

Trust & Hope

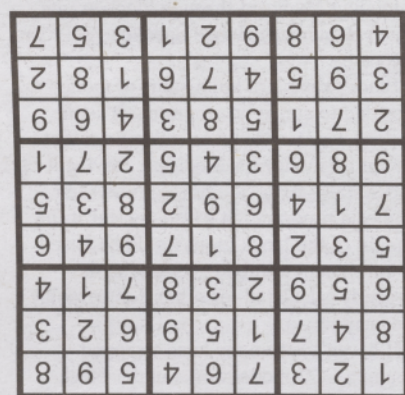
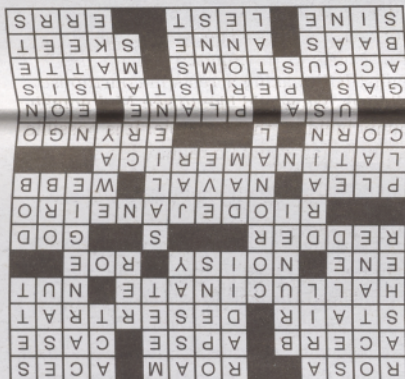
by Eileen Vizenor

Trust is a five-letter word that means so much. And, it SHOULD mean so much!

I feel that trust is everything. If we don't have trust within ourselves, how can we trust others, I ask. I admit that I lack trust, in others and in myself. This lack of trust started at a very young age for me. Now, in my mid-fifties, I still lack trust.

To get up every day to support my corgi and me, I have replaced trust with hope. Hope is now what I possess in my mid-fifties. Hope is what I wish for all.

Answers to Page 15 Puzzles



VENDOR PROFILE

Kevin Robinson

BY LEONORA KO
STAFF WRITER

Kevin Robinson sells Street Roots through rain, sleet and snow. “When it snowed,” Kevin said, “it was hard. I fell on the ice a couple times, but I sold some papers. Didn’t make as much money as I normally do, but I did make a few bucks here and there.”

Customers told him he was courageous. “I’m a responsible person, and want to get out there and do my job,” he said.

Kevin sells the paper in front of the Salt & Straw ice cream store near Southeast 33rd Avenue and Division Street. In the summer, staffers give him his favorite ice cream, salty caramel. Lately, they have given him hot tea.

“I’ve been there for about a year and a half, and they really like me,” he said. “I’m a friendly person and easy to get along with. I’m very respectful towards customers, and I like being around the public.”

Kevin grew up with his mother in Longview, Wash. One of his proudest moments was winning a gold medal in a Special Olympics softball event. After high school, Kevin went to vocational school in Astoria, became a certified soup and salad prep cook, and worked in fast food.

Kevin summed up the next chapter in his life this way: “I’ve pretty much lived a hard life for the last 16 years – ever since my mom died. We were really close.”

He traveled to Tennessee to reconnect and live with his father. When that didn’t

work out, he moved out on his own.

Kevin has been in Portland since 2013. Although he receives Social Security benefits, it was difficult for him to find housing. He was on the street for about five months.

“I had a sleeping bag,” he said. “And I’d sleep right in front of the Portland Rescue Mission. Or right there on the Burnside Bridge. Just anywhere I could find a place to lay my head. It wasn’t very comfortable.”

“Being diabetic, it was hard for me to take my (insulin) shots. When people see you with syringes in public, people think you’re a drug dealer. You know the stereotype. There’s not really any place with privacy you can (inject insulin), so I didn’t. That’s what caused my blood sugar to go over a thousand, and I ended up losing two toes because of it.”

After recuperating at the hospital and a nursing care facility, Kevin found housing through Transition Projects Inc., a nonprofit that serves people experiencing homelessness.

He rents one of 22 rooms in a two-story house on Foster Road, which has two bathrooms and a kitchen on each floor. Each room comes with a bed, a dorm-size refrigerator and a microwave.

“It costs me \$460 a month, and it’s going up to \$480 here in a couple months,” Kevin said. “I live on about \$650 from Social Security, so it doesn’t make it easy.”

Kevin would like to find a steady job and get off of Social Security. He applied for and is now in a vocational training program.

In the meantime, Kevin said, “I love working for Street Roots. There are friendly people. We march in the parades: the Veterans Day Parade, the Gay Pride Parade. And we have barbecues during the summer. They’re like family to me now.”

Kevin also finds community at his church. One of his pastors visited him at the hospital and drove him home from the nursing facility.

“I try to keep a positive attitude,” Kevin said. “I go to church; that helps. I go to the Liberation Street Church on Second and Burnside. (There I find) love, family.”

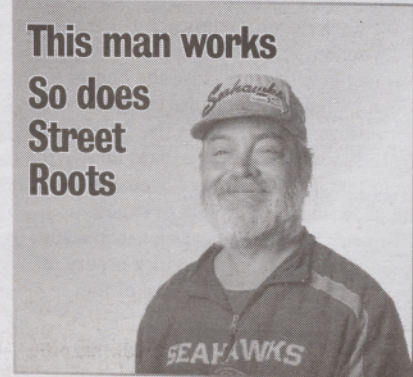
But the most important member of his family lives in Longview. He makes an eight-hour round trip on the bus to see his 10-year-old daughter.

“I’m proud of her,” he said. “She’s my only kid. She’s not getting in trouble in school, and she’s growing up to be a big girl.”

And in turn, Kevin said, “I’ve become more responsible. I want to accomplish something in life to make my daughter proud of me.”



In the Jan. 13 edition of Street Roots, the story “A taxing issue” incorrectly stated the amount of money raised by political action groups, Achieving the American Dream Coalition and the Oregonians for Affordable Housing PAC in 2016. They have raised more than a half of million dollars, not half a billion as stated in the article.



alberta coop grocery

small carts big hearts

good.local.food

1500 ne alberta st.
albertagrocery.coop
503 287 4333
open to all 8:30am- 10pm daily

CENTRAL CITY COFFEE

Drink well. Do good.

Sourcing & roasting craft coffee to benefit programs at Central City Concern.

IN STORES
New Seasons Market, Whole Foods, Food Front Cooperative Grocery, Green Zebra, Chuck's Produce and Will Leather Goods.

AT YOUR OFFICE
Interested in serving Central City Coffee at your office? Get in touch with us and we can help you make that happen. 503.226.7387

ON OUR WEBSITE
Buy Central City Coffee online and have it shipped directly to you or a friend.

AT KASBAH MOROCCAN CAFE
Get your espresso favorites at Old Town's newest spot (201 NW Davis Street), featuring Central City Coffee!

Follow our Facebook page for updates and specials.
centralcitycoffee.org facebook.com/CentralCityCoffee coffee@cccconcern.org