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Vendors lend artistic hand to pottery project

Finished clay bowls will be auctioned off in the fall to help people experiencing homelessness

BY HELEN HILL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Several afternoons this spring, Street Roots has been transformed into a bustling pop-up pottery studio thanks to artist Dana Lynn Louis and the Gather:Make:Shelter project.

Coffee cups and backpacks were temporarily swept off tables and replaced by paintbrushes, bottles of glaze, drawing books and greenware clay bowls as vendors gathered to research creative designs and paint them on bowls together.

"I want my rim to be salmon colored. I want it vibrant," said vendor Mark Rodriguez. "It's kind of hard to imagine, I know it will look different when it's fired. This is my true love, my very true love; art, creating."

Aileen McPherson was working intently on a detailed rose in the inside center of her bowl.

"Painting is what I've been able to do all my life," she said. "It calms my mind. I don't think. The only thing on my mind is what's in front of me. It's quiet, the mind is quiet."

Potters around the city have been working since February to throw, trim and green fire some 500 clay bowls, all to be decorated by people experiencing poverty and homelessness. The finished bowls will be auctioned off at several events later this fall, along with a community celebration with a feast to go into the bowls prepared by local chefs. Funds raised will go to organizations supporting Portland families and individuals experiencing homelessness.

The sessions at Street Roots are among more than 50 painting workshops for individuals, youth and families experiencing poverty and homelessness at service centers throughout the metro area, including Central City Concern, Imani Center, pear, Janus Youth, New Avenues for Youth, Rose Haven and Portland Homeless Family Solutions.

Street Roots was Louis' choice for the inaugural painting studio.

"I love Street Roots," she said. "I'm inspired by the warm energy in the room."

The project is in full tilt now, with hundreds of people collaborating.

The potters – who have contributed more than 500 bowls – came from Oregon



PHOTOS BY STREET ROOTS

At top, Street Roots vendors work on painting potter for the Gather:Make:Shelter project. Above, vendor Chris Van Dam shows off his bowl. Vendor Juliette Taliaferro (right) said, "I did an absolutely random, impromptu, abstract painting. I'm surprised. I love it."

College of Arts and Crafts, Portland Community Colleges, Pacific Northwest College Of Art, Mt. Hood Community College, Lincoln and Grant High schools.

They're joined by 40 independent potters and collectives.

Georgies Ceramic Supply, Grand Central Baking, Sizzle Pie, Blick Art Supply and the Urban Gleaners also contributed supplies and food to support Gather:Make:Shelter.

All workshop participants are paid a \$20 stipend when they paint a bowl.

"The most important thing to me is to pay these stipends. I want to make sure the artists are honored for their participation and talent," Louis said.

And the vendors are loving it.

"This has been an eye-opener because I didn't think I could draw. I'm actually

happy with the results. I was in the right place at the right time," said vendor Chris Van Dam.

"I did an absolutely random, impromptu, abstract painting. I'm surprised. I love it," Juliette Taliaferro said.

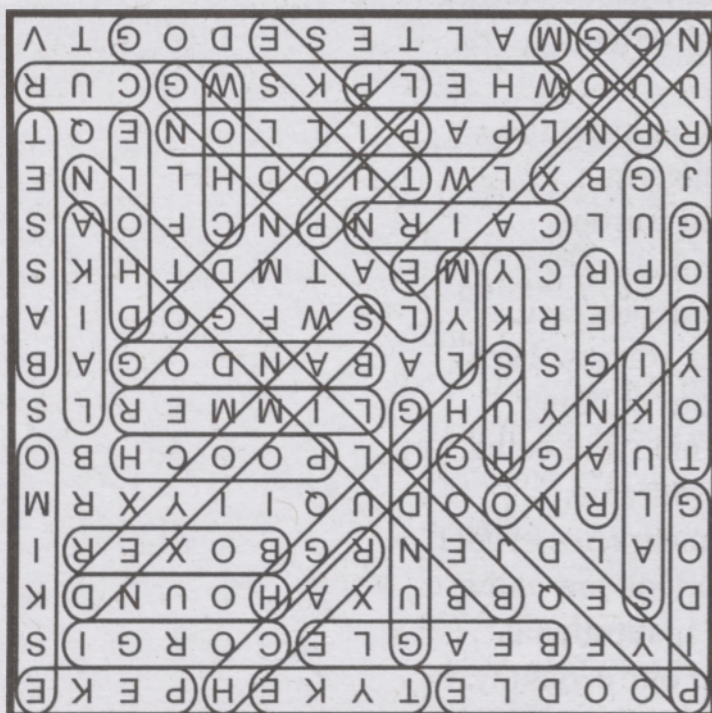
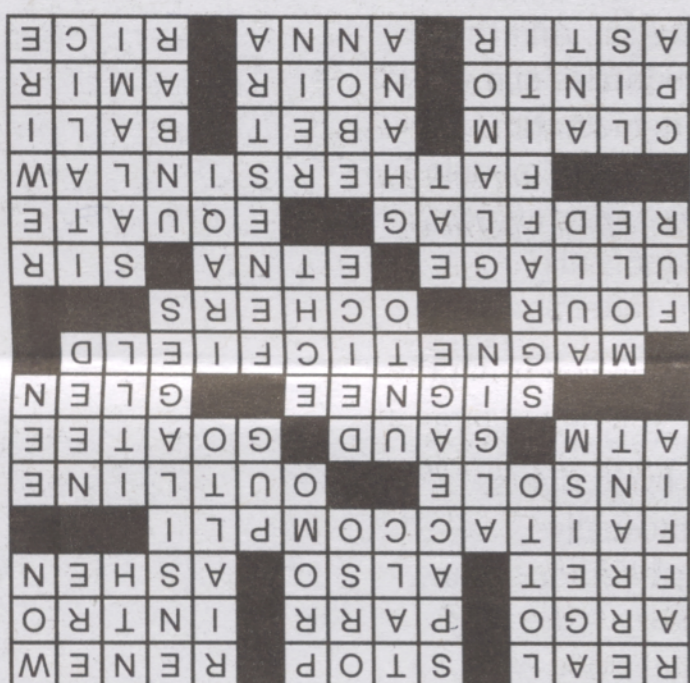
"I'm happy whenever I pick up a paintbrush," said Mary Daniels.

"It feels good to sit and get creative with everyone, with the added bonus of being able to help people get into homes. I'm always looking for ways to give back to all the organizations that helped me find housing and shelter," said Lori Lematta.

"I've been an artist since I was very little," said Chris Drake. "It's the only way I've ever been able to express myself. Doing this, I'm home, sweet home."

Gather:Make:Shelter is sponsored by the Charitable Partnership Fund, a 501(c)(3), publicly supported non-profit. To view pictures of the bowls and learn more about the project, visit the Gather:Make:Shelter Facebook page.

Answers to Page 15 Puzzles



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