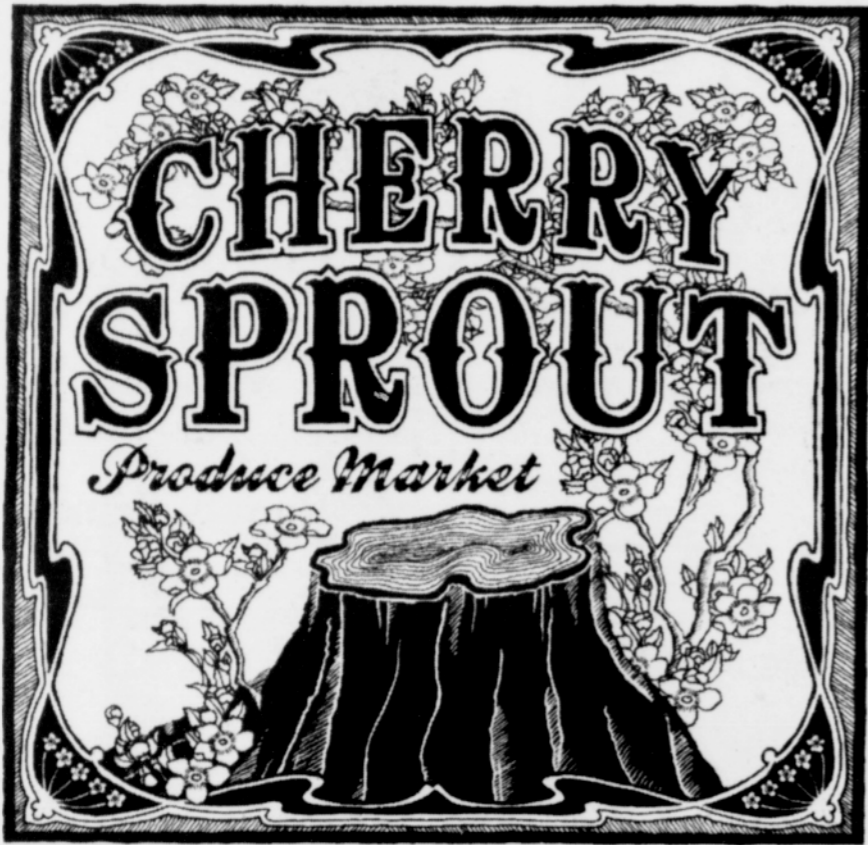


# Arts & ENTERTAINMENT



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## A Smile Portland Will Miss

### Candlelight vigil to pay tribute to late showman

BY CARI HACHMANN  
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Anyone who's spent much time in Portland, visited the Saturday Market downtown or crossed the Hawthorne Bridge from the eastside to the west, knew of "working" Kirk Reeves.

You may not have know him by name, but Portlanders knew him as the street performer in a white tux and Mickey Mouse ears, the smiling African-American man who plays trumpet and performs magic tricks for kids and waves at passing cars.

But behind the glint of childlike nostalgia he brought to an ordinary day, you may not have known that wherever Reeves turned in for the night, he suffered tears.

On Nov. 4, police discovered Reeves' body at the Smith and Bybee Wetlands Natural Area on North Marine Drive. Police say he took his own life with a self-inflicted gunshot wound. He was 56-years-old.



Street performer Kirk Reeves at the approach to the Hawthorne Bridge. (KATU photo)



Kirk Reeves

The announcement came as sad news for many Portlanders. Police withheld the cause of Reeve's death until they could locate his family members, which they soon did, notifying his sister in Boston, Mass.

Friends of Reeves said he was growing disheartened about his waning entertainment career, the Oregonian's Steve Beaven reported.

In May, he left for Los Angeles to audition for the television shows "America's Got Talent" and "Shark Tank," but friends said he wasn't selected for either. Another filmmaking prospect fell through.

Last month, the Oregonian reports, Reeves sent a long, rambling email to friends detailing his disappointments, health problems and his desire to kill himself.

"I haven't committed suicide because too many people would be hurt," he wrote. "But I hate this

place and want to leave."

Friends told reporters that Reeves had previously been homeless and suffered from diabetes and cataracts.

"I think he had a lot of dreams and he was getting very disheartened and he felt things just kept getting worse and worse," said Nour Mobarak, a Portland filmmaker who produced a student documentary about Reeves several years ago. "He was struggling a lot."

Reeves's friendship and compassion touched the lives of so many Portlanders and the city will not be the same without him.

The irony in his life and death is that if we could have showed him the compassion he handed so freely to all of us, we could have inspired him with a little more hope.

Rest in Peace Kirk, your smile will be missed.

Friends will hold a candlelight vigil for Reeves on Nov. 18 at 4 p.m. starting near the west side of the Hawthorne Bridge.

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