

**AVENTURERO, from page 10**

who helped him find work: in North and South Carolina, in Georgia, in Nashville and New Orleans, Washington, D.C. and L.A.; and most recently in Seattle, Vancouver, Portland.

For all those years, as he roamed about the U.S., Henriquez worked – always manual labor, the basic hard work it takes to keep a giant economy running: factories, warehouses, construction, moving companies; cleaning offices or cars; washing dishes. Despite his crooked legs he would work all day, 10 or 12 hours or more, and then play soccer into the evening. Nearly 20 years ago he quit smoking and drinking. “If I had not found Christ,” he said, “I would be dead.”

Even after 2008, when “everything went down (*se fue todo abajo*”), he kept working. “There were plenty of jobs for manual laborers, but you had to work hard.”

In his 50s, though, physical problems began to slow the adventurer: first, terrible pain in his hands, then his legs. He became weak; walking was difficult. Bit by bit, he was losing the vigor that had sustained him throughout his life. “For four years now,” he said, “I have not been able to work hard. In five minutes I am weak, my legs hurt. I can’t lift 20 pounds.”

He was living in L.A. then, and thought a change to a cooler climate would help. “I moved to Seattle for the weather. Some people, when it’s hot they feel good, healthy, happy. But for me it is better when it’s cold.” He worked for 10 months prepping cars for an auto auction, but continued to feel weak.

Restless and concerned for his health, he moved to Vancouver. He still had a little money saved up, and for a few months was able to pay rent. When his money ran out he found, through the Spanish-speaking grapevine, an auto shop that had no security system. The owner let him stay in the shop, use the bathroom and sleep on a couch in the waiting room in exchange for serving as an informal security guard. They said they would pay him a little per week, but after a few months refused to pay.

His family in L.A. invited him to come back and stay there. “But,” he said, “I didn’t want to be a burden – for them to have to take care of me.”

He moved into Portland, and again his grapevine helped him survive: He learned about

the organization Transition Projects, and stayed at one of their shelters for four months. TPI connected him with Northwest Pilot Project, and he found health insurance through the Oregon Health Plan (“You must have insurance,” he advised me). Now, he could see a doctor and try to figure out what was happening to him. He was able to go to the Fanno Creek Clinic, and feels his doctor there may have saved his life. He was diagnosed with carpal tunnel syndrome, neuropathy, spondylolisthesis, diabetes, gout – enough to keep any man down. By then he was also terribly overweight, and a doctor told him he must make a change.

“My doctor explained it to me,” he said: “People go to the doctor, they get pills, but they keep eating the same thing, they don’t change their habits. They take the pills, but the pills don’t help them.”

He took his doctor’s advice seriously, and learned about nutrition. He is proud of his success: “I lost 20 pounds, and moved three holes on my belt.”

Northwest Pilot Project helped him get into a studio apartment last July. Although he still imagines someday finding a place out of the downtown area, he is grateful to be housed. It’s better than the auto shop; better than the shelters, it’s certainly better than when he had to sleep on the street in Portland. He has a blender, and he’ll blend avocado, jicama and water. “If you drink it every day for a month you will be well.”

He feels better than he has in years. He goes to church every week. “I respect God,” he said. It’s a simple life, but for now it is good. With a small Social Security award, he feels he could live well.

Still, despite daunting health problems, he is very clear that he will not give up. “I have normal strength for looking for work, for cooking. To work hard eight hours every day? I do not have the power. I start to sweat, my body hurts.

“But I can empty trash, I can clean, mop, sweep. I know how to bake, make pastries. I can drive, I have a license. But for only a short time, maybe every week, 20 hours, or 25. Then I will be able to keep working for a few more years.” At age 57, he insisted, “It is not time to retire. “Ando buscando,” he said. “I am looking.”

**Punctuated Time**

by Shaggy

Intimacy

Is lost in the sea  
We must get it back,  
Eventually.

Adoration

Will be tested  
Weighed against our  
Expectations

Entitlement

Is no sentiment  
To exclude our praise or  
Empowerment.

Appreciation


For others frustrations  
Could save our dreams from  
Mass devastation

**Dream**

by Daniel Cox

Requiem of a nightmare. Standing  
On the edge of tomorrow. An  
ode to the priest, most high.

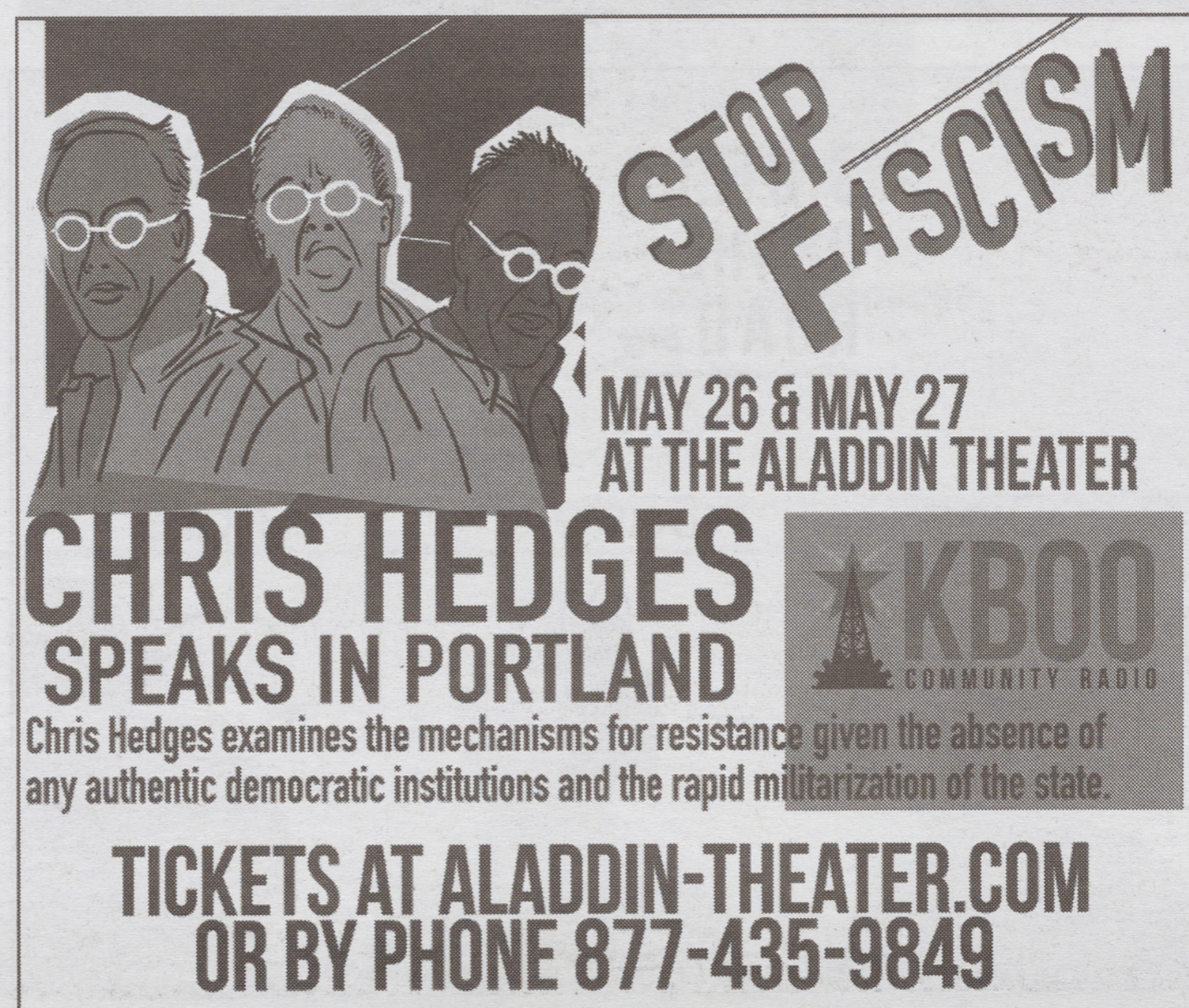
Here in this dream of today  
We rest on our laurels, and  
Hope for the best, it may seem  
Like a while, but it’s only  
A moment in time.



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**Armed Forces**  
and are experiencing  
or at risk of  
becoming  
homeless?

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