

Blood Gas

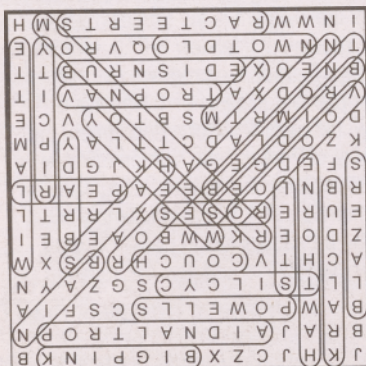
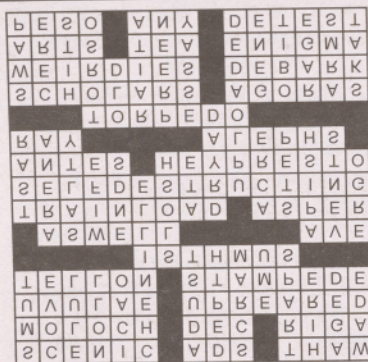
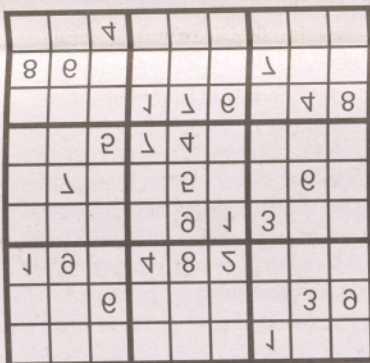
by Mike Vance

Alone and cold
 Gear tucked behind your legs
 Beat down from another day of shit
 Eyes closed in apprehension
 Hours go by
 You lay silent
 The dagger tears through your flesh
 Over and over
 You gasp for air in vain
 A lake of red engulfs what was your life
 And now another screaming ghost
 Haunts the ether
 In quest for revenge



STREET ROOTS PHOTO

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Health care and homelessness

Street Roots vendor and board member Leo Rhodes (shown far right above) speaks during the City Club of Portland Friday Forum, Jan. 9. This month, City Club released a research report that lays out a set of recommendations to strengthen the implementation of health care reform for people who are homeless through streamlined efforts between coordinated care organizations, service providers and local governments.

Rhodes was one of a committee of City Club member-volunteers who interviewed public officials, homeless advocates, health care administrators, persons experiencing homelessness, county employees, coordinated care workers and academic researchers.

Rhodes spoke to his own personal experiences being a homeless man and trying to secure health care, and maintaining a stable health routine once in housing.

In January 2014, the Affordable Care Act expanded Medicaid

eligibility to those with incomes at 138 percent of the federal poverty level, including nearly all homeless adults without dependents and those not currently eligible for Medicare. As a result, more than a quarter of all residents in Multnomah County — including nearly all individuals experiencing homelessness — are now eligible for Oregon Health Plan coverage.

The report concludes, among other things, that homeless health care issues are housing issues, and that over the next five to 10 years, local government and organizations should invest in supportive housing, which includes onsite, comprehensive, integrated rehabilitation and health services. More urgently, however, the committee concluded that over the next two years, the government should advocate strongly for housing status as a health determinant.



Position Opening: Executive Director

JOIN provides critical services and dignity to our homeless neighbors. You can help us continue our 22-year legacy of social justice and advocacy for people experiencing homelessness by joining our diverse and close-knit team.

To apply visit www.joinpdx.org

