

On Sunday, August 25th, the Neighborhood Anarchist Collective (NAC) hosted its 3rd Solidarity Share Fair of the year at Park Blocks.

Share Fair is a mutual aid event held about 4 times a year. It's "a really free market," with free goods like clothing, food, and gear, as well as free services like haircuts, massages, medical care, and pet care. Local organizations table to connect attendees with resources and information. HIV Alliance, a long time supporter, provided free HIV testing on site. Several orgs provided Narcan.

But connecting people with life saving harm reduction and survival supplies is only the beginning. Share Fair is a fun and festive event with live music, yoga classes, and games and story time for kids. Surveys from attendees stated they appreciated the kindness and positivity from volunteers, "watching people drop their guard," and the sense of comfort and community.

Share Fair is growing and offering more resources. The NAC Brake Light clinic inspected vehicles for minor repairs like brake light replacement, helping prevent traffic stops and scrutiny from police. Donations rotate throughout the day as more attendees bring what they don't need and take what they do. Medics for Action Collective of Eugene (MACE), and Radical Assistance for Vulnerable Eugene Neighbors (RAVEN) both provided foot care. Leftover clothing went to Queer Eugene, so if you missed this market, there are still community resources distributing needed goods.

This event did pose a challenge with the heat. Volunteers worked to provide shade with canopies, and a cooling station with fans provided relief. Volunteers with spray bottles misted (consenting) participants, and ice water was always available. Despite the heat, an estimated 400 people attended this Share Fair.

There have been 35 Share Fairs since founding in early 2018, with modified distribution projects through COVID. Many community members view Share Fair as a charitable project, but organizers firmly emphasize solidarity, not charity. There is no means testing or hierarchy in distribution of goods and services, and volunteers and coordinators also need and use the resources provided. Mutual aid might be the most broadly appealing principle of anarchism, but Share Fair is at its core a radical event– “all belongs to all” in action.

The next Share Fair will be Saturday, November 15, 12-4 PM at First United Methodist Church.