

## Robots

by Rachel D

They will patrol the land  
Doling out well-deserved justice.

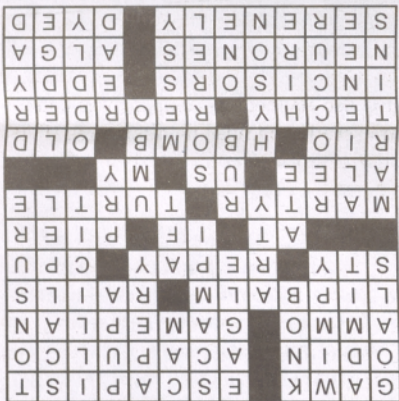
One will emerge as the most righteous  
And He will rule in goodness and love.

His rulings are infallible,  
beautiful in form,  
But over time some become envious.

There is an explosion in the sky.  
Every living being is gone.

To maintain perfection,  
A utopia of non-existence.

### Answers to puzzles on page 15



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

## VENDOR PROFILE Mike Dusek

BY LEONORA KO  
STAFF WRITER

Mike Dusek remembers clearly the date his sobriety began. "I'm coming up on five months on (July) 20, so I'm almost at my half-year mark. Then I'll have only 18 months to go before I can become an alcohol and drug counselor."

He points to initials on his T-shirt and describes the first step toward his goal: "CVC stands for Community Volunteer Corps. You volunteer for 80 hours, and it helps you get your foot in the door."

That door is Central City Concern, a nonprofit that alleviates poverty and homelessness by addressing housing, health and job issues together.

The organization provides a structured path to recovery. For Mike, that means volunteering for three months on a Central City Concern crew at places like the food bank and the Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation.

His next step is to work for six months in the Clean & Safe program. The Portland Downtown Business Improvement District contracts with Central City Concern to clean a 213-block downtown area and bus mall.

Once Mike finishes his job experience stints and is sober for two years, he is eligible to become a drug and alcohol counselor at the nonprofit.

Mike has had other jobs. A native Portlander, Mike says he has lived all over the country, from running a landscape business in Idaho to restoring cars in Ohio.

He recently returned to Oregon, ready to make a change: "Just got tired of getting successful at something and then getting loaded again, screwing it up and ending up back out there. It's been a cycle – and I want to end the cycle."

This time, he is staying sober with Central City Concern supportive housing, which comes with a counselor and case manager. Through the Central City Concern community, he is learning to have healthy relationships, and to assert himself instead of holding onto resentments. He also attends Alcohol Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous meetings and has a longtime sponsor who is an important

role model.

"My sponsor, he's kind of an asshole," Mike said with a laugh. "He's not scared to hurt your feelings. But I need that, and I love that about him, you know? He's going to tell you what you need to hear, not what you want to hear."

Mike has sold Street Roots off and on throughout the years.

"Originally when I first started with Street Roots, I had really low self-esteem. Being homeless and not having a place to go shower really drops your self-esteem. So it helped gain back some of my personality and self-worth."

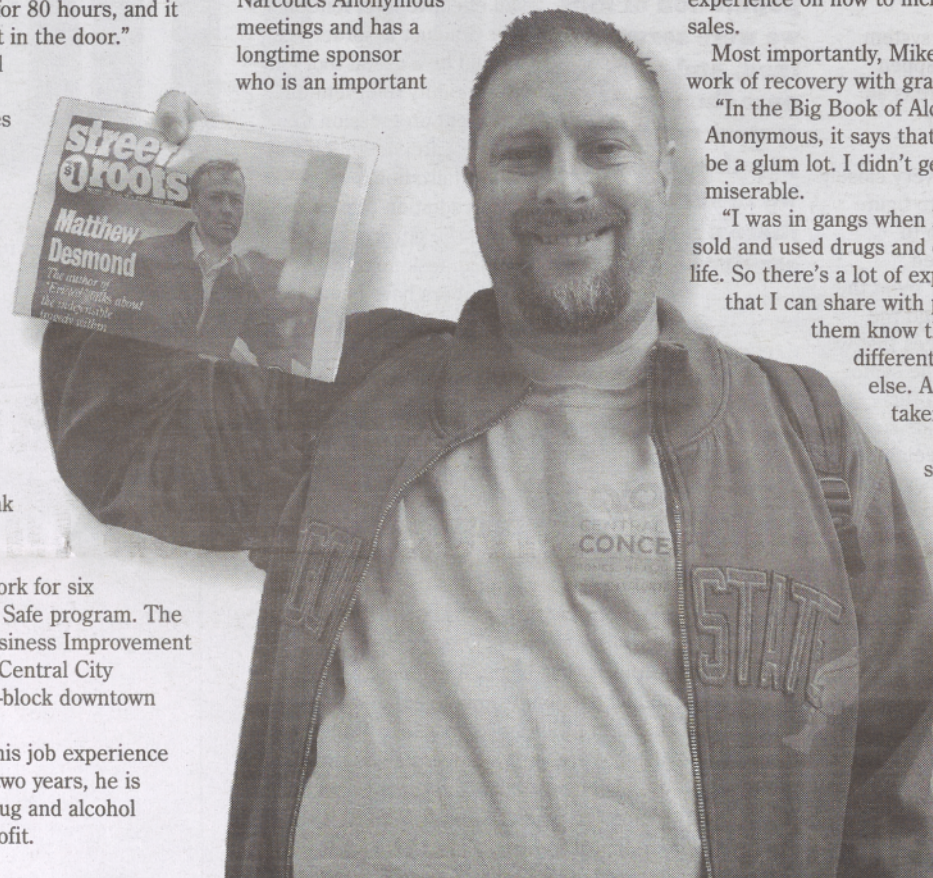
Now Mike is upbeat, friendly and naturally helpful. Before this interview, he was helping another vendor, sharing his experience on how to increase newspaper sales.

Most importantly, Mike is doing the hard work of recovery with gratitude and humor.

"In the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, it says that sobriety is not to be a glum lot. I didn't get sober to be miserable.

"I was in gangs when I was younger. I sold and used drugs and drank most of my life. So there's a lot of experience there that I can share with people and let them know that they're not different than everybody else. A lot of us have taken that road.

"And then I can show them how I've done things differently to make it."



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"Nothing happens until something moves." - Albert Einstein

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