

ETHOS

Summer 2010 Volume 2 Issue 4



**ALL EYES ON
SOUTH AFRICA**

*WOODS TO WONDERLAND:
BUILDING THE OREGON
COUNTRY FAIR*

THE NAZIS NEXT DOOR



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Multimedia

Soundwaves

World famous Zimbabwean musician Thomas Mapfumo shares his musical stylings, influenced by the sounds and rhythms of his native people.

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Culture Shock

The Lost Pearl of Cambodia

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STORY ALISON MORAN



Expression

Graffiti in the Gallery

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STORY ALEX STOLTZE



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Aid Along the River

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STORY LEAH KENNEDY

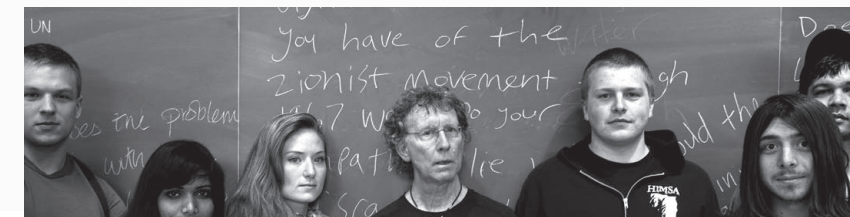


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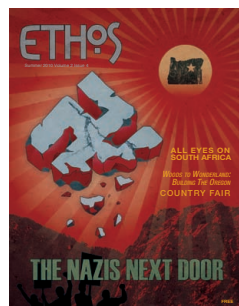
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ETHOS



PHOTO CHRIS PARKER

Ethos (originally *Korean Ducks Magazine* then *KD*) has been a student publication with a multicultural focus since 2004.

I'm commonly asked *What is Ethos, exactly?* I normally stutter for a bit while assorted thoughts of culture bounce around the many clogged corridors of my head. *It's a multicultural magazine, made by students* I usually respond, always disappointed with my vague offering. Then I get the follow-up question: *Well, what do you write stories about?* The floodgates open. We've covered a wide spectrum of culture in the last four years. There's that story about toilets around the world (Winter 2010) or Eugene's fiery Papa's Soul Food Kitchen (Fall 2007). What about when we covered the culture of breeding and riding bulls (Fall 2008) or that feature investigating female circumcision (Summer 2009)?

Even after working as *Ethos'* editor for nine months, I still can't quite encapsulate this magazine into something concise and tidy. I fail to tighten and pull it into a fashionable bow. Perhaps multiculturalism as a concept is too ornate to iron down to simple terms. So, *it's a multicultural magazine . . . made by students* becomes my only mumbled response.

For me, *Ethos* has been the opportunity to explore and attempt to understand the murky depths of culture, and I hope it provides the same for our readers. Maybe that's what *Ethos* is all about: opportunity for exploration.

Our staff has the great fortune to experience life through the lens of a journalist, which is no simple commission. There's an immense, alluring challenge to telling somebody else's story accurately, especially if that somebody is from a culture as foreign as *stunna shades* are to your grandmother (to be fair, I don't completely get those either). *Ethos* doesn't always get it perfect, but we embrace the tricky task.

Sadly — maybe fortunately — my time stumbling through nebulous descriptions of *Ethos* has come to an end. Graduation is here. This is my final edition working on this remarkable, student-driven publication. I am grateful for the experience, but more so for the exposure to an incredible staff passionately invested in the exploration of curious, cool culture.

At the end of the day, maybe the question should be how do *you* define culture? How do *you* explore it? Open the floodgates.

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Congratulations to the *Ethos* staff, both past and present, for its award-winning work. In 2009, *Ethos* received national recognition from the Columbia Scholastic Press Association's College Gold Circle Awards and the William Randolph Hearst Foundation.



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Escaping Prostitution

Jeri Sundvall-Williams advocates against Portland's sex industry and fights for legislative reform

STORY KELSEY THALHOFER PHOTOS ARIANE KUNZE & SARABETH OPPLIGER



Pulling back her hair, Sundvall-Williams reveals a small tattoo. During her time on the streets she got this tattoo to help remind herself and others of her moral convictions,

Jeri Sundvall-Williams races, half-clothed and bleeding, down Milwaukie Avenue in southeast Portland. Cars fly by and she clutches the fanny pack holding her night's earnings, terrified of the man pursuing her with a knife, equally horrified at the thought of returning home to her pimp empty-handed. "God, if you're there," she prays, "I know I messed up my life, but I'll serve you for the rest of my life if you just get me out of this."

This was just one of many nightmares Sundvall-Williams, an Oregon native, survived during the five months she spent as a prostitute in 1989. But, for Sundvall-Williams, this particular date would be her last; later that day, her pimp was arrested, freeing Sundvall-Williams from her enslavement. At the time, she thought this escape had happened by chance — she was simply lucky. However, looking back at her story and where it has brought her, Sundvall-Williams says, "I don't actually believe in coincidences anymore."

She eventually entered the West Women's and Children's Shelter in northwest Portland and began coming to grips with the abuse that had haunted her since childhood. It took years for Sundvall-Williams to realize her continuous victimization stemmed from this abuse, and even longer to transcend her role as victim and become an "overcomer." Now a dynamic activist against human trafficking and neighborhood coordinator with the Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement, Sundvall-Williams sat down in Portland with *Ethos* to discuss her experiences, transition, and projects she's passionate about today.

Can you give a picture of your life before prostitution?

I grew up in Salem; both my parents worked. I got good grades in school, and I was an athlete — basketball and track. It was when I graduated from high school and married at a young age — to someone who turned out to be an abuser — that life started changing for me. I was in that marriage about five years before I got away from him. When I came to Portland to be near family, I was in my twenties with two young children. Because of all the years of being beat up and everything, I had zero self-esteem, and I was just a really good, easy target for a pimp to click onto and force me out on the streets. This was one of the streets. [Motioning to the road.]

Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard [in northeast Portland]?

Yeah, but at the time it was called Union Avenue. In 1989, it was just this blighted community with practically no businesses on the street. It was a really seedy area, and I'd just walk up and down the street. It was a pretty awful lifestyle. For the most part I was walking up and down 82nd Avenue, which is a much busier street. My pimp's requirement was that I would make at least \$300 a night, or daylight would come and I could come home. So I would go out at 8:00 at night and walk up and down the street and earn money. Well, \$300 back then was about fifteen dates. Fifteen dates a night, seven nights a week, is a pretty horrifying thing. His sister is basically babysitting my kids while this is happening and he was giving her crack — she was on crack, she was pregnant with twins. Despite all that, I think she did a fairly good job of taking care of my children. Still, it was an awful, awful situation for all of us. I wasn't seeing them. I was being locked in the room all day long and then forced out on the streets at night, and it was just a horrible situation.

So you now work for the city as neighborhood coordinator with the Portland Office of Neighborhood Involvement, which overlaps with many of these experiences. What other work do you do to try to spread awareness or help the situation for prostitutes?

I volunteered to sit on the board of the Council for Prostitution Alternatives, because I wanted to give back. Throughout the years I've sat on many different boards to help people with different situations. Then one of the members of [Portland's] Montavilla Neighborhood Association that I worked with fairly regularly came to me and said they were holding a summit on prostitution, and were wondering if I would speak as a survivor. She said, "The neighborhood is all up in arms. Everybody's angry." And I'm thinking, "Why would I want to go speak to them?" But I said yes. Because eventually it becomes a call — it's a calling in your life where you realize, "I went through this and I survived it; that must mean I need to help." Because a lot of people don't survive it. A lot of people get stuck somewhere.

Wow.

As I was preparing for these meetings, I was researching to find out where women could go when they needed help. I found that all these services were cut years before. Even on the Multnomah County Web site, there was a listing for two organizations where women could go for help, and if you called those numbers both



Today, Sundvall-Williams dedicates her life to helping others get out of Portland's sex industry.

have been disconnected because both of those organizations no longer exist. So I said, as far as Multnomah County, that they should make current numbers available on their Web site, and Mayor Tom Potter dedicated \$500,000 to go to a program to start helping women again. That was an incredible reward for stepping out, for me, that we have some services now.

Right now, there are no shelters to take in women. You could drop into a center, and yet there's no place, if you want to get away from a pimp, to just take you away and put you in a shelter. So, currently,

I went through this and I survived it; that must mean I need to help.

that's what we're working on, and we're working with Senator Ron Wyden as well, who is bringing, hopefully, a \$50 million block grant to create some shelters and help get women off the streets.

We worked on House Bill 3623, which posts a sticker everywhere alcohol is sold. The sticker comes with a letter to people renewing their liquor licenses, asking them to stick it in their window so that people have this 1-888 number to the Polaris Project so they can get out of human trafficking situations. That happened in late April. Now we're going to stuff envelopes and have a press conference.

What is your personal goal for yourself as an advocate against prostitution?

One is that I work on it for the rest of my life. One of the reasons I went and spoke for the events on

82nd Avenue was that at the time there were three teenage girls who were all being pimped by the same guy, and they were friends of my daughter growing up. You see these little girls all dressed up in little dresses and stuff, and now, ten years later, they're being pimped by this guy. So I'd like to see a lot of changes. The women, who are already victims generally when they get arrested, are being re-victimized, and yet, the guy who's pimping them, he's got them in so much fear that they [the pimps] are not being prosecuted, and generally the Johns, the Drakes, whatever they call them, go free. So I'd like to see a

lot more discipline on people's parts. If it's not okay to do, then it's not okay to do across the board. When you

look at prostituted women, 98 percent of them were molested as children. It's not a job choice that you make because you feel good about yourself. Somebody is using you as a slave, and they're benefitting, and you're not. So, I want to see some legislative changes in the way those things are addressed, and I'd like to see a lot more help for folks, especially women escaping prostitution. But we can't not address the other two pieces. You can't not address the supply, the women, you can't not address the demand, which is the Johns. We're not currently doing that, so it's a lifetime of work. ♻️



See another survivor's story at
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A Journey Toward the Future

International interests offer opportunity for Haitian development



Eight days after the earthquake, Haitians walk between crumbled cinder block buildings in Port-au-Prince. The epicenter of the magnitude 7.0 quake was only 10 miles southwest of the capital city.

Haiti has its share of palm tree-shaded beaches and warm tropical waters, but for many life on the Caribbean island is far from paradise.

According to the Heritage Foundation, Haiti is the poorest nation in the Western Hemisphere. Coups, dictatorship, and political instability have stagnated the country's economy and hindered the establishment of basic infrastructure like electrical grids, sanitation systems, schools, and medical facilities. The Duvalier dictatorship, a period of extreme human rights violations and military rule, lasted for almost three decades. The chaos following the ousting of the oppressive dictatorship in 1986 forced most factories to close, slowing Haiti's economy.

Manufacturing provided Haiti with the majority of its export goods. Roughly 70 percent of Haiti's total exports go to the U.S. annually. In December 2006, the U.S. Congress passed the HOPE Act, which eliminated tariffs on garments and automotive parts exported

to America. The HOPE Act reopened Haiti's garment industry and captured the interest of investors looking for new manufacturing opportunities.

By 2009, Haiti's potential for development was gaining international attention. Companies from the U.S., Brazil, Ireland, and Korea expressed real interest in restarting the nation's factories, which meant more jobs for the estimated two-thirds of the population that were unemployed.

But the island nation still lacked basic infrastructure. According to the World Food Programme, roughly 50 percent of Haiti's population doesn't have access to clean drinking water. Noticing this need, Curt and Beth Luthye began working with their partners at Nazarene Compassionate Ministries to establish the Haiti Water Project in 2007.

LeeAllie Buchanan, who works on the ground in Haiti for the organization,

says gathering water is usually the children's job. "In rural areas, people have to walk for hours to get water. Sometimes it's two to four hours round trip and kids are more focused on getting water than on school or just being kids," she says.

The project has installed sixty biosand filters in schools and is in the process of putting in sixty more. The filters make clean water accessible to students and the larger community. "Water is the source of life," Buchanan says. "When you lack access or have dirty water, you realize this."

Haiti was awakening from decades of stagnation and pushing toward the future when disaster struck. ♀

The rural population of Haiti spends 60 percent of their income on food.



ILLUSTRATIONS CAM GIBLIN

Desperate Measures

Haiti's fragile infrastructure wasn't prepared for the quake or its aftermath

On January 12, 2010, the Earth shook. Cracks fractured the brand new walls of King's Hospital in Port-au-Prince. The hospital had only performed twenty-five operations in its sparkling clean operating suite before the quake hit. Despite the violent tremors that ripped apart much of the country, the thirty-five-bed facility stayed standing. It was one of the few medical facilities that suffered minimal damage, the staff found itself inundated with quake victims.

Used to seeing about 120 patients per day, the hospital staff suddenly had 300 desperate people crammed into the inpatient ward. More survivors congregated on the hill above the facility. Medical supplies ran out fast.

Medical Teams International, a nonprofit aid organization based in Oregon, helped coordinate the first wave of relief. The first team of two doctors, three

registered nurses, and medical equipment were sent two days after the quake.

"When we first got there, their staff was exhausted," says Marlene Minor, vice president of communications. "Of all the disaster zones I've been to, this was the worst."

Marie Davis and her husband Curt arrived in Port-au-Prince in March. Almost two months after the earthquake, the stacks of rubble remained.

"We went into the city on an excursion and it was totally flattened," Marie Davis says. "What we saw on CNN and other news reports didn't capture the scope of the damage."

The Davis' were sent to a hospital 120 miles outside the city in Bonne Fin. Farther from the epicenter, the hospital was able to survive the quake. Marie Davis, an ER and surgery nurse from Dallas, Oregon, worked in the makeshift recovery unit.

Curt Davis worked as an electrician and helped the medical team when he could. He also became the adopted "poppy" of a twenty-year-old patient, Sherley Peltrop, who arrived from Port-au-Prince with both legs paralyzed from the knee down.

Peltrop had been in school with sixty-five other students when the quake struck. She, her brother, and ten other students were the only survivors. Her legs were trapped under fallen concrete for twelve hours until she was rescued. The prolonged pressure caused permanent nerve damage to her lower legs and she could neither feel nor move them. Through patient rehabilitation she learned to balance on her lifeless legs, like prosthetics, and even use a walker.

"To see her have no hope of ever walking again, and then to be able to walk was impressive," Marie Davis says. "It was because of courage." ♀

Starting from Nothing, Again

Could the earthquake be a turning point?

At first glance, the earthquake that decimated Haiti's fragile capital city wouldn't appear to have a silver lining, but that may be the case. The outpouring of support from countries, companies, and individuals toward the relief effort has been unprecedented.

The United Nations released \$10 million in emergency funds while Germany, Sweden, Spain, and Canada provided search and rescue teams, medical supplies, tents, water, and volunteers. The U.S. sent marines and supplies to help aid U.N. peacekeeping forces and reopen the airport and seaport.

Sol Inc., a Florida-based solar powered outdoor lighting company, designed and donated 100 lights to the relief efforts. Trained employees were also sent to install the lights. "Looking at the country and the challenges, we believe that by installing lights now, we can help make a difference in the long term," says Audwin Cash, vice president of marketing for Sol Inc.

The lights were placed in relief camps and along two-lane streets to improve security. According to Sol Inc. employees returning from Haiti, a curfew currently is in place as the problems with violence and safety at night continue. Cash says the lights address an immediate need and have

a vital impact by providing light and security.

At King's Hospital things have slowed down for the doctors. Most of the patients are quake victims returning for check-ups, and the hospital's partner, Lumiere Medical Ministries, has resumed its regular rotations of missionary volunteers. According to the president of Lumiere, Hank Haskins, the damage to the structure appears minimal. A team of architects and engineers are being sent to do a final evaluation and give the facility a clean bill of health.

Officials looking toward rebuilding the country are faced with an array of immediate needs. Schools need to be reopened, hospitals rebuilt, and an estimated one million people are without permanent homes. The first steps are being taken. In early March, the U.S. Senate passed the Haiti Recovery Act that

will forgive all Haiti's debts to the U.S. Haitian President René Préval says that the November presidential elections will go forward as planned.

As the Haitian government and the international community discuss strategies for reconstruction, the biggest question is: How can Haiti be rebuilt and improved? With the current wave of support and attention, this could be Haiti's chance to become a stronger, more stable nation. —Anneka Miller



All Eyes on South Africa

South Africa kicks around controversy over the FIFA World Cup

STORY KELSEY IVEY

Panorama of Cape Town, South Africa, looking over Green Point Stadium and Table Bay.



For one month this year, the country at the end of the world will be at the front and center of global soccer. Beginning June 11, hundreds of thousands of devoted soccer fans will stream into South Africa for the 19th annual FIFA World Cup Tournament.

The World Cup “will be one of our most important defining moments . . . a moment where the attention of the world will be nowhere but right here in South Africa,” says chief executive officer of the 2010 FIFA World Cup Organising Committee South Africa, Dr. Danny Jordaan, on the fifty-day countdown to the beginning of the games.

Thirty-two teams qualified for the first ever World Cup to be held on the African Continent. South Africa competed against Egypt, Morocco, Libya, and Tunisia for the coveted title. FIFA, the Fédération Internationale de Football Association, deemed South Africa the most prepared African nation to host the games.

Yet this is not the first time South Africa has dominated the headlines around a mega-sporting event.

On August 18, 1964, South Africa was banned from competing in the Tokyo Olympics because of the nation’s apartheid regime. Over three-dozen countries threatened to boycott the games if South Africa played, so the International Olympics Committee banned the country until its government desegregated and granted basic human rights to all citizens. For twenty-eight years, South Africa was isolated from the global games for its social and political policy enforced by the white minority that segregated public areas and schools, and denied non-whites from positions in government. Not

until the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympics, two years before the apartheid government dismantled, did a South African athlete compete in the Olympic games.

During this time, soccer in the rainbow nation was painted in monochrome. From 1961 to 1992, South Africa was suspended from participating in FIFA’s World Cup because of the government’s insistence on segregating sporting teams.

South Africa’s racially divided past doesn’t seem to be a hindrance to FIFA’s standards today, but a possibility for further social development and cultural acceptance.

“There is no balance in what has been spent and what should be invested in the social dynamics of the country.”

According to FIFA’s Big Count 2006 campaign, over 270 million people across the globe playing soccer. The organization is devoted not only to hosting mega-sporting events like the World Cup, but also to aiding social and political change around the world through soccer.

For South Africa’s World Cup, FIFA established the social campaign, “20 centers for 2010.” The aim of the movement is to promote social change and public health through sports and youth education across Africa.

The first Center for Hope opened in

Khayelitsha on December 5, 2009, one of the poorest townships on the edge of Cape Town. Not only does 65 percent of the township’s population make less than 200 Rand a month (less than \$1 a day), but the crime and HIV/AIDS rates are also some of the highest in the country. Through soccer programs hosted by the Center for Hope, FIFA and its community partners are teaching the youth — who make up a quarter of Khayelitsha’s population — life skills and HIV/AIDS prevention.

Even with the grassroots campaigns supported by FIFA’s mission to strive for cultural tolerance and social improvements in South Africa, FIFA programs and government-supported projects have come under fire by international and local organizations in recent months.

In particular, Temporary Relocation Areas (TRAs) set up by the government to house homeless and evicted residents have sparked local and international controversy.

Stark white sand surrounds rows of perfectly aligned corrugated iron shacks where thousands of homeless and evicted residents from around Cape Town now call home. The 1,600 temporary houses located about 25 miles from the city center make up the township block called Symphony Way Temporary Relocation Area, better known as *Blikkiesdorp*, an Afrikaans word meaning “tin can town.” While the city says residents move to Blikkiesdorp voluntarily, some claim to be forced from their homes as a part of a street “clean-up” for the World Cup.

“If you are homeless in [South Africa], you are seen as part of the crime and grime that must be removed from the city centers

and tourism areas before any big event,” says Linzi Thomas, founder of MyLife, a charity and nonprofit organization based in Cape Town that rehabilitates street youth at risk. “There are no effective strategies to take the homeless off the streets in a holistic manner so they can reintegrate with support.”

The media and local Non-Governmental Organizations have criticized Blikkiesdorp for its strict curfew, unsafe living conditions, and unsanitary facilities for its residents.

According to the national newspaper *Sowetan*, some residents have even dubbed Blikkiesdorp a “concentration camp,” and compared the TRA to the run-down, crime-ridden compounds seen in the recent blockbuster movie *District 9*.

“Billions have been spent on the stadiums when there are people dying of hunger, HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, crime, suicide, and addictions,” Thomas says. “There is no balance in what has been spent and what should be invested in the social dynamics of the country.”

However, the city claims the TRA was not established in preparation for the FIFA World Cup.

Temporary housing “Is provided for residents in emergency situations . . . These include, amongst many others, victims of xenophobic attacks; evicted people for which the city has been named responsible; people living on the streets, in atrocious conditions in backyards, in road reserves, in pipes, on pavements; or those living in condemned buildings,” says Kylie Hatton, Cape Town’s media manager. “Blikkiesdorp represents a

significant improvement to their previous living environment.”

The greatest concern with Blikkiesdorp is safety for the residents, the city states in a recent press release. The TRA is fenced-off and Informal Settlement Management Department officers regularly patrol the area to ensure a safe environment and prevent the inflow of unauthorized occupiers. But vandalism of the structures and toilet facilities continues to be an ongoing problem.

“The city is not covering up its social realities,” Hatton says. “Residents have not been displaced nor housing demolished for any of the infrastructural upgrades in the metropolitan area linked to the staging of the World Cup.”

The United Nations predicts a 78 percent increase of traffic into the nine South African cities hosting games. The biggest concern for those cities leading up to the kickoff of the World Cup is their presentation to the thousands of economy-boosting international tourists. While the fans’ eyes may be focused on the grass field, they may not notice what they don’t see — the homeless and hawkers — and the lingering influence that South Africa’s segregated past has left on the population.

Across the bay from where boisterous fans from all over the globe will cheer on their favorite teams at the July FIFA World Cup semi-finals in Cape Town, lies a dusty field surrounded by barbed wire and chains at the Robben Island Prison, which held political prisoners of the Apartheid era, is contrastingly quiet. It is a field that knows soccer and FIFA regulation as well as the strict rules that governed its players and South Africa’s segregated past.

Just outside where the former president of South Africa Nelson Mandela hunkered in solitude, political prisoners spent their free time passing a makeshift soccer ball, not only for entertainment, but spirit and survival. Now the dried and hardened field that encouraged the feet of political change to play soccer represents an era of racial and social inequalities. And as a haunting tribute to both South Africa’s past and present, it too will be watching as all eyes turn to South Africa once again. ♻

A glance at the apartheid

Apartheid was the social and political policy of racial segregation enforced by the white minority in South Africa from 1948 to 1994. Segregating all South Africans into three groups: *bantu* (black African), white, and colored (mixed race), it restricted nonwhite populations from holding positions in government, land ownership, and social contracts while splitting all public areas, schools, business, and residential neighborhoods by race.

During the apartheid, black political activists fighting for racial equality, including future South African presidents Nelson Mandela and Kgalema Motlanthe, were imprisoned at Robben Island Prison.

Led by President F. W. de Klerk, the South African government began dismantling the apartheid regime in the early 1990s in response to national and international pressure. In 1994 the African National Congress was reformed and the first free general elections were held, where Nelson Mandela was elected the first black South African president.

PHOTO COURTESY MEDIA CLUB SOUTH AFRICA



STORY CHRISTINA O'CONNOR
PHOTOS TAYLOR SCHEFSTROM

A century ago, Portland's underground tunnels bustled with an illegal kidnapping trade. Or did they? Today, the truth behind urban legends blurs with the desire to believe.

The crowd at Hobo's Restaurant in downtown Portland is dwindling. Most of the night's patronage has moved on to more provocative pursuits — Dixie Tavern across the street blares country music, and brave drunks stand up at the Boiler Room next door to slur their words in sloppy renditions of their favorite songs. But Hobo's remains classy and inviting — a few parties linger at candlelit tables, sipping red wine, and chatting softly.

Below ground, it's a different story. Legend has it that from the 1840s until 1941, while Portland maintained a reputation as an upright city, illicit activity seethed in a series of underground tunnels—a seedy mélange of prostitution, gambling, and shanghaiing. Although mostly sealed off today, the tunnels apparently used to connect most of downtown. Intoxicated men from bars above would be dropped into the tunnels through hidden trapdoors. Once underground, the men were held in small cells until their kidnappers sold them to ship captains, forcing them to work onboard without pay. Some weren't returned to Portland for up to six years, while others were never seen or heard from again. The practice came to be called shanghaiing because men would wake up in the middle of the ocean on their way to Shanghai, China. Today, the underground is said to be one of the most haunted places in the Pacific Northwest, crawling with the spirits of shanghaiers and their victims.

On the other hand, this could be nothing more than a scary story. An urban legend. Maybe it's all just something that happened to somebody's brother's girlfriend's cousin.

After all, there is not much left of the tunnels today. The area beneath Hobo's and Old Town Pizza is one of the few spots where buildings still connect. Nobody has been able to track down anybody who was involved with the slave trade. Nobody has met anybody who helped construct the tunnels. And nobody has spoken with anybody who was shanghaiied.

But Cascade Geographic Society founder and director Michael P. Jones believes he has.

Most historians see the stories of the underground as nothing more than, well, stories. Apart from Jones' sources, there is no direct connection or tangible proof to the allegations that circulate the streets of Portland. And without that proof, this is all just an urban legend — a modern narrative that has some documented aspects, such as a specific place and time, but is difficult to trace. Although nothing has been proven, people still cling to this story. It has become an integral part of Portland community legend. Tourists and locals alike come in droves to walk through the underground and bask in the debatable history. What is it that draws people in?

Struggling to perch himself up on a high stool sandwiched between pool tables and video games. It's the only place he can manage to sit after his recent foot surgery. "The doctor said that I wore out my bones," Jones says. "He had never seen anything like it."

Jones has been working in the underground since he was seven years old, trying to salvage artifacts from the past. Shoes. Shards of glass. Tin cans. These, he says, are all proof that shanghaiing happened. Because the underground today is difficult to access, rescuing these items is a tremendously difficult task. But Jones carries on, bad foot and all, because he says it's important to preserve this part of Portland's history.

Everyone in Hobo's seems to know Jones. Servers wave as they rush back and forth taking orders and bussing tables. He grants them a nod and continues talking. Everybody who is affiliated with the area beneath Hobo's seems to know Jones, too. Jones says that he has talked with primary sources — families of the shanghaiied and the shanghaiers. Over the years, various people have tracked Jones down to tell him their stories about the underground.

A young man weaves over to the table, fixated on Jones. "I know you, man!" he says, beer in one hand and propping himself up on the table with the other. He tells Jones that he took the tour a few years ago. "Is this place really haunted?" the man asks. "I mean, did all that stuff really happen?"

A few decades ago, people used to accept the stories they heard to be fact. But these days, hardly anybody takes urban legends seriously.

That question comes up again and again. And while Jones is entirely confident that shanghaiing happened in the tunnels, others are skeptical.

Although he might not be happy about it, in a way Jones understands why others have differing views. He explains that Western culture places too much importance on what is written down in textbooks, what he calls “accepted history,” and too little faith in oral histories, or “unaccepted history.”

He asserts that the westernized shift away from a belief in folklore is dangerous. “Once you start taking the accepted history and ignoring the unaccepted history, you’ve lost a lot of history because . . . what you’re going to find in folklore is a lot of history that hasn’t been put on this other side for some reason,” Jones says, shifting in his seat. A group at the pool table cheers every time one of them makes a shot. Jones ignores the noise and leans in closer to the table. He explains that while Western societies have established a steadfast separation between accepted histories and folklores, other cultures see the two as he feels they are: interrelated.

“Like if you go to [Asia], and in a lot of Native American tribes, storytelling is so important,” he says. “And it doesn’t mean the story isn’t true. But for our culture in the U.S., we’ve ignored so much.”

For Jones, what he hears about the underground cannot be ignored. “I just have to tell these stories,” he says.

But former Oregon Historical Society (OHS) public historian Richard Engeman feels the legends are nothing more than just stories. “This is nothing but hearsay,” he says.

Engeman spent years researching the underground. After amassing piles of research, he has been unable to find concrete evidence to prove shanghaiing occurred in the tunnels.

“If there are any tunnels at all, show me one,” he says. “If there is any evidence of any kind that points to sailors being shanghaiied, I’d like to know about it.” When Engeman started at OHS in 2001, he quickly discovered the underground was a topic of much interest within the community. People often questioned him about the tunnels and shanghaiing, so he started looking for historical evidence to support their stories. The first time he called the city’s archive center to inquire about zoning documents for the tunnels, he had to hold the phone away from his ear because the woman on the other end was laughing so hard.

A couple weeks later and a block down, Portland Walking Tours guide Donna Yarborough leads a group of seven down the back stairs of Old Town Pizza. Yarborough, it seems, is the skeptic’s skeptic. Tunnels? No, she tells her group as they enter the basement, they would not be seeing any tunnels

on this tour. She leads them to a brick corridor and tells them about the tunnels and shanghaiing, but denies that one has anything at all to do with the other. That brick corridor, she explains, which is no longer than ten feet, is all that’s left of the tunnels here.

Portland Walking Tours founder David Schargel maintains while there certainly were tunnels beneath the city, they had nothing to do with shanghaiing. Instead, the tunnels were built for a variety of purposes, including flood control and utility lines. He also explains that the tunnels were used to carry supplies to the docks — but none of these supplies included men.

Despite the lack of readily available evidence, these tales still persist throughout Portland. Many Portlanders grow up hearing about the tunnels. On a recent CGS tour, more than forty people crammed into the back courtyard of Hobo’s, listening as one of the tour guides delivered a well-rehearsed shtick about the tunnels, shanghaiing, and the very likely

possibility that at least one person in the crowd would have a paranormal experience underground. The audience exchanged excited gasps and wide-eyed stares with one another.

“There’s a natural human impulse to be intrigued by tales of dark and mysterious and hidden things,” Engeman says.

“That’s a fairly universal impulse, and the impulse to generate stories is also pretty universal. It’s not a mystery to me that somebody can take something and run with it until it becomes a whole other thread.” Engeman says some of the shanghaiing tales rumored to have happened in Portland have also been repeated in San Francisco, Seattle, and other port cities.

This sort of traveling localization is characteristic of urban legends. Many American teenagers have probably heard the one about the

babysitter who realizes that the creepy phone calls she keeps getting are being made from inside the house. Or the one about the girl who finds her date hanging from the tree above the car. In Eugene, this story happened at Skinner’s Butte, explains Dr. Sharon Sherman, a folklorist at the University of Oregon. But in Los Angeles, the same thing happened at Mulholland Drive. In Honolulu, it was Morgan’s Corner. Not only do these legends transcend spatial limitations, but they have also recurred in various forms for generations. The one about the man who drives a mysterious girl home only to find that she has disappeared before they get there has been around since the horse and buggy days.

According to *The Vanishing Hitchhiker: American Urban Legends and Their Meanings*, legends transcend time and space “not only because of their inherent plot interest but because

they seem to convey true, worthwhile, and relevant information.” The book explains that urban legends often carry important lessons that reflect societal values and encourage an adherence to those standards. A terrible fate awaits those who do not comply.

Sherman has a simpler interpretation for the reason these stories are told and retold. “I think it’s just our fascination with the unknown,” she says. “Anything that’s unknown, people speculate about. And if they’ve heard it happened to someone else, there’s the question in one’s mind: ‘Could this really have happened?’”

Yarborough leads her group into another room in the basement under Old Town Pizza. Nothing resembles a tunnel, but it is dark and musty. Yarborough tells them to snap as many pictures as they can and hands them electromagnetic field detectors (EMFs). The pictures could pick up ghostly orbs, and EMFs, originally designed to find cables behind walls, are commonly used as ghost hunting tools.

Yarborough tells them to look for any sign of the spirit of Nina, a woman who was allegedly killed in the underground. The group wanders around the room, waiting for the light to change from green to red. When the color on the EMF shifts, it signals a change in the surrounding energy. This could mean that electrical wiring is nearby. But it also could mean ghost.

Today, although the same stories persist, Sherman speculates that the nature of urban legends is changing. Like Jones, she thinks people are becoming increasingly skeptical about these narratives today. A few decades ago, people used to accept the stories they heard as fact. But these days, hardly anybody takes urban legends seriously. “There’s no longer that same mystical feeling that I had when I was younger and that other people I knew had about those stories,” Sherman says.

She feels that this modern-day skepticism is partly caused by media saturation. The 1990s teen horror craze brought a series of movies about urban legends, while Web sites, like Snopes.com, are dedicated to questioning these stories. “And so once people have seen the movies and read the information on the Internet, they no longer believe,” Sherman says.

But how does anybody really know for sure?

After unsuccessfully hunting around in the underground for ghosts, Yarborough and her group head to the White Eagle

“If there are any tunnels at all, show me one... If there is any evidence of any kind that points to sailors being shanghaiied, I’d like to know about it.”

Saloon, another Portland site is rumored to be haunted. By now, the group seems a little disheartened. They spent the light rail ride rolling their eyes at one another and barely suppressing their scoffs.

Upstairs at the hotel, Yarborough tells her group to keep their thumbs glued to their electromagnetic field detectors.



Located north of the Willamette River off the Fremont Bridge, the White Eagle Hotel is considered one of the most haunted places in the Northwest.

Then she begins telling the story of Rose, a woman of ill repute, and Sam, a dim-witted piano player who worked at the hotel in the 1920s. When Sam, who had long been holding a torch for Rose, finally proposed, she laughed. Embarrassed and angered by Rose’s cruel reaction, Sam took her upstairs to his room — outside of which Yarborough and her group now stand. Rose and Sam argued, and when Rose emerged all she could do was stumble into the corridor — she had been stabbed. She died right there at the top of the staircase, where the group listens.

Right then, at the climax of the story, all electrical hell breaks loose — one of the EMFs starts going off. It turns orange, then red. A shift in energy. It could just mean electrical wiring. Or it could mean ghosts.

“Rose? Is that you?” Donna asks as she eyes the EMF. The tool turns back to the neutral yellow, then spikes up to red again. “Sam?”

By this time, it’s got everybody’s attention. The group leans closer, huddling together to watch the little meter go up and then down and then up again.

“Is that you, Rose?” Donna asks again.

The lights stop flickering.

Leaning toward the meter, the group waits.

They wait for another spike, or any sign that

Rose and Sam are trying to communicate with

them. They wait, and for a brief moment, their full attention is focused on nothing but the lights on that little meter.

Just for that brief moment, some of the snide side-glances stop. The cynical under-the-breath comments end. For that brief moment, everyone just believes. ☐



Michael P. Jones stands at the entrance to Portland's underground. Beneath a pair of steel doors, stairs to the “shanghai tunnels” are revealed.



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El Poder Del Inmigrante

[Power of the Immigrant]

Immigrants seeking steady work find opportunity at U.S. barns

STORY KATY GEORGE PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS COURTNEY HENDRICKS

Seven a.m. The sun is cresting over the hills, filling the stable yard with soft light. The green grass in the quaintly fenced pastures is idyllic and inviting. Sparrows trill noisily from the eaves, but inside the barn the horses are quiet. Felipe*, a short but solidly built Hispanic man with close-cropped hair and kind eyes, glances briefly toward the grass as he crosses the gravel parking lot. He smiles, crows' feet furrowing as he reveals crooked but bright white teeth. Felipe doesn't stop walking; there's no time to fully appreciate the perfect spring morning. He is focused on the seemingly endless list of chores he must squeeze into the ten-hour workday ahead. The prospect doesn't faze him. While the work is challenging, Felipe loves the horses.

"You need a lot of discipline, and I enjoy that," he says in

rapid-fire Spanish. "Sometimes they don't want to do what you ask. I like to try to figure out what they're thinking."

Felipe hasn't been around horses for long, but he has little trouble understanding them. He learns quickly and works hard. To the immigration office where Felipe has applied for work permits regularly since 1999, he is an ideal candidate. But his spotless records fail to show that originally, Felipe entered the U.S. without documentation.

"It was hard," Felipe says, "but I couldn't stay in Mexico." Michoacán, Felipe's home province, has the sixth lowest GDP per capita in the country. The work opportunities, he says, were few. Like many of his countrymen, Felipe saw the greener pastures *al otro lado* – on the other side of Mexico's border with the U.S. "The reason I left was, more than anything, to secure myself a better future," he says.



Grooms use curry combs to clean horses. Many immigrants hired at stables have no previous experience with horses.



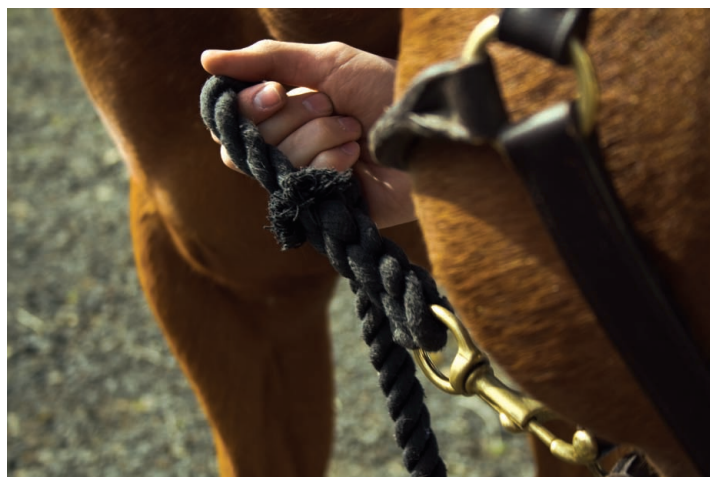
Turning out horses is one of the many tasks on a groom's to-do list.

Felipe seems to have done just that. He currently works with the horses at a well-known show barn in the Northwest, a job description he shares with millions of Hispanic immigrants across the U.S. The vast majority of barn workers are from Spanish-speaking countries. A 2006 study by a racetrack industry student from the University of Arizona claims 94 percent of grooms at racing barns are of Hispanic origin, and 70 percent were born in Mexico.

Felipe confirms the trend. "All of my friends who work at barns are Mexican," he says. The reason? Felipe shrugs, rocking back on his heels as he looks up at the brim of his visor. "Maybe it's because we Hispanics don't usually have a set career, so often we can't choose a job. The job chooses us." If there's work to be had, he says, immigrants will take it.

Whether by chance or pure grit, Felipe has thrived as the head groom of his barn. He lives with his wife and baby daughter in on-site housing, a small but comfortable home with a lovely view of the pastures. He has legal status, as does his wife, and his daughter is a U.S. citizen. Still, he continues to worry about immigration.

The immigration office "can deny your visa application for anything," he explains matter-of-factly. "If they spot something suspicious, you're out." The safest way to go about renewing the Employment Authorization Document, which is



Grooms form close bonds with the horses they care for.

wasted, no overlap in their actions. They eyeball portions from the cart and toss them into each stall. The routine is second nature, carried out with brisk familiarity.

Slowly, the horses quiet until the only sound left is soft munching. With the hay down, Julio goes to work cleaning the rows of stalls. Felipe begins the turnout rounds, leading one horse after another to pasture, his quick, industrious stride making up for shorter legs.

Back and forth, up and down, the two men pass the morning filling water buckets, tending wounds, and sweeping aisles. Minutes slip into hours, but nobody stops to count. The day is measured in tangible tasks completed: six horses sent outside to enjoy the rare sunny day. Thirty-five stalls cleaned, with new shavings spread out in fluffy masses. Garden tended. Four sets of wraps retrieved from the laundry and rolled neatly. All turned-out horses returned to stalls

to finish their breakfast. The items on their to-do list get crossed off quickly, but by noon they will be barely halfway through.

"We always have work," Felipe laughs. "Painting, helping [the head trainer] if she needs it, cutting the lawn — there's always a job to be done."

what Felipe has, is to meet with a lawyer, but Felipe says that's too expensive. He is forced to rely only on the advice of those who have renewed in the past. Felipe's current permit expires in 2012. Though he has successfully applied for at least ten work permits since his first, the uncertainty of the process weighs on him. If he is denied, his whole family will have to return to Mexico.

On this particular morning, work takes precedence over such fears. Felipe rolls back the gargantuan metal door and a horse whinnies in greeting. The rest of the stable picks up the chorus, voicing their collective hunger. Felipe shushes them as he and his coworker Julio* overfill wheelbarrows with sweet-smelling green hay. Their movements seem almost choreographed, no time

But Julio, who likes the variety, adds that the work is "very practical. We're always learning something, which is wonderful."

For both men, the learning curve has been steep. Felipe especially has made incredible strides as a groom. When he first arrived in the U.S. he spoke no English and had never worked with horses before. "My family [in Mexico] had horses, but they were very different from the ones here," he says. *Caballos de cerro*, he calls them, indicating they were free roaming rather than trained. He never had plans to work at a barn in the U.S. He simply took what work he could find, including a job at a factory where they taught him serviceable English that has since blossomed to near-fluency. Eventually, after work at the factory dried up, he stumbled upon a job at a stable in Washington. He learned the basics of grooming there, but the trainer was less than helpful. Intimidating, he calls her. So when he heard about his current job through his friends in the business, he needed little encouragement to leave.

"Mostly I wanted to find a job that gave me a bigger house,"

"I didn't come here because I'm lazy or greedy. I came because I had to."

Felipe says. His previous job gave him housing, but it was too small. "Everything was in one place — the bedroom, the kitchen, the bathroom. I wanted to take care of my daughter, and to find a better place for my wife."

His life in Oregon has been good so far. Felipe likes the trainer at this barn, and he says the people are nicer here than other places he has lived, such as North Carolina. "There's a lot more racism there," he says carefully, "but it's not just against Hispanics. White, black, Asian — people had problems with everyone."

Julio, who is Guatemalan and does not speak English, agrees with Felipe's view of Oregonians. "I haven't faced prejudice [at this barn] before," he chimes in. "Everyone's very agreeable."

Felipe and Julio are lucky in this regard. While not all the riders at the barn make an effort to get to know them, the ones who do appear to have a good relationship with the grooms. All too often a slightly uncomfortable feeling manifests itself between Hispanic grooms and the generally Caucasian barn clients. Overt racism is uncommon, but so is outright friendliness.

Melissa Borgel, who rides at both a barn in Eugene and one outside of Denver, says she has never even seen the grooms at the Oregon stable, she has ridden since November. "I don't know if that's because I just don't notice them or if the owners try to keep them out of sight," she says, running her hands through her blonde hair slightly awkwardly. Borgel rides during some of the busiest times at the stable, but she hasn't seen any other clients interacting with the grooms either. "It's not like I'm trying to ignore them. They're just never around when I am."

At her Denver barn, however, Borgel does not feel as separated from the workers. Like her Eugene barn and the one Felipe works at, it's a hunter-jumper barn, but there's also an extensive polo program. The polo players feel less of a division between rider and worker. Borgel says the grooms and stable hands are still just as likely to be Mexican immigrants, but the sport is dominated by rich Latino men, especially Argentines. Because so many polo players speak Spanish, she thinks like the grooms are more likely to be included in the fold. "I'm friends with a lot of them," she says. "We mess around, go out to dinner, drink together. It's more relaxed."

The hunter-jumper riders, however, are the same in Colorado as they are in Oregon, Borgel says: a little less likely to be chatty with the grooms. "A lot of the riders are middle-aged women from the suburbs," she explains with a crooked smile and just a hint of an eye roll. "They don't really know how to deal with a non-white dude, so they think it's more polite to ignore him than to be friendly."

For Felipe, however, there are more important problems than quiet barriers



A cross tie holds the horse steady as workers perform their duties.

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between stable client and worker. The mood amongst the grooms at his barn is tense in the wake of Arizona's new immigration law that, among other things, requires police to inspect the paperwork of anyone they suspect to be in the country illegally. Any conversation between coworkers is rushed and quiet, almost whispered, as they go about cleaning the stalls. Their silence fills the building to the timbered ceiling; even the radio, wailing Mexican love songs, does little to mask their nerves. They're afraid, Felipe explains, of what might happen next. He says tempers are flaring — even here in Oregon.

"I was in Wal-Mart the other day with my family," Felipe says in English, voice lowered and a little strained. "A man stopped me and started yelling, calling me names and saying I was stealing jobs from Americans." The episode shook him; he hopes it was an isolated incident, but fears it was not.

While unsettling, the confrontation was nothing compared to what Felipe's friends face in Arizona. They are undocumented, and as such are at risk for jail time. "They have to sell their house and move," he says sadly. "They can't stay . . . It's too risky."

To Felipe, the law is little more than state-sanctioned racism. The police will stop all Hispanics, not just the undocumented, he says, because "How can they tell the difference?" It is impossible, Felipe says, to tell at first glance if someone is in the country legally or illegally, and he feels for those who might be wrongly targeted. "I would feel bad if they stopped me, if they thought I was illegal," he says in careful, precise English, "but I could deal with it. But if they stopped my family, my wife or my daughter," Felipe shakes his head, his expression dark as he twists his pitchfork in his hands. "I would go crazy. I would take them right back to Mexico."

Arizona's new law has changed something in Felipe, who had previously been somewhat dismissive of the idea of racism against Hispanics in the U.S. The image of his daughter, a natural-born citizen, being questioned by police based on her ethnicity has etched itself in his mind, leaving him uneasy. His words are angry, but his tone and expression convey more of a weary disappointment, as though he had expected better from this country.

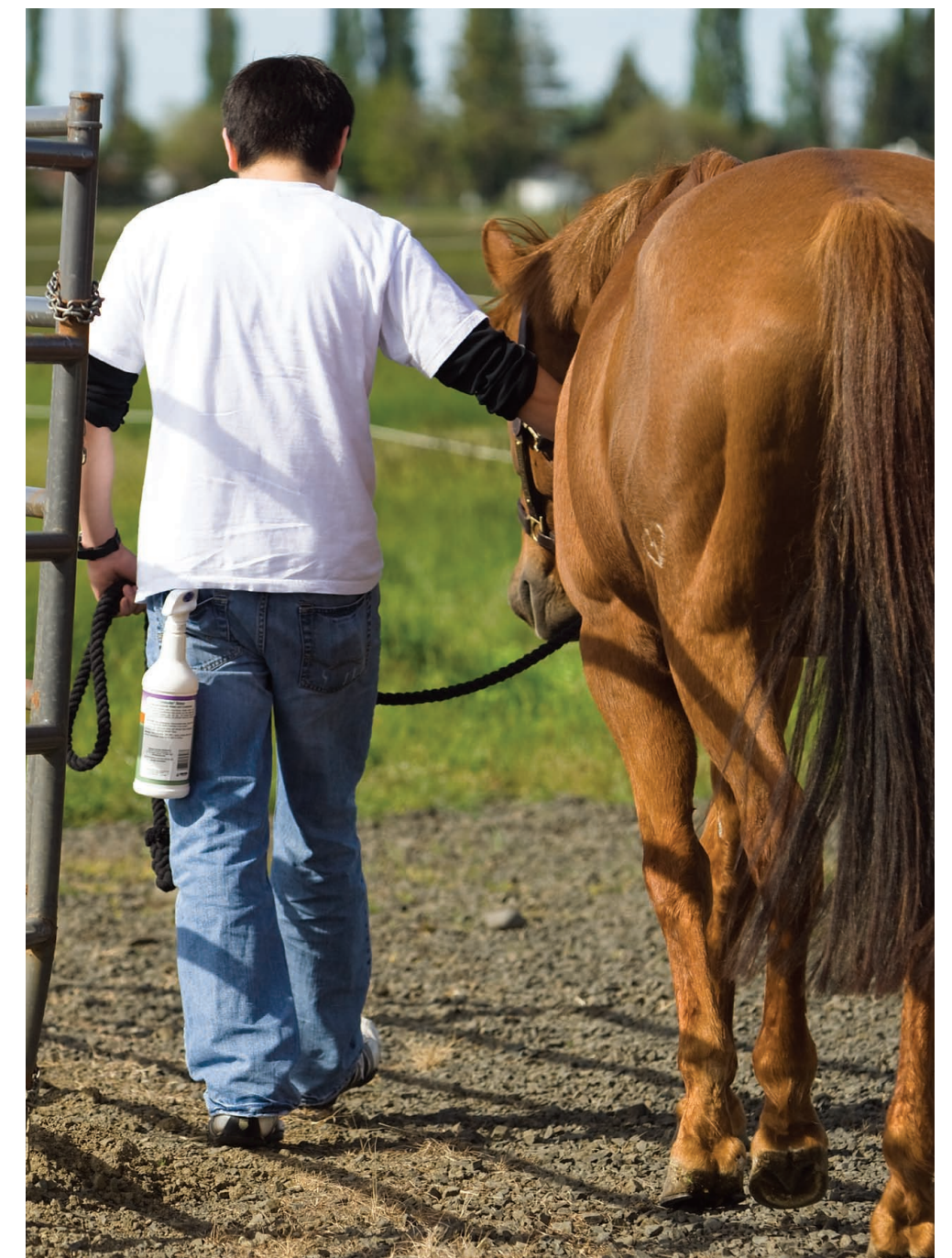
Still, Felipe has not given up hope, even in this dark

moment he retains a shadow of his inherent optimism. There are ways to combat the sort of attitude that encourages legislation like Arizona's, which he believes stems from misunderstanding. "If a person has a bad experience with a Hispanic immigrant, they might think we're all bad," he says with characteristic sensitivity. "Sometimes we are, yes. But mostly we're just people." If everyone knew an immigrant personally, Felipe says, people might be a little more compassionate. But as things stand, empathy can be hard to find.

"I just want to tell them, we're human, too," Felipe says quietly, leaning against a stall door. "It's important to show people that. I didn't come here because I'm lazy or greedy or anything. I came because I had to." He pauses, tapping his toe against the doorframe meditatively. "Maybe if someone hears my story they'll understand."

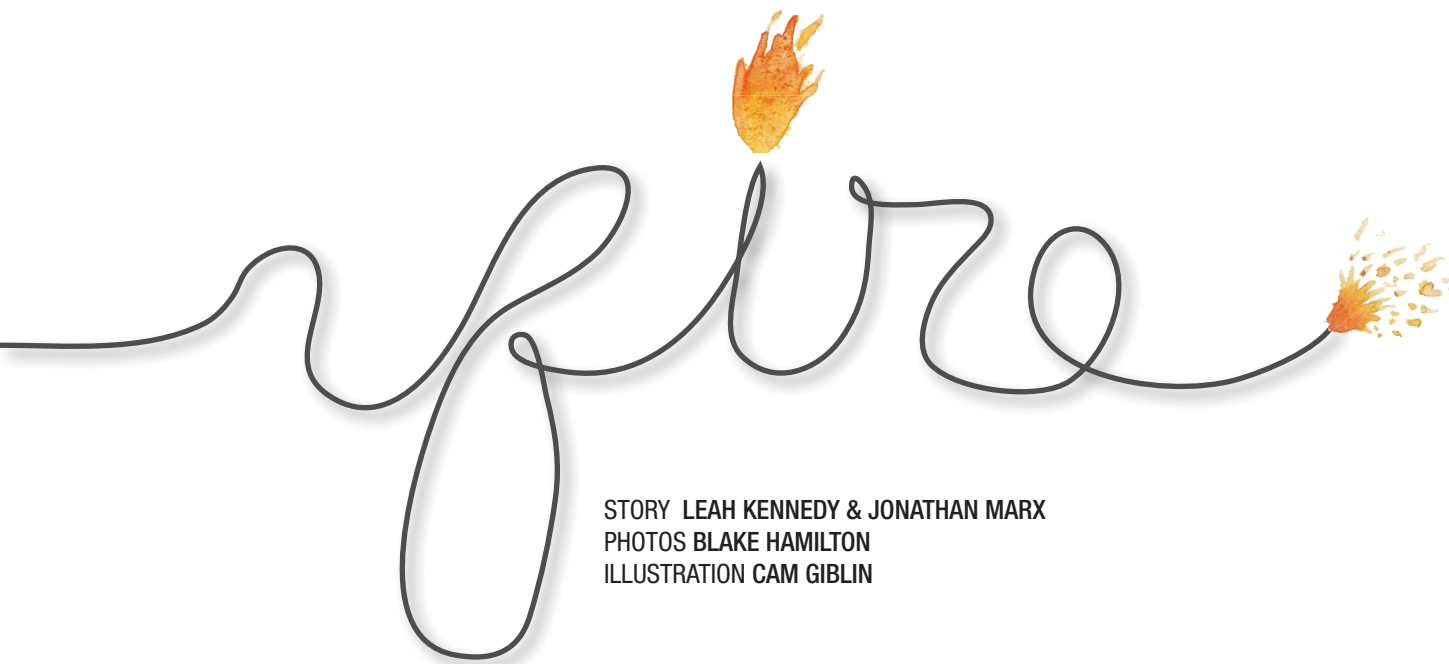
**Editor's note: The workers' names have been changed to protect their identity. ♀*

Leading horses out to pasture is part of a groom's daily routine.





EMBRACING THE ELEMENTS:



STORY LEAH KENNEDY & JONATHAN MARX
PHOTOS BLAKE HAMILTON
ILLUSTRATION CAM GIBLIN

No other element has had as much impact in the development and destruction of entire civilizations as fire. From the ashes of over 70,000 homes in the Great Fire of London, to the \$940 million dollars spent on fireworks each year in the U.S., man's ability to harness the flame has resulted in both sparks of genius and bursts of devastation. Despite its fiery temperament and unpredictable personality, fire, the third of *Ethos'* featured elements, is revered wherever it touches.

FIERY TRADITIONS

A native of Jakarta, Indonesia, Vania Situmeang found herself strangely out of place in her own country when she arrived in Bali in 2007. Attracted by news of a royal funeral, Situmeang joined the crowd of thousands lining the streets, unaware that she would witness a sacred ritual practiced only by the Hindu population of Bali. Known as *Ngaben*, the celebration honors the transition of the deceased into the afterlife. "It was a big ceremony because in Bali they still have a royal family, and it was one of the mothers of the royal family," Situmeang says, a slight hint of her Indonesian accent coming through as she recalls the details from the day.

On the day of the ceremony, the community gathered at the home of the royal family to help carry the *Wadah*, an animal-shaped sarcophagus, to the temple. For this ceremony, the *Wadah* was in the shape of a bull, representative of the Brahmin caste, the highest Balinese social class. At the temple, the essence of the community was performed with the community and all of the members of the royal family in attendance. "When the royal family first arrived at the temple, they prayed and circled around the *Wadah* and did rituals for an hour and a half," Situmeang says. "After that is when the fire starts." Doused with holy water and kindled with leaves, the *Wadah*, along with gifts of money and food, instantly ignites into flames.

Though the *Ngaben* cremation ceremony is unique to Bali, the use of fire to spiritually transport the soul of the deceased is not. For the Klamath Tribe of Oregon, cremation ceremonies are used for sacred purposes as well as a security measure against the spread of disease, says Gordon Bettles, steward of the University of Oregon's Many Nations Longhouse.

"The belief is that fire sends the things it burns into the next world for the ancestors who have moved on, so that when you move on it's there," Bettles says. "Fire itself is an element of

immense power." He relates his tribe's beliefs about cremation, as well as the way fire has been used throughout history to shape and define their people. "When you think about fire, it needs things to burn," Bettles says inside the Longhouse, as the afternoon sun filtered in through the windows.

Talking about fire and its significance to his tribe seems to soften his expression. The embers, flames, smoke, and ash – all are pivotal to Bettles and his tribe. "When you burn fire, you're actually paying tribute to one of the oldest tools man had learned how to use," he says.

From the use of heated rocks to draw out sickness to representing the union of man and wife, fire also plays the role of guardian and caretaker overseeing the tribe's wellbeing.

Conjuring images of cozy fireplaces and wood-burning stoves, flames evoke simple thoughts of warmth. But in religious

Doused with holy water and kindled with leaves, the *Wadah*, along with gifts of money and food, instantly ignites

practices around the world, fire and its smoke and ash are used in ceremonies from cremations to weddings, and are as diverse as the people who practice them.

In a traditional Klamath wedding, the groom paddles

across a river or lake to pick up his waiting bride. The couple makes their way out to the middle of the water where the groom cooks his bride food with a fire he created on a stove in the canoe.

The Klamath Tribe members refer to fire as "grandmother" in honor of the role it plays in their lives. "Your grandmother takes care of you," Bettles says. "Without it your food won't cook, and you'll get cold because you can't warm up at night in the snow."

The uses of fire throughout these and hundreds of other religions and cultures are diverse and unique. A simple fire takes on a new meaning to observers hailing from different backgrounds. Whether it's used to cremate or to marry, to pray or to heal, most can agree this powerful element is essential to the survival and spiritual wellbeing of all.

TAKING ANOTHER FORM

Suspended 93 million miles above our heads, the sun shines its light on all creeds and cultures. For thousands of years, this fiery orb has been revered by countless civilizations throughout the globe, with traditions both old and new. From Aztecs to Egyptians, Jews to Bulgarians, millions of followers look up to the sun for spiritual awakening.

Known as Huitzilopochtli, the Aztec god of sun and war often appears with hummingbird feathers adorning his head and left leg while holding a serpent-shaped scepter. According to Aztec legend, Huitzilopochtli encouraged the Aztecs to leave their land and travel south where they founded Tenochtitlan, modern day Mexico City.

The Aztecs believed Huitzilopochtli was in constant battle with the moon and stars, and every sunrise marked another victorious battle over darkness. His constant victories didn't come without significant cost; the Aztecs practiced human sacrifice to fuel Huitzilopochtli's battles. In Tenochtitlan alone, an estimated 20,000 sacrifices took place at the four-day dedication of the god's main temple.

Similarly, the Egyptians believed their sun god Ra battled with darkness. In the form of a serpent, the demon Apep attempted to hypnotize and eat Ra. However, Apep's attempts were never completely successful. The Egyptians attributed solar eclipses to Apep's short-lived victories over Ra. In the end, all-powerful Ra always overcame darkness and brought light

All-powerful Ra always overcame darkness and brought light back to Egypt as he traveled across the sky on his two solar boats.



back to Egypt as he traveled across the sky on his two solar boats.

Sun worship, while not as violent or chaotic, continues to this day. On July 1, crowds gather along the Black Sea's coast in Bulgaria to celebrate what's known as "July Morning." Standing on the cliffs above the sea, the group of mostly Bulgarian youth welcomes the sun's rays as a new beginning in

life. It's a fairly new tradition, originating thirty years ago, and the crowd is young and energetic. They sing "July Morning," a hit by British rock group, Uriah Heep, as the sun slowly appears over the ocean.

"There I was on a July morning looking for love," belts David Byron, the group's vocalist. "With the strength of a new day dawning and the beautiful sun."

Long before Bulgarians gathered to rock out to the sunrise, religious groups have adapted sun worship in a variety of ways. The Jewish faith observes *Birkat Hachamah*, or "the blessing of the sun." According to the first chapter of Genesis, God created the universe in seven days and on the fourth, at nightfall on a Tuesday, placed the sun in the sky: "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night." Today, Jews celebrate this anniversary when the spring equinox occurs on Tuesday night. *Birkat Hachamah* remembers the sun's return to this original position,

which happens once every twenty-eight years. Last observed in 2009, the celebrations spanned the globe. It brought an estimated 50,000 people to Jerusalem's Western Wall for prayer, and in Uruguay hundreds gathered to watch a small plane pulling a sign reading, "Thank you, G-d, for creation."

LOST IN THE EMBERS

Sending pages up in flames to control information is far from a modern concept. Throughout history, rulers, churches, and governments have used book burning as an effective censorship tool to quell dissent. From ancient China to medieval Europe, burning books proved the best way to eliminate contrary ideas once and for all. Before the invention of the printing press, setting one copy aflame had the power to destroy a book's content forever.

A city in crisis. A city filled with immigrant workers and controlled by corrupt businessmen. A city where one man enters a world of workers to tell their story. Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle*, shocked America and resulted in a massive overhaul of corrupt and unfair labor practices of the meatpacking industry, vastly improving the lives of factory workers.

Sinclair's book was one of more than 25,000 volumes burned in what is arguably the largest documented book burning in history. On May 10, 1933, students at Wilhelm Humboldt University in Berlin set ablaze a massive pile of books while singing Nazi anthems. Besides Sinclair's *The Jungle*, the crowd burned books by Sigmund Freud, Albert Einstein, Helen Keller, Franz Kafka, Ernest Hemingway, Karl Marx, and hundreds, possibly thousands of other authors. Freud's books were burned in protest to his open discussion of sexual desires in human nature, an idea the Nazi regime hoped to eradicate as they "purified" the nation.

The highlight of the event was an inspirational speech by Propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels. The book

Sinclair's book was one of more than 25,000 volumes burned in what is arguably the largest documented book burning in history.

burning was given so much positive attention from the German media that it ignited several other similar events across Germany.

"One of the things that the Nazi book burning did was create an icon, a cultural image that can be replicated," University of Oregon history professor David Luebke says. "It has a kind of iconic status that no other book burning really has. And in that sense, that's the frame of reference for what you think of when you think of book burning."

A large portion of the books burned were taken from a library run by Magnus Hirschfeld, a gay Jewish man, Luebke says. While none of the books consumed by the flames on the streets of Berlin in 1933 were in danger of being lost forever, the book burning had a political significance that still impacts book burnings today.

Today, piles of books deemed controversial are still reduced to ashes in bonfires around the globe. But in this technological age the gesture is purely symbolic — there's little chance a book's content will be forever erased. In Ray Bradbury's futuristic book, *Fahrenheit 451*, he envisions a society where books are illegal, and firemen burn them as a trade to control ideas.

The events of May 1933 possibly inspired churches including the Christ Community Church of New Mexico to organize modern book burnings. In 2001, the Community Church staged a mass burning of the *Harry Potter* series and other objects the group deemed sinful, including AC/DC records and Ouija boards.

...

From the silhouette of the U.S. Capitol engulfed in flames during the war of 1812 to the flickering glow of a candlelight vigil, a flame knows few boundaries. Its powerful reputation blazes across history, infiltrating societies from the Aztecs to modern day Bulgarian youth. Of all the elements, fire's powerful capacity to create and destroy marks it as a force to be both honored and feared. ♡



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The Oregon Country Fair BEHIND THE SCENES

ETHOS PULLS ASIDE THE CURTAIN TO REVEAL AN INTRICATE YEARLONG PROCESS
BEHIND MAKING OREGON'S WORLD FAMOUS FAIR

STORY VICTORIA DAVILA PHOTOS SARABETH OPPLIGER

To walk into the 280 wooded acres of the Oregon Country Fair (OCF) is to enter a wonderland. Step off the free shuttle bus with an OCF ticket in hand, and dive into a land of artwork and good vibrations springing from blades of grass. Two large mythical dragons sit at the entranceway, greeting crowds and also serving as benches and booths. People wander through a swirl of painted, bedazzled bodies swimming amidst an endless stream of more than eighty food vendors, hundreds of craft booths, and numerous stages at the OCF.



Beside the occasional flower tour, the Oregon Country Fair remains mostly free of any human activity, allowing nature to grow freely during the year.

Behind the scenes of the storybook wonder is an intricate structure with strong foundations going back over forty years. The Fair's cooperative ways of learning and living pushed it to iconic counterculture status over its lifespan. Created to support a Fern Ridge school, freethinking Eugenians contributed their time and talent to start the first Fair in 1969. It drew 2,000 people, cost \$1, and made only a small profit. Today, roughly twenty thousand volunteers

“It’s a family reunion every summer where we renew our commitment to live purposefully.”

work the event with a budget of about \$1.5 million. Each day draws 18,000 visitors who pay over \$20 in admission. The Fair hasn't lost sight of its philanthropic roots — just last year it donated \$55,000 to local arts, education, and basic needs organizations.

“You’ve got thousands and thousands of people and potential for chaos and it goes off as if it’s this well orchestrated ballet,” says Linda Shumate of Prem Rose Edibles, who vended at the Fair for the first time last year.

Fair Evolution

The Fair has “metamorphosized over the decades into a rare breed — a self-sustaining and lively arts festival that contributes to its community. The Oregon Country Fair became a place where aging hipsters, sacred tricksters, and new vaudevillians, plus their children and grandchildren, would gather for decades to celebrate counterculture community,” explains Eugene journalist Suzi Prozanski in her book *Fruit of the Sixties: The Founding of the Oregon Country Fair*.

The Fair is still known as a carefree gathering of hippies, where clothes are either fanciful or barely there. But beneath the surface lie the constantly spinning wheels of a well-oiled machine. Amidst the blur of sights and sounds, many Fair attendees remain unaware of all the labor it takes to perpetuate traditions and produce this enormous community event.

A board of directors has its hands full overseeing all actions of the Fair. Along with the board, countless volunteers, site caretakers, and seven year-round employee organizers work as the Fair family slaves away, putting on more than just an event, but a social manifestation of the spirit of Eugene.

The OCF has been a mythical land of enchantment in the west for Ken Kesey fans, Deadheads, and anyone searching for a communal or psychedelic experience — it draws pilgrims from near and far seeking a glimpse of Oregon life.

At First Glance

To see booth after booth of northwestern crafts and food, none of it prepackaged or brand name, is a welcome sight for anyone used to the shiny boxed world.

“No Pepsi or potato chips here,” Norma Sax boasts about

the quality food. Sax is an OCF Elder (someone who has worked at the Fair for twenty years or longer) and year-round employee of the Fair as an administrative assistant. The vendors adhere to environmental-based rules of composting all food and transitioning toward compostable utensils.

“Some people come for the fabulous entertainment, food, crafts, and demonstrations of how the world could be. Others, including me, come to live in that world for a little while, to be reminded that it’s entirely possible,” Jain Elliot says. Elliot is a sixty-year-old Elder of the OCF who has been attending the Fair for half her life.

The world Elliot speaks of is one where hand-built wooden structures are continuously renovated, maintained, and added to the figure-eight shape that defines the Fair's path. The architecture is unlike what most people are used to. Some booths are new, while others have been there since the Fair started in 1969. Artwork weaves into all aspects of the fair. Structures wrap and work their way into the nature that surrounds them. As a rule, minimal pruning of trees maintains the authenticity of the natural environment, and branches must be tied back rather than cut or harmed in any way.

Beneath the Surface

Daily maintenance and routine replacements are necessary due to winter flooding and weather damage, and require a caretaker to be on site year-round, along with a site manager who lives there a few days a week.

Site manager at the Fair for sixteen years, Steve Wisnovsky is constantly observing the grounds' yearly transformation. During the off-season, he watches wildflowers bloom and dominate the area of lush green grasses. Wisnovsky sees the vast difference between the usual wooded lands and the chaotic pseudo city in July. The people trekking through wear the grass down to brown dust, but before the masses arrive, the Fair paths are beautifully lush.

During the weekend-long event, the population of the Fair grows to the size of a small Oregon city. Similar to a town, there are booths and central locations reminiscent of shopping centers, where themed booths come together to create “villages” or “parks,” all of which must be cohesive and coordinated.

Teams of people work to make sure the Fair runs smoothly and flawlessly during the months prior to the event. Crew leaders and back-up managers assign volunteers to manage traffic direction, security, water, and cleanup. Over the years, various crews and directors slowly grew with demands for a more organized structure. Like many collectives, they struggled with decision-making, authority, and delegation, but also worked to stay true to foundations of equality and progress.

The identities of the Fair's organizers and workers used to be a closely guarded secret, but over the years it has loosened up. Seen as a radical threat to normative society, the original founders and volunteers dealt with government surveillance of homes and businesses. At one point, according to Prozanski's book, “coordinators routinely destroyed registration lists

after each fair at the insistence of participants paranoid about government snoops.”

Volunteers put countless hours of work into the production of the OCF. Today, Elliot estimates, 20,000 people get passes to attend the Fair as workers. But there is still no central list. Even the event organizers can't place a specific number on it.

Most of the profits are donated to groups that provide services like education, food for the needy, and funds for the arts across Oregon. Just as the original founders intended, the philanthropic Fair still brings together crowds donating time and money to better the community.

Night Life

Gaining a place with a crew isn't an easy task. Normally, volunteers have to have a connection with someone already involved if they want to get started. But once the day visitors are gone, hard work is rewarded with nights of relaxation, music, and dance.

But the infamously wild nights can be hard for those aiming for true rest. The Fair isn't without drama. True to a real family, “the Fair family,” as they refer to themselves, occasionally disagrees. The board of directors deals with sorting out conflicts and issues that arise.

Recently, a division over the evening music choices — electronic versus acoustic — became an issue. Some who remember bonfires and guitar singalongs don't appreciate the overflow of loud music deep into the night. A ban on late-night electronic music has been proposed. Timing and zoning have been brought up as possible compromises. Only the board can make the final decision.

A Yearlong Process

The music issue is one of many matters debated during the ongoing process of building the Fair. The board also sets policy and decides which local organizations will receive Fair-donated money. Committees make recommendations to the board, which are voted on in the fall.

Attendees and volunteers have an opportunity during the Fair to be a part of the process by donating to the Jill Hymen Vision Fund. Money from the previous year has been awarded, by process of a vote, to the Relief Nursery, St. Vincent DePaul's, and Womenspace, among other organizations.

The newsletter is another example of the family-oriented and highly structured characteristics of the Fair. It includes upcoming events, birthday announcements, advertisements, board decisions, and more. All of it becomes a way of life.

The Magic of the Fair Family

When all the aspects unite, attendees describe the Fair as nothing less than magic.

This magic keeps workers and attendees coming back, oftentimes rising through the levels of involvement with the Fair production. Many of the Fair's workers stay with it for their entire lives.

After decades of volunteering, Elliot became an Elder. With this status, she no longer has to work for her pass. Even so, she continues as the coordinator for the Little People day care booth in the Community Village, and remains active with Village meetings and work parties.

“It’s a family reunion every summer where we renew our commitment to live purposefully,” says Colleen Bauman of Dana's Cheesecakes. Bauman has attended the Fair every year since she was in high school in the early seventies. Her daughter Willa, now eighteen, grew up with the Fair as a way of life. They take pride in being one of few twenty-four-hour booths nourishing Fair workers after hours.

Those who have remained with the Fair as long as Elliot and Bauman have seen the yearly and decade-long transformations. At meetings, organizers discuss short- and long-term improvement goals. In April, various new designs to prevent future overcrowding of the walking paths were reviewed. Additions and alterations must be approved by an archeological organization because the grounds lie on a Native American burial site. Despite the strict guidelines and rules, the Fair's magic permeates every aspect from planning to orchestrating.

“Try something new. Go to a new a new stage,” Bauman says. “Have a conversation and get to know people behind the scenes working there. To me, that’s very much the beauty of the Fair. Get involved and be part of it.”

The fairgrounds transform into a small town with 40,000 visitors over the three day event.



PHOTO COURTESY CONNOR JAY



THE NAZIS NEXT DOOR

STORY MAT WOLF
PHOTOS NICK COTE
ILLUSTRATIONS PAUL RAGLIONE

A known neo-Nazi organization recently set its sights on John Day, Oregon. This isn't the first time the white supremacist ideology and its adherents have sought to establish headquarters in the region

This past spring, the residents of John Day, Oregon, decided there was a small minority group that did not have a place in their community. These outsiders were denied the right to purchase property; their presence was mocked; they were protested against whenever possible. Signs were posted on storefront windows refusing service to these unwanted newcomers and town hall meetings convened to discuss the group's potential presence. But who exactly had become the focus of so much slander and fear mongering? Why would a minority belief system be so viciously attacked in this rural Oregon setting?

This group was the Aryan Nations, an organization at the forefront of neo-Nazi revivalism in America. Its members are on the far right fringe and advocate survival training and arms buildup to defend their beliefs and attack opponents. It's a group on the run too—this violent mindset was the reason the main branch of the Aryan Nations was run out of its home base in northern Idaho in 2000. It now sought to reorganize and relocate its headquarters to another unassuming isolated site in the western United States: John Day.

To drive through John Day is to take a trip back in time.

Nearly five hours from the big city lights of Portland, John Day is wedged between the Strawberry and Blue Mountains; at 1,900 people, it's the largest town in rural Grant County. A walk in downtown John Day evokes images straight from the 1800s. Cowboys roam the main drag and tumbleweeds roll lazily across the streets. But modernity has left some of its mark; the town now has its obligatory McDonalds, and an Internet café sits across from the old bar strip. A world famous fossil bed, fishing in the John Day River, and the rugged natural beauty of this region draw plenty of outside visitors.

On February, 17, a man named Paul Mullet walked into the offices of the *Blue Mountain Eagle*, Grant County's weekly newspaper. Mullet was dressed in a military-style uniform adorned with swastikas. He asked to speak with the paper's editor, Scotta Callister, and explained to her that he was the leader of an Aryan Nations affiliated organization and wished to buy property in Grant County to build a training and meeting center. Mullet had already contacted local real estate agencies, but had made no indication to them that he was the leader of a white supremacist group.

"It was pretty clear that he was not your usual tourist,"



In response to the proposed purchase of land by the Aryan Nations, storefronts in John Day display anti-Aryan Nations flyers.

An anonymous associate of the Nationalist Socialist Movement displays a swastika tattoo. Some white supremacist groups, like the NSM consider themselves to be legitimate political parties more than organized hate groups.



Callister jokes. “He liked the idea of having the national forests here and open spaces here in order for doing their training exercises, and he did say that they would have their annual world gathering here.”

Mullet also explained that his organization would actually make John Day a safer place, offering to patrol the streets to prevent crime, perform community service projects, and possibly even run for public office.

As bizarre as the concept of a white supremacist group running for and gaining, political office in Oregon might seem, there has been some precedent set in this arena. Outside of the Northwest, former Ku Klux Klan Grand Wizard David Duke won a Louisiana State Senate seat in 1989. Duke eventually

ran for U.S. Senate and president, but with little success. Also, Wasco County, Oregon, one county over from John Day, was the site of a takeover attempt by an unwanted group in the 1980s. Followers of the religious leader Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, called ‘Rajneeshis,’ moved approximately 7,000 of their number into rural Wasco and registered them to vote. Though not white supremacists, they poisoned salad bars and restaurants in The Dalles, Oregon, in 1985 in order to assassinate potential political adversaries.

Leaning over his video store’s front counter, wearing a black-and-red plaid shirt, Dave Barntisch strikes the image of a typical small-town business owner. His shop in John Day, like many other retailers, proudly displays signs on the front doors stating,

“Members of the Aryan Nation not welcome here,” and “No Hate, No Aryan Nation, No Neo-Nazi, God made everyone.” Not only are residents concerned about clashing ideologies, but also the financial impact of the Aryan Nations hurting Grant County’s tourism industry.

“I don’t believe in their doctrine, and it won’t be good for the local economy,” Barntisch says. “Everyone is entitled to their own beliefs, but [the Aryan Nations] are bullies. They won’t accept other ethnicities, and this community is too tight knit to accept that.”

Galvanized by word of mouth and editorials in the *Blue Mountain Eagle*, a set of informational meetings in nearby Canyon City drew 600 people, mainly local business owners, ranchers, and farmers. Attendees decided to boycott the Aryan Nations and not allow them to organize or purchase property there. “I think we have to respect people having different political views and being from all ends of the political spectrum, but we don’t have to accept racism as a respectable quality in our community,” Callister says, echoing sentiments of many Grant County residents. To the protest of Mullet and the Aryan Nations, this hate group had become a target of discrimination.

The problems facing John Day did not begin in this small patch of Oregon wilderness — the series of events that brought the dark shadow on the town’s doorstep began some years before, with the ideals of a self-styled white supremacist messiah.

“EVERYONE IS ENTITLED TO THEIR OWN BELIEFS, BUT THE ARYAN NATIONS ARE BULLIES.”

Richard Butler, an engineer and WWII Army Air Forces veteran, had a vision. In 1974, Butler relocated his family to the alpine community of Hayden Lake, Idaho. It was the ideal location for a man like Butler to start a commune of like-minded individuals who loved nature, rejected societal norms, and sought to recreate their own private utopia. However, the tenets of Butler’s organization had nothing to do with the peace, love, and understanding principles of other communes of this period.

In the sixties, Butler was an adherent to Christian Identity, a belief maintaining that English-speaking white Christians were God’s chosen children and the one true master race. These ideas also promoted the concept that the white Christian races needed to band together and form a white-only homeland in the northwestern United States called “The White American Bastion” or “The Northwest Territorial Initiative.” Butler seized on this concept, and by 1979, established the original Aryan Nations in a Hayden Lake compound.

The Hayden Lake Aryan Nations and other like-minded



In February, hundreds of community member protested a proposed Aryan Nations relocation to Grant County. A series of demonstrations and town hall meetings drew as many as 600 people. PHOTO COURTESY BLUE MOUNTAIN EAGLE

hate groups, many with Christian Identity or white supremacist ties, flocked to northern Idaho and portions of eastern Washington, claiming it as their promised land. At the peak of the organization’s membership in the eighties and early nineties, Butler’s twenty-acre compound hosted rallies, concerts, and paramilitary training. It also sought to bring together leadership from the Ku Klux Klan and various skinhead groups.

On the surface, the Aryan Nations preaches it was a peaceful organization, only seeking to solidify white racial identity. But its pamphlets, magazines, and even comic books for children depict scenes of violence against minorities and often portray non-white victims as subhuman. Now, in the Internet age, most of the Web sites affiliated with the Aryan Nations continue these trends, as well as provide articles glorifying the Third Reich, links to Hitler’s manifesto *Mein Kampf*, and other fascist literature. The sites insist on Holocaust denial, while showing images of Jews and non-whites being murdered and destroyed. Many seem to say, “The Holocaust never happened, but it would have been awesome if it did.” It was soon apparent this was more than just violent rhetoric within the Aryan Nations, but could easily boil over into action, as a man named Robert Matthews would demonstrate.

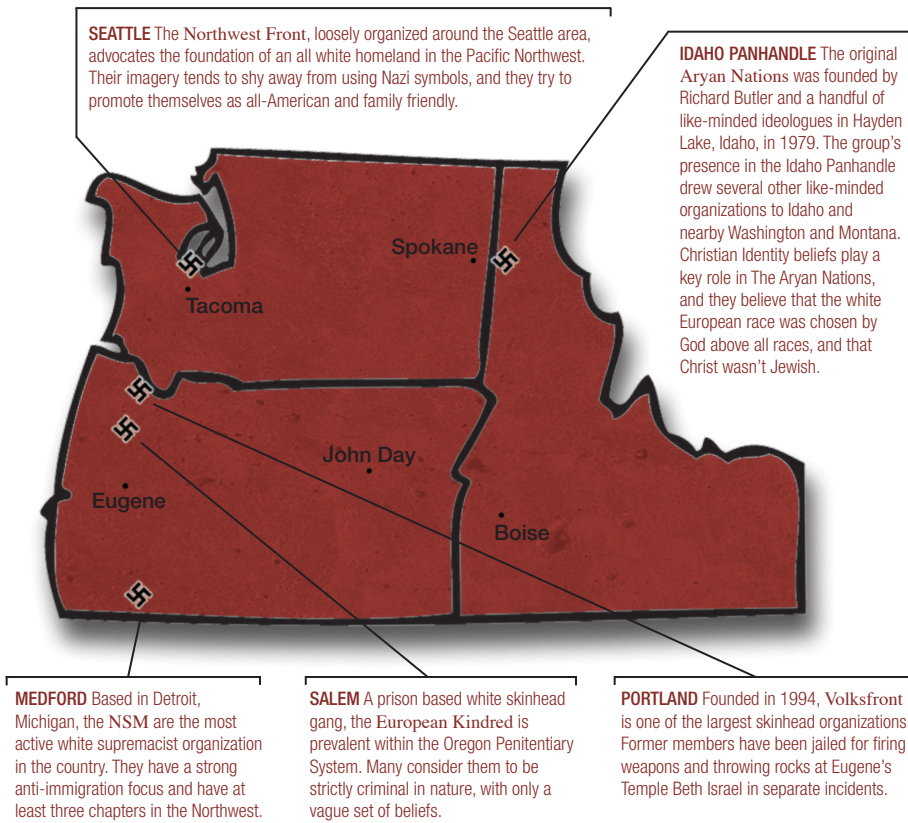
Matthews was a small town Texas boy who became enamored with the ideals of white supremacy and Butler’s vision of a Northwest white homeland. Matthews became a frequent visitor to the Hayden Lake compound and soon recruited followers there. In 1983 he founded “The Order” at a site in Metaline Falls, Washington.

“The Order became a group of individuals who would meet federal definition of what domestic terrorists would be: a group that carries out force or violence in furtherance of their political or social goals and agendas,” says Mike Caputo, special agent at the FBI’s Portland office.

After its initial founding, Matthews and The Order robbed banks, armored cars, and even adult bookstores in attempts to raise funds to start the Christian Identity’s idea of a White American Bastion. In Colorado, they brutally murdered Alan Berg, an outspoken Jewish radio host, in 1984.

In response to these activities, federal and state authorities began investigating and arresting members of The Order.

WHITE SUPREMACIST GROUPS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST



Matthews was killed in a standoff with law enforcement officials on Whidbey Island, Washington, but to this day he remains a martyr for many white supremacist organizations.

The Aryan Nations and its ideology had only inspired The Order's crime spree, but they themselves would not steer clear of entanglements with the law. In 1998, guards at the Hayden Lake compound opened fire on a vehicle stopped on a nearby road. In 2000, the Southern Poverty Law Center, (SPLC), a watchdog and legal advocacy group specializing in discrimination and hate crime cases, sued the Aryan Nations on behalf of the vehicle's passengers. They won a \$6.3 million lawsuit that effectively bankrupted the Aryan Nations, forcing them to sell their compound to pay damages.

Butler died in 2004, and what was left of the centralized leadership of the Aryan Nations went with him. The group split off or merged with a variety of other white supremacist groups over the ensuing years and became rife with internal leadership struggles. The Aryan Nations entity wishing to purchase property in John Day was only one of these splinter groups.

After a few ringtones a mild-mannered man picks up the phone, answering with the zeal of a customer service representative. "Aryan Nations," he says. Speaking with *Ethos* in a telephone interview, the man is Paul Mullet, the self-described leader of The Aryan Nation Church of Yahweh, or Aryan Nations 88. The reference to Yahweh identifies the group as not only white supremacist, but also solidifies its ties to the Christian Identity movement that idealizes white Christian Europeans as the true chosen people of God. The 88 is a symbol for double H's, the eighth letter of the English alphabet — HH stands for Heil Hitler. The Church of Yahweh is not the only organization to claim the Aryan Nations moniker following the death of Butler, but this particular group made headlines when

it announced its intent to buy property in John Day.

Mullet's tone does not come across as radical; he remains calm and collected, expressing his concerns with the social climate of this country and its domestic policies. He says his organization is considering a move to eastern Oregon for the region's scenery and plentiful fish and game. These of course are lures that any board of tourism would promote to attract outsiders to a community. In addition to traditional white supremacist views, Mullet also carries concerns about U.S. immigration policies and the current presidential administration that wouldn't have been exotic coming out of the mouths of many mainstream political pundits. Mullet does not believe that the current U.S. president is a natural born citizen and thinks he's actually a foreign agent.

"I not only believe he wasn't born in this country, but I also believe that he's the Antichrist, and with 2012 coming around the corner, that if something doesn't happen soon, that in this world, as we know it, there's going to be a pitched battle," Mullet says. This rhetoric, though tinged with racism, also overlaps with increasingly mainstream Christian Millenarian views.

That's what is so striking about a man like Mullet and the group he represents.

Many of his beliefs sound outrageous, but some are the same concerns shared by middle-of-the-road white Americans. Speaking out on issues of faith, immigration, and social class are all protected rights under the First Amendment, as is hate speech. The current mood in this country reflects previous historical periods when race tensions were brought to a boil and hate groups came to prominence. The American Great Depression of the 1930s saw a peak of KKK membership, with an estimated four million members nationwide and at least 14,000 in Oregon. Joe Roy, Chief Investigator for the SPLC, believes that the recent rise in popularity of these sentiments and groups makes sense considering America's current socioeconomic predicament.

"Historically, when the economy is bad and jobs have become nonexistent, [people] feel disenfranchised, so you see a rise in the numbers and activity of these right wing groups," Roy says. Mullet echoes this sentiment by claiming that his organization has been expanding rapidly despite the small numbers his critics insist on. He says there are chapters of the Aryan Nations Church of Yahweh in over a dozen states, and his numbers are growing, in no small part due to the racial background of the current president and the increasingly changing racial makeup of the nation.

The SPLC and the Anti-Defamation League, another watchdog group against intolerance, have acknowledged they've seen an uptick in anti-government militia activity in the past year, largely due to the election of a minority president, economic uncertainty, a fear of expanded government control, and non-white immigration. Not all of these groups necessarily believe in neo-Nazism, but of those who do, many have a presence in the Pacific Northwest. These ideologies run the gamut of styles and approaches and at times seem non-confrontational. A group called the Northwest Front clearly advocates a separate all-white homeland in the Northwest, but

it does so without using the swastika symbol. Its Web site makes the group out to be the NPR-listening, latte-drinker's white supremacists. It focuses on urban life in Portland and Seattle and even features a podcast.

If Northwest Front wants to distance itself from the Nazi imagery, then groups like the National Socialist Movement, possibly the largest white supremacist group in the nation, take the opposite approach. Its members have traditionally worn Nazi-inspired brown shirts and storm trooper utility uniforms. The group is based in Michigan, but has at least three chapters in Oregon and Washington. Volksfront, a skinhead group, also has ties to this region and maintains a strong presence in the greater Portland area. Some of these entities overlap in membership as well.

A self-described former skinhead affiliated with the NSM spoke with *Ethos* on condition of anonymity, is an affiliate of

"IF PEOPLE ARE GOING TO CALL ME A NAZI, THAT'S FINE, I PRESCRIBE TO HITLER'S IDEOLOGY ECONOMICALLY, POLITICALLY, AND MILITARILY, BUT I PRESCRIBE THAT FOR AN AMERICAN NATIONAL STANDARD."

the National Socialist Movement. He doesn't believe in the emphasis groups like the Aryan Nations place on religion but still recognizes many of the same beliefs. He views the National Socialist Movement as a legitimate political party and not a hate group. He also feels that terms like "neo-Nazi" are an inaccurate label and prefers the term Nazi when describing the NSM.

"If people are going to call me Nazi, that's fine. I prescribe to Hitler's ideology economically, politically, and militarily, but I prescribe that for an American national standard," he says. "We're trying to better our race as a society and make our race and our nation as good as possible. Any other race is more than welcome to do the same thing."

legal representation, though he did not wish to go into details.

The hate group subculture thrives largely because the U.S. puts great stock in encouraging openness and freedom of belief. These core values are how this country is defined and proudly promoted to the rest of the world. The U.S. must condemn hate speech, but also exist alongside it as a result of living in a truly free nation. In addition, as immigration and related issues continue to stoke alienist and nationalist sympathies in this country, groups and individuals with white supremacist sentiments could become increasingly vocal and active. As a clear consequence, U.S., despite its mainstream melting pot ideals, may not be able to simply ignore the Nazis next door. ☹

A scene from 1920s Ashland, Oregon. At the time Oregon had an estimated 14,000 KKK members. PHOTO COURTESY OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



A CHE REVELATION

How the life of a contested hero inspired an American student to ask questions and seek answers

“Comunista,” my friend Ivan hissed, snatching the book from my hands and pulling out a lighter. With a flick of his thumb the corner of my beloved book curled into smoke. My mind ran in circles, trying to figure out if something had been lost in translation; the Argentine accent was still so difficult for me to understand.

“He was a killer Lizzie. Don’t you get it?” Ivan said in Spanish, handing the book back to me, the singed corner still warm. I avoided his gaze, afraid of confrontation, and shoved the book quickly into my bag.

It was my second week in Rosario, Argentina and my first time in South America, but I had read plenty to prepare myself. “It’s so Western!” the guidebooks yelled at me, “Like the Paris of South America!” Cafes dotted every corner and marble statues perched in parks and on the tops of buildings. The main street, Cordoba, was lined with designer stores, upscale restaurants, and flower stands blooming with whatever was in season. But there was a side of the city the guidebooks forgot. Just one block down from Cordoba, the city felt

as if it would collapse at any moment. The sidewalks were scarred with gaping cracks, trash bins overflowed with litter, and buildings were bleached with spray paint and bullet holes. Rosario obviously had a more complex history than I had been led to believe.

Most of my classes addressed standard study abroad subjects, language and grammar, but one focused on something I didn’t expect: Ernesto “Che” Guevara. Our first morning of class, the room was freezing as my professor dropped an 800-page book down in front of us.

More copies followed, thumping menacingly against our wooden desks. My peers and I glanced at each other, eyes wide with fear. Studying abroad was not supposed to involve books this large. I had envisioned sunshine, beer, Argentine boys, almost anything except homework loads that included a book bigger than the Bible. The smooth, black cover was embossed with the outline of a face I had seen on so many T-shirts. I turned it over in my hands, feeling its weight; *Che Guevara: A revolutionary life*,

the spine read. Our professor, Julieta, was petite with high cheekbones and piercing eyes. Her pregnant belly bulged, emphasized by her small frame. Standing in front of our nine-person class, one hand perched on her stomach, she asked:

“So, what do you know about Che Guevara?”

Silence.

“He was born in Argentina?” the blonde next to me offered. Julieta nodded.

“He fought in the Cuban Revolution,” a boy with shaggy hair said. Another nod.

“He was murdered by the CIA,” I suggested, unable to remember if I had read that on Wikipedia or not. She darted her eyes toward me, raised an eyebrow and said:

“We have a lot to learn.”

The truth is, I had a lot to learn in every aspect of my Argentine life. My *Castellano*, the Spanish dialect spoken in Argentina, was stilted and stuck on my American tongue. I was constantly

I couldn’t shake the feeling, the gut instinct that tragedy and perfection couldn’t exist together.

forgetting the proper way to drink Mate, the staple beverage of locals. I would often tell my host family a story about an adventure from the day and they would cry out in shock. “Ojo, Lizzie!” My host mother said, pulling her eyelid down warning me to keep my eyes open. “You shouldn’t be out by yourself/ talking to those types of people/ eating from there/ holding your purse that way/ touching dirty street animals.” There were rules to this country, and I had yet to learn them.

In my frustration to understand Argentina, I focused my attention on my class on Che. Maybe I didn’t know how to live there, but I knew how to study. The book became my companion. I carried it in my backpack, reading it in cafes, in the park, and on the bus rides I took to visit the far corners of the country. I had a pen permanently tucked behind my ear, marking passages to transcribe into my black Moleskin journal. Suddenly, Che stopped being just the subject of my class. I began examining his life, his words, and how he dealt with the things he saw on his travels in South America. He was no longer just a historical figure; I started

seeing him outside the classroom walls.

Che Guevara was born in Rosario, about four blocks from the apartment where I was living. Each day, I would stumble out into the bright morning light, turn a corner, and bump straight into a 20-foot-tall portrait of him. Several feet past the mural, I would walk by “*Hasta la victoria siempre*,” (Onwards toward victory always) his famous mantra spray painted on three different buildings. Down the street was the “Che Hostel.” Before this trip I never cared about Che, but now I couldn’t get him out of my head.

Shortly after starting school, my friend and I traveled to Mendoza, a city famous for its wineries and spectacular scenery at the base of the Andes Mountains. We chose to do a bike tour of the wineries, all located in a dilapidated rural town called Maipú, which lies neglected outside of the manicured city center of Mendoza. Our bikes were both in various states of disrepair, but they seemed to match

the rundown buildings perfectly. Almost sarcastically, the saying “*Maipú, el mejor lugar para vivir*” (Maipú, the best place to live) was

painted across sanitation vehicles and partially torn down buildings. Bricks and pieces of rock lay abandoned, as if someday a work crew would come back and finish the job. On the other side of the road, the Andes rose like ancient watchmen with snow still perched on their rocky shoulders. Below, the only things in sight were the twisted hands of thousands of grape plants reaching for the sunlight. It was a contradiction I couldn’t ignore — the poverty of the people juxtaposed with the glory of the scenery. I had seen something similar in Rosario: the broken, dirty homes combined with the immaculate wineries. I couldn’t shake the feeling, the gut instinct that tragedy and perfection couldn’t exist together. But they did, and like my first impression of Rosario, the contrast left me feeling lost. I didn’t know what to do with this new point of view that was emerging in my head.

That night, I stayed up late reading my book again. I discovered Che was not born a revolutionary. Ironically, he spent most of his youth weakened by a case of asthma so terrible that it inspired

him to go to medical school in hopes of finding a cure. Restless from his constant studies, he hopped on an old motorbike and traveled across South America. He spent months viewing the poverty and oppression that racked his homeland. When he returned to Argentina, he was changed. “The person who wrote these notes died upon stepping once again onto Argentine soil,” he wrote in his book *Notas del Viaje*. “I, am not I; at least I am not the same I was before.”

This quote stayed with me. I returned to Rosario and began looking at my adopted home with new eyes. Why weren’t the buildings getting fixed? Why were all the poor people pushed to the outskirts of the city? Was no one else wondering the same things I was? One night, I sat at the kitchen table reading my Che book. My host aunt, Norah, was bustling around the kitchen. Her long, mahogany hair swayed like a pendulum as she moved between tasks. As she swooped to check the oven, I wondered how she thought Argentina could be helped.

“What I don’t understand is why you’re not studying San Martin,” she said, ignoring my question. She was referring to the general who helped most of South America gain independence in the late 1800s. “He helped Argentina, but Che just left and went to Cuba. What did he ever do for our country?”

Ivan had said the same thing. Che left Argentina. Che was violent. What did Che really do anyway? These questions might seem strange to ask sixty years after his death, but I discovered that Argentina was still searching for a way to survive. While the U.S. hasn’t fought a war on its own soil since the Civil War, Argentina is still recovering from “The Dirty War,” a six-year period of government-sponsored murder and terror from the late seventies to the early eighties. Thirty-thousand Argentines “disappeared” from the streets to never be seen again. And then, in 2001, an economic collapse sent the country into a deficit that led to its current situation. *Forbes Magazine* charges the Argentine government with having “rampant corruption,” while 50 percent of its citizens live below the poverty line. In a country like this it’s easy to understand people’s anger. Since Che left, who would help Argentina?

I asked this question to Theo, a nineteen-year-old Argentine with thick brown hair and braces that glinted in the afternoon sunlight. He ran a hand through his hair and said, “Have you heard of Grameen Bank? You should visit.” He made a phone call and two days later I was seated in a circle of Argentine

women, in a community center on the outskirts of the city. To my left was a middle-aged man who was sweating profusely in the late afternoon heat. He held a cigarette in one hand, the other wildly gesticulated to the women as he emphasized the importance of community and support in paying back their loans. His name was Raul Bianciotti, the leader of the Rosario branch of Grameen Bank, a nonprofit that gives out microloans to poor women to help them start a business. The women form a support group and rely on each other for advice as they pay back their loans. It’s a program started in India but has enjoyed monumental success all over the world.

In Rosario, 99 percent of the women pay back their original loans and can raise their family to a higher income status. Sol, a thirty-year-old woman with coral lipstick and a baby on her hip, kissed me on the cheek and said, “Thank you for coming to hear our stories. Grameen has saved my family and the lives of many of my friends.” Maybe fighting poverty didn’t just have to come through the ideals of one person. Maybe it could be fought through the ingenuity of many.

I landed in Argentina with a two-dimensional understanding of the social landscape. Before the trip, I conjugated Spanish verbs, typed “Che Guevara” into Wikipedia, and peered at the map of South America dreaming of what was to come. But since I’ve returned, the map seems superficial. How can a piece of paper hold my memories? How can it represent the smell of the Rosario summer air, the glimmering rays of the sunset over the river, or the ebbs and flows of *Castellano*? Looking at the outline of South America, its borders forming the shape of a bleeding heart, it’s easy for me to understand the passion Che had for his land. Wherever I went, my study of Che ignited conversations and controversy. He pushed me to think about topics that are ugly and difficult, and to address my own involvement in these problems. As he famously stated, “If you tremble indignation at every injustice then you are a comrade of mine.” His words, which I studied during my three

months in Argentina, forced me to confront the mystery and struggle of his country.

I had imagined study abroad like the photos you see on Facebook. Smiling, young, handsome people holding drinks in front of a foreign background. I soon discovered that my study abroad reality existed in the contradictions, in the experiences that were difficult for me to understand and explain. I learned the most about life in Argentina in the moments of apprehension, of shock and guilt. Che enlivened my experience and his life gave me context and motivation to search for the true reality in Rosario. My unlikely hero, a dead Argentine communist, helped me realize that the answer to poverty can only be found by being brave enough to ask questions.

—Lizzie Falconer



HASTA LA VICTORIA

Fashionista Faeries

Eugene designers stitch a whimsical world of their own

Decked in feathers and draped in fabric, faerie fashion conjures up visions of mystical lands and magical beings. With intricately adorned hair pieces and glistening wings, designers Allison Barlow, Harlequin Okikai Julian-Stewart, and Lisa Sandow capture the essence of supernatural spirits for the Faerieworlds festival at Mount Pisgah. From July 30 through August 1, visitors can scour booths and enjoy folksy beats with fellow faeries. Here, catch a glimpse of these distinctive woodland fashions.

—Victoria Davila & Charmaine Ng

1 Flashy faeries need only their wings to draw an audience. Amid a soft sea of lavender and cobalt blue fabric, lights run along the delicately serrated edges of Barlow's wings. Dynamic curves and jagged holes add unexpected attitude. White puffs rest atop the antennae to finish off this deceptively innocent look.

2 Only the most confident dare to slip on this shape-hugging leotard, complete with a dramatic, plunging neckline. Julian-Stewart's onesie balances an attention-grabbing fit with prim Victorian-style lace layering the torso. This royal blue piece fiercely denies inhibition and embraces classic femininity.

3 A tiny crow skull surrounds 1 by stark white and olive green feathers. Sandow's edgy flapper-esque hair piece in place. Complemented by fringed leather choker and lace-up boots, prima elements make for one bad-ass faerie.

4 Modeling her design, Barlow layered in earthy greens and muted purples. Her sporty anywhere-but-not-here-to-dance-but-not-per-weekly-painstakingly-handcrafted — some even lit by battery-powered lights — Barlow's wings are not your average Halloween accessory.

5 This vivacious piece by Julian-Stewart celebrates the carefree atmosphere of the tropics. With swirling splashes of vibrant colors, this unconventional style breaks out a psychedelic pattern of vertical neon orange, pink, and green stripes. The turquoise tulle hem hits at mid-thigh, and shows the exuberance of this strapless dress.

6 This slip, accented by brilliant maroons and desert browns, leaves plenty of room to roam for adventurous sprites. The beige cotton base features airbrushed lace over a floral and tie-dyed pattern. A collaboration between designers Barlow and Sandow, this youthful garment harkens back to summer days that never seem to end.

PHOTO CHRIS PARKER

Bottoms Up

A global guide to alcoholic beverages for the tipsy tourist

Kvass: Russia

In America, some people use beer as an ingredient in bread. But in Russia, bread is used to make Kvass. Russian street vendors lug around trailers carrying big, barrel-shaped tanks filled with the distinct beer, which is created by fermenting stale bread. A Russian version of cola, Kvass is so low in alcohol content that many locals refer to it as “children’s beer.” Coca-Cola began manufacturing and distributing its own brand of Kvass after the corporation realized it was losing market shares to the local “beer cola.” The market for Kvass is growing so quickly that Pepsi is also rumored to be interested in creating its own version of the beverage. *Less than 1% ABV*



Mezcal: Mexico

If the thought of slurping down a worm with a shot of booze makes you cringe, then proceed with caution when drinking Mezcal. A specialty of Oaxaca, Mexico, this smoky alcohol is similar to tequila in that they’re both made from different types of agave cactus. The worm is the larval stage of a moth found on the leaves of the agave plant used to make Mezcal. Some distillers have started using fake plastic worms because they’re cheaper. In accordance with a Mexican law, Mezcal must contain at least 80 percent agave, making it purer than most tequila, which contains at least 51 percent agave. *At least 50% ABV.*



Snake Wine: Southeast Asia

A baby cobra is curled at the bottom of a jar of murky liquid, a scorpion hanging from its mouth. Snake Wine, found in Southeast Asia, consists of a dead poisonous snake stuffed into a bottle and left to ferment. There are many additions to this unusual concoction, including scorpions and bees. Snake Wine is believed to increase sexual drive for men, and to be a powerful cure for a wide variety of illnesses and injuries. The drink is harmless when properly made, but mistakes can be deadly, which is why lots of care goes into the preparation. Brewers use a variety of species and fermentation processes to create subtly different flavors. *Does it matter? There’s a snake.*



Chicha: South America

The drink of the Incas, Chicha is a frothy yellow beverage made of fermented corn. Traditionally, Incan women prepared this drink by chewing and spitting up corn pulp that was then left to ferment in warm water. Talk about self-brewed. These days, Chicha is ground by hand, and is popular during festivals and special occasions — particularly in the Ecuadorian *Fiesta de la Jora*, when the guest of honor consumes this corn-based concoction. Because of its celebratory nature, Chicha, found in Peru, Ecuador, Chile, and Bolivia, is typically only made for special occasions. *13% ABV.*



Bok Bun Ja Joo: Korea

A specialty of Korea, this black raspberry wine is a tasty, dry liquor that isn’t excessively sweet. The literal translation of the alcohol’s name is “man who pees in a pot.” The wine is said to pump a man up with so much energy that when he pees in a pot, it nearly flips. Bok Bun Ja Joo appears in an old tale in which a young, sick boy was told by a Buddhist monk to drink the wine. After following the monk’s advice, the boy miraculously became healthy once again. The alcohol is thought to prevent cancer and slow down the aging process, as well as increase virility in men. *15% ABV.*



Glogg: Norway

Sweet and spicy, warm and festive, this Norwegian holiday concoction dates back to the Viking era. The main ingredient is red wine, which is heated and infused with a deluxe array of spices, including cloves, cardamom seeds, ginger, and cinnamon. For the final touch, a dash of hard alcohol is added. Its fiery melodies make Glogg perfect for warming up a frigid winter night, and it’s especially suitable for Norway’s cold climate. *Enough to warm you up.*



Kumis: Central Asia

Hailing from the plains of Central Asia, Kumis is a drink made from mare’s milk, though many people use cow’s milk as a substitute. First brewed in the fifth century BCE, the beverage hasn’t lost its popularity over the years. Traditionally, the milk was kept in a horsehide pouch hung from a saddle and bounced about during the ride, so it fermented for anywhere from a few hours to a few days before it was ready for consumption. Today, modern methods are used to ferment this low-alcohol-content specialty. *2% ABV.*



Zubrowka/Bison-grass Vodka: Poland

Wheat, barley, and grapes are common field-grown alcohol ingredients in the U.S. But grass? In Poland, grass-infused vodka is a popular drink. The alcohol, which contains a single blade of bison grass in each bottle, originated in the fourteenth century as a celebratory drink men indulged in after a successful day hunting buffalo in the fields. Said to increase strength, power, and youthfulness, this Eastern European specialty was once banned in the United States because the grass contains a prohibited additive, coumarin that is slightly toxic to humans. At the turn of the millennium, Poland began producing coumarin-free Zubrowka for the U.S. market, though the artificial version is not as flavorful as the original. *40% ABV.*

Seek the Snitch

Muggle Quidditch flies off the pages of *Harry Potter* into the campus arena



Keepers tend to stick close to the goalposts, tackling, swatting away, and using their bodies to block the Quaffle.

The burning, stinging sensation throbs through the Chaser's gangly body. Dressed from head to toe in shades of black, the pain pulsates at the epicenter of impact: his shoulder. Each game, his body becomes a tool for deflecting flying balls and striking fellow players as he dashes through the field toward a homemade goal post.

Charging through the mass of people, each player fights for possession of the partially deflated volleyball. Lowering his head and squaring his shoulders, the athlete plows through the mass of bodies from the opposing team; he has one objective in mind. Leading the scoreboard,

the Chaser seizes the opportunity for his team to pull ahead. Eyes on the prize, he catapults the Quaffle into the hoop.

Nearing the goal, he wipes his palms, gritty from sweat and dirt. He tightens

the grip between his shaky hands; it's tied at 40-40 and the game is resting on this shot. His shot. Breathing in deep, he jogs towards the goals, timing his stride perfectly to launch it in at just the right moment. The crowd roars; Muggles everywhere rejoice. Finally, Quidditch can be played by all.

MATCHES FEEL ALMOST AS QUICK-PACED AS THE BROOMSTICK-RIDING PLAYERS DEPICTED ON THE SILVER SCREEN.

Played on college campuses across the United States, Quidditch, the fictional sport of J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter*, is attracting droves of wannabe wizards and witches to join — including those at the University of Oregon. And despite the lack of magical powers and ability to fly, "Muggle Quidditch," as played by non-magical people, feels almost as quick-paced as Hogwarts matches.

Around the world, 226 teams make up the International Quidditch Association (IQA). Since its establishment in 2007, the IQA's World Cup in Middlebury, Vermont, has aired on major news networks including CBS and ESPN. And while the fledgling UO Quidditch team hopes to one day make it to the coveted World Cup, for

now, they are working toward recruiting more members and being officially recognized by the university's associative student body.

A mix between rugby, basketball, dodgeball, and flag football, Muggle Quidditch has a little bit of everything for everyone minus magic broomsticks. And keeping in mind there is no healing magic, a first-aid kit is highly recommended. More often than not, it comes in handy amidst the chaos.

HOW TO PLAY MUGGLE QUIDDITCH



According to the official IQA rulebook, teams need at least seven members playing at all times. Including substitutes, who can sub in at any time, each team can have up to twenty players. And while the positions sound self-explanatory — Chaser, Beater, Keeper, Seeker — in reality, the logistics of how each position is played is as awkward and confusing as you would expect a pseudo magical sport to be.

CHASERS

The main scorers, Chasers are the fastest and most nimble members of the team. The three Chasers spend the majority of the game trying to score by throwing the Quaffle, a deflated volleyball, through one of three makeshift goalposts on their opponent's side. The goalposts vary in height and are often constructed out of a Hula-Hoop duck-taped to a PVC pipe. Chasers can also steal the Quaffle from opposing Chasers through tackling, intercepting, grabbing — just about anything goes. Chasers score ten points for every goal — that is, if they can avoid being struck out by the Beaters first.

BEATERS

Armed with dodgeballs called Bludgers, Beaters temporarily tap out and disarm opposing players. For Chasers, this means losing the Quaffle while Beaters from the opposing team must drop their Bludger. Empty-handed?

Get ready to run — the penalty for getting tagged is a lap around all three respective goal posts. And with two Beaters per team and three Bludgers total, the team with the extra Bludger always has the advantage. In terms of muscle power, in Muggle



A substitute for the book's magical, winged Golden Snitch, the Muggle Snitch is just that — a muggle.

Quidditch, Beaters are the playmakers. But let's not forget the goalie.

KEEPER

As guardian of the goals, the Keeper is the most versatile member of a Quidditch team. Protecting the posts from relentless Chasers. Keepers tend to stick close to the goalposts, tackling, swatting away, and using their bodies to block the Quaffle. However, if the opportunity strikes, each Keeper can leave their post and assume the role of Chaser. Quaffle in hand, a Keeper can score just like a Chaser — but also be tagged out like one. Thus, while Keepers have the freedom to choose between offensive and defensive plays, an unsuccessful run for a goal may leave its own team out of a goalie.

SEEKER AND THE SNITCH

Besides the inability to whiz around on broomsticks, there is one distinguishing characteristic between magical and non-magical Quidditch: the Snitch. A substitute for the book's magical, winged Golden Snitch, the Muggle Snitch is just that — a Muggle. Not affiliated with either team the Snitch, usually a track-team member clad in bright yellow, runs around with a sock-wrapped tennis ball hanging by the elastic waistband of his or her shorts. With the start of the whistle, the Snitch has two minutes to run and hide somewhere on campus. After the time is up, the Seekers from each team have ten minutes to find the Snitch and grab the sock. If ten minutes elapse and the

Seekers remain sockless, both Seekers and Snitch must return to the field. Catching the Snitch just got a whole lot easier.

The game ends when a Seeker seizes the sock off the Snitch. And while the team that catches the Snitch receives an extra thirty points, it doesn't guarantee a victory. In both *Harry Potter* and *Muggle Quidditch*, it's possible to catch the Snitch and still lose the game, depending on each team's total score.

Talk about keeping your eye on the ball.



On a sunny day during spring term 2010, the University of Oregon Quidditch team took to Gerlinger lawn for its weekly match. With Hula-Hoop goals and deflated dodgeballs for optimum grip at the ready, these local Muggles began their version of the famous fictional game.

"People are really friendly on this team so everyone's comfortable with tackling someone or just grabbing someone else and trying to wrestle the ball away," says University senior and team member Adrian Ho. "The team bonds really fast no matter if you just came off the street to join us."

Started two years ago, the team has both a Facebook page and Twitter feed to send out bulletins of upcoming events and invites for people to join the ever-expanding team. New Muggles are encouraged to join.

"We play rain or shine, no matter what the weather is," Ho says. —*Kassandra Easley*

See how Quidditch is played at the UO at ethosmagonline.com

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION CAM GIBLIN, SARAH HEWETT & WESLEY THOMPSON

Lost Impressions

STORY STEFAN VERBANO ILLUSTRATION CHELSEA PERO

The Saturday Market hit me like a bag of bricks. If I could have taken a magic paintbrush and glossed over the towering buildings and jutting concrete with a scene of green rolling hills and trees, I would have thought I was at Woodstock. Tie-dye enveloped everything — the sweet sounds of twanging guitars and beating drums harmonized with laughter and the chatter of commerce to become a dull roar. Everyone was smiling.

I let my ears lead my feet through the bustling rainbow to the corner of 7th and Oak. There, on the steps of the Lane County Courthouse, I found a semicircle of drummers and dancers completely engulfed in rhythm. Some were dressed in tattered blue jeans and wool sweaters, sporting long, beaded dreadlocks, while others wore immaculate white sundresses or hibiscus-print aloha shirts. The air smelled like lavender and reefer. I found a cement ledge to recline on and closed my eyes. Suddenly I was home, sitting next to a bonfire in a moonlit field in the San Juan Islands, surrounded by a similar semicircle of drummers, their tumult of drunken laughter and slapping snare and bass tones mixed with frog croaks and the crackle of seasoned firewood. For a moment, these two vastly different places were one in my mind.

Unfortunately, this fleeting first impression of Eugene has not held true. Though my time here has been punctuated with similar scenes of jovial hippies, music, and art, I cannot help but feel that many aspects of this new urban atmosphere are irreconcilable with the idyllic lifestyle I used to lead.

I was born and raised on Guemes Island, and lived eighteen years in a log cabin my parents built out of debarked fir trunks. My stomping ground was twenty acres of swampy clearings, surrounded by an encroaching forest of alder, cedar, and maple trees. Less than 300 people live on the three-mile-long island, with its two-lane gravel roads and lone general store locals aptly call "The Store." The mainland town of Anacortes is the closest thing to civilization, separated from the island by the mile-wide Guemes Channel.

Though growing up

in such a rural atmosphere could have easily made me question the significance of institutional education, I felt it was vital to finish high school and apply to college. Many of my friends on the island did not see the value in post-secondary schooling and instead used their intelligence to grow the food they eat or build the houses they live in. Moving to Eugene has forced me to give up sailing boats and felling trees in order to become well practiced at taking exams and throwing a little orange ping-pong ball into a keg cup.

Guemes Islanders value chainsaws and overalls over newspapers and Twitter feeds, and yet still manage to stay as involved as Eugene locals. When the evening operating hours of ferry service to the island were extended from 6 to 10 p.m., pick-up truckloads of disgruntled residents arrived at the dock. Their grievance was that extended ferry service made life more comfortable for big city transplants, increasing population and eroding Guemes' rural character. So, over the period of a week, hundreds of people stood draped in American flags, holding picket signs, blocking traffic, and singing songs. I cannot help but assume Eugene shares a similar thread of alternative activism as I hear of a time when anarchists were smashing store windows and student activists were protesting Nike sweatshops by sleeping in tents outside Johnson Hall.

Law enforcement is virtually non-existent on Guemes, and the lack of police stations and patrolling officers has allowed islanders to evade the radar of stratified society. Maybe it's the fact that many residents live in the forest and keep to themselves, or maybe it has to do with the humble, long-haired social rejects the island attracts, but I can confidently say that living on that island was the closest I have ever come to being absolutely free.

Eugene cannot boast this same level of individual autonomy. Despite its throngs of retired hippies and championing of multiculturalism, this town has a palpable rule of law. Before coming here, I had this idealistic image in my mind that Eugene cops would reflect some of the town's character, perhaps sporting beards, faded blue jeans, and smiles. I was wrong. The Eugene Police Department scours the streets on Thursday,

Friday, and Saturday nights like navy blue commandos, using the variety of menacing tools on their belts to abate a never-ending cycle of petty crime. I had lived eighteen years without being forced to interact with the embodiment of law, and now have to consider whether I feel safer knowing someone with a badge and a gun is around every corner with the job of protecting me.

Police sirens, barred windows, security guards, and illuminated walkways are all prevalent in this town because there is a genuine lack of trust among members of the community. So, when I am headed back to my tiny apartment after a long night and see an obviously intoxicated young woman dressed in high heels and a black mini skirt stumbling down the sidewalk, I cannot help but wish she was instead walking the dark, winding country roads on Guemes. At least there, the worst thing she will be given by a late-night passerby is a ride and a prayer.

My old friends and neighbors on the island were so inimical toward police involvement that they would take it upon themselves to do the community's dirty work. Two years ago, an elderly, well-respected pack rat left the state for a week. He owned a seven-acre plot of land that he called "The Museum," which was little more than a field full of rotting boats and a myriad other flotsam that the county was about to foreclose on. So, night after night, a congregation of the owner's concerned friends labored away. We ripped half-century-old rowboats out of story-high blackberry brambles, using a tractor to jostle out the jagged planks piece by piece, and drag them toward the waiting bonfire. Fuming black, acrid smoke from burning paint made the scene drift in and out of sight, and I will never forget the roar of fire and machinery echoing into the thickly wooded darkness. Regrettably, such benign anarchism has no place in suburbia. ♡



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