

There's no place like Ashland for 'Ruby Slipper'

Artist Sketch

Name: Erin O'Kelley
Age: 32
Hails from: Boulder, Colo.
Training: Bachelor's degree in philosophy and creative writing from the University of Colorado at Denver. Learned web design while working at the VR-1 video game company in Boulder.
Niche: Web design.
Claim to fame: "I think it's yet to come."
Inspiration: "I'm inspired by bold colors and the moods they evoke. Masters such as the French painter Toulouse Lautrec, the Mexican artist Frieda Kahlo, the mosaic artist Gaudi, as well as the art nouveau movement. Personally, my inspiration comes from my family, especially my father, who showed me what belief can do to build one's sense of self."

By **Bill Choy**
 Ashland Daily Tidings

For more than three years, Erin O'Kelley has called Ashland home while running her own web design business, Ruby Slipper Designs.

O'Kelley fell in love with the town while visiting her best friend Shannon Christopher, a local hairdresser, and decided Ashland would be the perfect place to start her own business.

"Some places just feel like home, even if you've only been there five minutes," she said. "The beauty of the foggy mornings, wintertime trees dusted with snow, brilliant summertime sunsets ... makes this place feel like a favorite coat that you just never want to take off. I'm just constantly overwhelmed by the great fortune and blessings of living and working in this magical place."

O'Kelley, who has worked as a web designer for companies in Boulder, Colo., and

Seattle said she likes being her own boss and escaping the hustle and bustle of a larger city.

Ruby Slipper designs web pages for companies throughout the country as well as in the Rogue Valley.

Locally, she has designed web pages for Riverwalk Ashland, the Ashland Independent Film Festival, and Providence Medford Medical Center, and has worked for several women's foundation Web sites.

O'Kelley said she enjoys the many aspects of web design such as the strategic, logical and design standpoints and putting it all together.

She said she likes using her love of art and design to come up with interesting and creative web pages.

"The design aspect is the focal point of where all the ideas come together and become visually accessible," she said. "I also get to meet the most interesting people with what I do and put their



Submitted photo

ERIN O'KELLEY MIXES web design with other artistic passions.

ideas online."

In her free time, O'Kelley pursues many creative outlets such as photography and painting, which she became interested in while in college.

"I love playing and working with colors and composition," she said.


For the past two years, she has been a member of a local hula troop, Aunty Malia's.

O'Kelley said it's an amazing experience when she performs the hula.

"It feels like the carpet becomes sand on my toes," she said. "I love the grace and the storytelling aspect of it. It's a way to dance with your hands."

For information on Ruby Slipper Designs call 488-1276, or go to www.rubyslipper.com.

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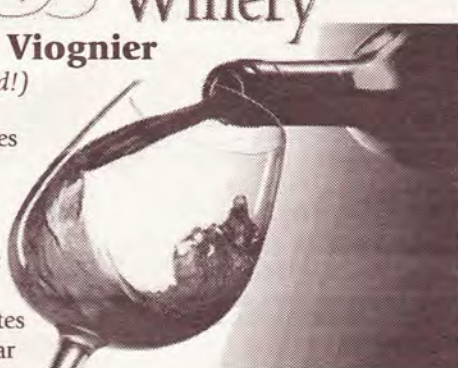
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