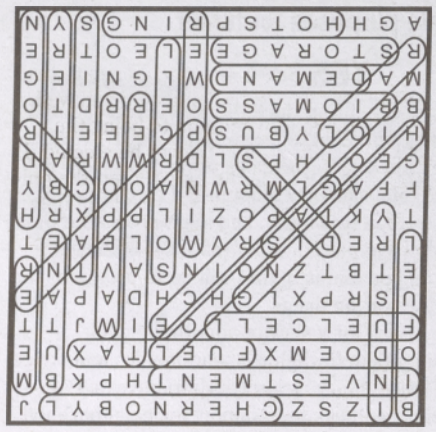
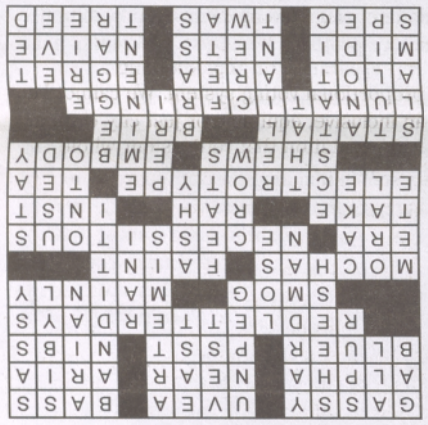
Answers to puzzles on page 15

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





VENDOR PROFILE
Stephen Banks

BY CORINNE ELLIS
STAFF WRITER

Surfing isn't just a hobby for Stephen Banks; it's a way of life.

Stephen has lived in all corners of the country, but he said his favorite place will always be California.

Stephen loves to surf, so anywhere near the ocean is where he'd like to be.

For nearly 15 years, Stephen lived in Southern California with the ocean always a stone's throw away. Most mornings he could be found at Swami's, his surf spot of choice in Encinitas, Calif. It didn't matter if the waves were big or small; part of the experience for him was just about paddling out and being in the water.

"It starts my day out. It gets my mind straight. There's no one there. I'm not in society. I'm just me – me and the water," Stephen said.

Surfing quickly became a part of Stephen's daily routine and something that he could always look forward to.

"I surfed every morning right before work. Get up at 4:30 a.m., hit the swell, be there for about an hour, chill out, get dressed, go to work," Stephen said. "After work I'd go back and do it again."

While surfing requires a certain amount of physical strength, it also requires strength of mind. The swells crash and pound, and you have to be able to focus and stay calm.

When the surf is rough, you need to be prepared to hold your breath for several minutes.

It isn't about being the best or showing off, Stephen said. "You're just there to be there."

His personality reflects common values of surfing. He is laid back and levelheaded. He says he is able to get along with most anyone and is good at interacting with all different types of people. This comes in handy when he is out on the streets selling Street Roots.

He arrived in Portland from Southern California at the beginning of September. It's a different way of life here, but he is slowly adjusting to it.

Before moving to Portland, Stephen worked in construction for 22 years, but he said he's ready for a change. A new life in a new city means the chance to start over.

"I'm trying to figure something out. ... I'm just trying to better myself every day," he said.

From Vermont to Oregon and everywhere in between, Stephen has lived in every corner of the country and learned many life lessons along the way. Of all the places he has lived, he said Vermont is easily his least favorite.

"We tried to go hunting and never saw a single animal," he said with a laugh.

Stephen said he looks forward to eventually returning to California, where he can spend his days surfing and mountain biking.

PHOTO BY CORINNE ELLIS

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