me and a few of my other friends, and it changed everything."

He joined the Air Force, but was honorably discharged during basic training because of a broken pelvis. His veterans benefits allowed him to attend college at Oklahoma State University Tech, where he studied graphic design. On the first day of his first class, he remembers his professor told him this:

"There's a difference between a designer and an artist. The difference is, a designer draws what they're told to get paid. An artist draws what they feel and hardly ever gets paid."

Kenneth decided he belonged to the latter category. Nevertheless, he received his associate's degree and searched for a graphic design position, but was unable to land one.

The possibility of a literary contract for a book he'd written called "The Keys to Chaos" brought him to Los Angeles a few years later, he says. The contract didn't work out, but he stayed in L.A. trying to get his work published or displayed, and worked first at a hostel and as a manager at a coffee shop, then for a fundraising network.

Kenneth experienced homelessness for the first time during the first month and a half he was working in fundraising, saving money to sleep inside. He had to hide from his workplace that he was homeless to keep



PHOTO BY COLE MERKEL

his job.

"Sometimes you've got to do what you got to do," he says.

He fundraised for various organizations, but he decided to leave the job because he felt like some of the work he was doing was unethical.

"No matter what happens, I could go back to L.A. and have that job, right now. I'm just good at it. But I hate that job. And I can tell you, I love this one. I feel like I'm doing something honest."

He walked from L.A. to Santa Rosa with his Dalmatian/Bullmastiff named Gentleman Jack, and hitchhiked the rest of the way to Eugene. From there he made his way to Portland — in his words, the "most beautiful, disgusting place" he has ever been.

He sees addiction, desperation and sadness — the disgusting side. But he also sees much in people to admire.

"People always talk about making change and doing stuff in Los Angeles, and they may picket once or twice. In Portland, Oregon, they are always standing up for themselves. They are constantly raising a ruckus, and it's almost like it's expected by the City Council and by everyone that's running things," he says. "They know that if they piss off Oregonians they're going to hear about it."

He was homeless for his first Portland

winter, but now stays with friends, and is content with his situation. Besides Street Roots, he makes extra income through his art, from designing a logo for the University of Oklahoma, to sending tattoo designs to family.

"I tell everybody, this is hard work, it is not easy, and I must get paid for it to do it."

Kenneth is working on various creative projects now. One is a comic book he hopes to submit to Dark Horse Comics, about an insomniac who enters an alternate dimension in her sleep where she becomes a force to combat evil. And he's collaborating with a friend on a short crime story comic. With another friend, he is creating T-shirt designs based on his dog.

"The dog is actually way more interesting than any of my comic book art is. I've seen people's reaction. He lights up people's faces when he goes down the road, like he's an angel or a unicorn. I tell people sometimes that he's part panda bear, part unicorn."

Besides supplying him with a small income, Street Roots is the only place so far that his work has been published.

"It's a newspaper and I'm an artist, and I really want people to enjoy my art and my stories."



Street Roots is a proud member of the International Network of Street Papers, now more than 120 papers strong, worldwide.