



Vendor Millard Gullede with a friend

## Vendors are at the core of Street Roots' mission

Our vendors, those men and women out selling the paper, rain or shine, are at the heart of Street Roots' mission. The relationships built with the broader community and more than 70 active vendors who sell *Street Roots* in the Portland metropolitan area and Vancouver are at the heart of the program. Over the course of a year more than 250 individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty sell *Street Roots*. Last year, more than two dozen individuals gained housing while with the organization. Through them, approximately 14,000 copies of *Street Roots* are sold or distributed every month.

Vendors purchase papers for 25 cents each and sell them for \$1. The 75 cents that a vendor nets from each paper sold helps him or her meet basic housing, food, clothing and hygiene needs. Many vendors support themselves primarily through the sales of the paper. The 25 cents from each paper that remains with Street Roots is used to cover printing costs of the paper itself.

Vendor applicants must attend a one-hour training orientation to earn a badge certifying them as a Street Roots vendor. The orientation outlines the rules and regulations of Street Roots, while offering vendors sales techniques and empowerment tools through a sales training video for getting involved in the organization. We are a low-barrier organization, giving new vendors the opportunity to start from scratch and develop their own sales schedule. New vendors receive 10 free papers to sell to kick-start sales.

To help our vendors, we work to provide an engaging newspaper every two weeks. Vendors are a key part of the process, offering suggestions and support for the continued improvement of the newspaper's presentation, as well as the operation of the vendor program itself.

The popularity of our vendors has created many new friendships within and beyond our community. Many have made connections that have led to employment, housing and new opportunities. And on a day-to-day basis, they are changing the paralyzing stereotypes directed at the streets.

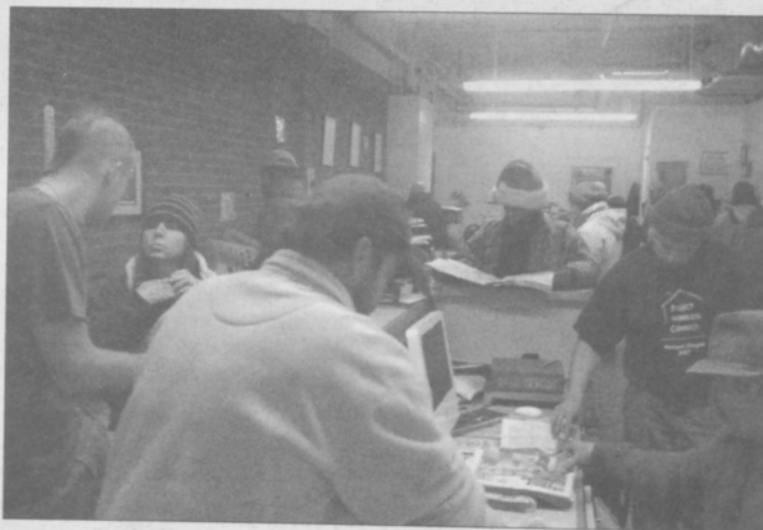
So the next time you see a vendor, say hello and buy a paper — and stop and chat if you have the time. You can find vendors selling the paper 365 days a year, in all kinds of weather, waiting for you to come along.



Above, vendor Vicky Sittinghawk heads out into the snow to her sales spot, Powell's City of Books.

**"I always look forward to reading *Street Roots*. It helps keeps me in touch with what homeless people and advocates are saying about day-to-day, real conditions on the streets. We are in earnest about our efforts to change the homeless system, bring homeless people into housing and end homelessness. I appreciate *Street Roots* so much for its fair reporting and critique of these efforts."**

— PAUL CARLSON,  
 U.S. INTERAGENCY COUNCIL  
 ON HOMELESSNESS



Left, vendors fill the office on a Friday morning when the paper arrives. The first Friday of a new edition is always a busy event, with vendors unloading the truck, stocking the bundles, buying their papers for the day and then reading and catching up. It is one of the most fun times to be in the office.

## Saying goodbye to an old friend

Roger Gates captured the hearts and minds of Portland's Northwest neighborhood where he sold the paper for seven years. In the two days leading up to Street Roots finding out about his death in July of 2008, nearly a dozen customers called the office asking where Roger was. In the days after his death Street Roots received more than 200 cards and phone calls requesting information about Roger's life and asking when a memorial would be held.

At a memorial held in Northwest Portland more than 200 of Roger's family, friends and customers paid tribute to Roger's life.

Roger embodied what it meant to be a Street Roots vendor and why the organization matters. In 2009, Street Roots will be creating a Roger Gates Memorial Fund for the Street Roots vendor program. Any donations received for the fund will go directly to the vendor program to help individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty with daily supplies meant to improve the lives of our vendors. For more information, contact Israel Bayer at 503.228.5657, or e-mail him at [streetroots@hotmail.com](mailto:streetroots@hotmail.com), or make a donation to Street Roots, 211 NW Davis, Portland, OR 97209, noting that the money donated is for the Roger Gates Memorial Fund.

