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## VENDOR PROFILE

### April

**BY MEGHANN VAN PELT**  
STAFF WRITER

If you find yourself in conversation with Street Roots vendor April, possibly at her sales spot at Alberta Co-op, you may very well lose track of time talking about everything from Voltaire to the importance of having your friend's back in times of need.

An active member of the community, April attributes her success in Portland to the Alberta Co-op, among many other organizations.

One in particular, SAFES – Salvation Army Female Emergency Shelter – has recently opened new horizons and, quite literally, new doors for April.

“It is by SAFES, the Salvation Army, that I now have housing and intensive case management for housing for a year,” she said.

Her sense of gratitude for SAFES, Rose Haven Day Center for Women and Children, Catholic Charities, and a host of other agencies throughout Portland was evident as she described her experience since leaving California a few years ago. Since her arrival in Portland, April has been living on and off the streets, a difficult reality, especially as a transgender woman.

SAFES introduced April to its housing program, through which, after 30 days of following community standards, participants have the opportunity to apply for an SRO (single room occupancy) apartment.

In January, April got into an apartment and despite the long journey to get to this point, she has maintained an enviable sense of humor. She had only positive words to share about her current home.

“Check this out. They have this thing called the closet. It’s amazing. Leaves me wondering what they’ll think up next. You go in, you open it up, you put in your

possessions, you open the door, you leave, you get a key, you come back, you open it up; there it is, it has all of your possessions still. I love it!”

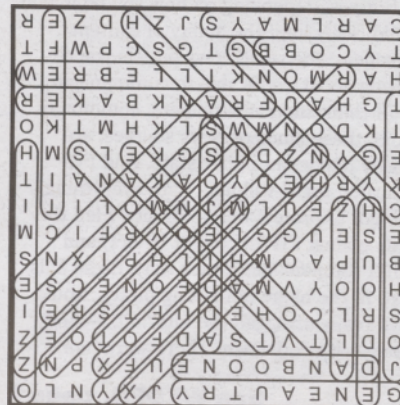
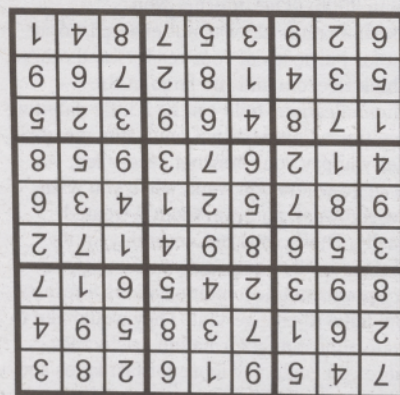
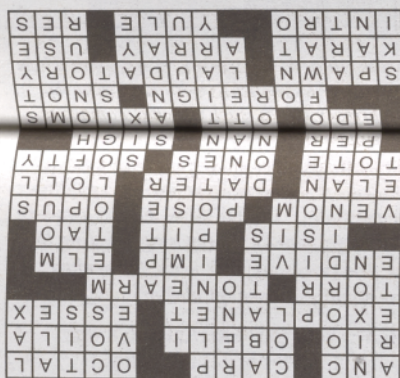
April, who describes herself as a “peace punk,” recognizes the value that lies in being part of larger communities.

“Remember that you’re not that unique. The more you remember that, the less disconnected you’re going to feel.”

April is practicing what she preaches and keeping busy in the community. You may see her selling papers outside of Alberta Co-op; in the Street Roots office on Wednesday mornings – at the creative writing group or at the upcoming Street Roots women’s group; or at various other organizations throughout Portland and the LGBTQ community.



### Answers to Page 15 Puzzles



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