

NEWSBRIEFS

Detroit workers, youths march in protest of closings, layoffs

Detroit, Mich.— Hundreds of poor and working people gathered at the National People's Summit and Tent City in downtown Detroit to put forward the people's vision of a future with guaranteed jobs and income, universal health care, and housing and utilities.

More than 330 people registered for the four-day event that started June 14, according to the report by Workers World.

"They're going to regret the closing of 14 plants and the laying off of General Motors workers, because the workers are fighting back," said Frank Hammer, a retired United Auto Workers International representative and leader of the Autoworker Caravan, as he opened the rally after a militant demonstration outside the big-business summit.

More than 500 workers, including many from around Michigan and Ohio, marched in front of the GM Renaissance Center, demanding jobs and human needs.

Marchers carried banners and signs demanding jobs, health care, education, immigrant rights, jobs for youths, reproductive justice for women, an end to foreclosures and evictions, and many other issues.

ACLU wants DoD to stop teaching that protests are terrorism

If the government asked you to give an example of low-level terrorism, would you answer "protests?"

That's the correct answer on a test in anti-terrorism training materials used by the Department of Defense.

The American Civil Liberties Union wants the test changed, calling it "an egregious insult to constitutional values."

The ACLU has sent a letter to the department asking that the materials be corrected immediately. The Level 1 Antiterrorism Awareness training course is an annual training requirement for all DoD personnel that is fulfilled through Web-based instruction.

"Teaching employees that dissent on issues of public concern is something to be feared, rather than respected, is a dangerously counterproductive use of scarce security resources, making us less safe and less democratic," said Michael German, ACLU National Security Policy Counsel and former FBI special agent, who co-signed the letter with Brick.

CORRECTIONS

Street Roots strives for accuracy, but we're human. So we also strive to correct errors in our paper whenever possible. Please report any errors to our managing editor, Joanne Zuhl, at 503-228-5657, or write in to joanne@streetroots.org.

Home away from home in Portland

BY ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Like a lot of us who have lived a while, David Armitage wants to "go home." He wants to go back to a time, place, and relationships where life was easier. Although he is from Portland originally, David wants to return to his adopted village in northern Greece. While he prepares to return, he sells Street Roots newspapers because, "it gives me something to do."

David refuses to succumb to the kinds of depression he sees in some other men who just sit in their rooms and "do nothing." He reportedly only goes home at night to watch a movie on television and sleep. During the day, he sells Street Roots at the back door of Powell's, then takes the streetcar to 23rd and Lovejoy and spends most late afternoons sitting in the shade of a tree outside the Lovejoy Grocery store. "I put my newspaper on the table in front of me where people can see them," he told me. "Then if someone says they want to buy a paper, well, then they can."

VENDOR PROFILE
David Armitage

David is a people watcher. He sees students, working people who look stressed out, tourists, politicians, and traffic. Lots of traffic. And road rage. He watches the streetcar go by. He has learned to recognize the streetcar drivers and the mechanics who are called upon when something goes wrong with the trolley. While he watches all this he dreams of his friends and work in Greece where he was the caretaker for a family that owned an orchard outside of Thessalonica.

I commented to David that he seems to have a slight accent when he talks. He said that he's been back in Portland for four and a half years now, but he is still relearning English after 17 years speaking Greek. He said it had been, and still is to a lesser extent, an extreme culture shock when he came back. "I feel like a stranger in my home town." It helps to seek out community with Greeks in Portland. He attends the Greek Orthodox Church in Laurelhurst. The church does a good job of "keeping the

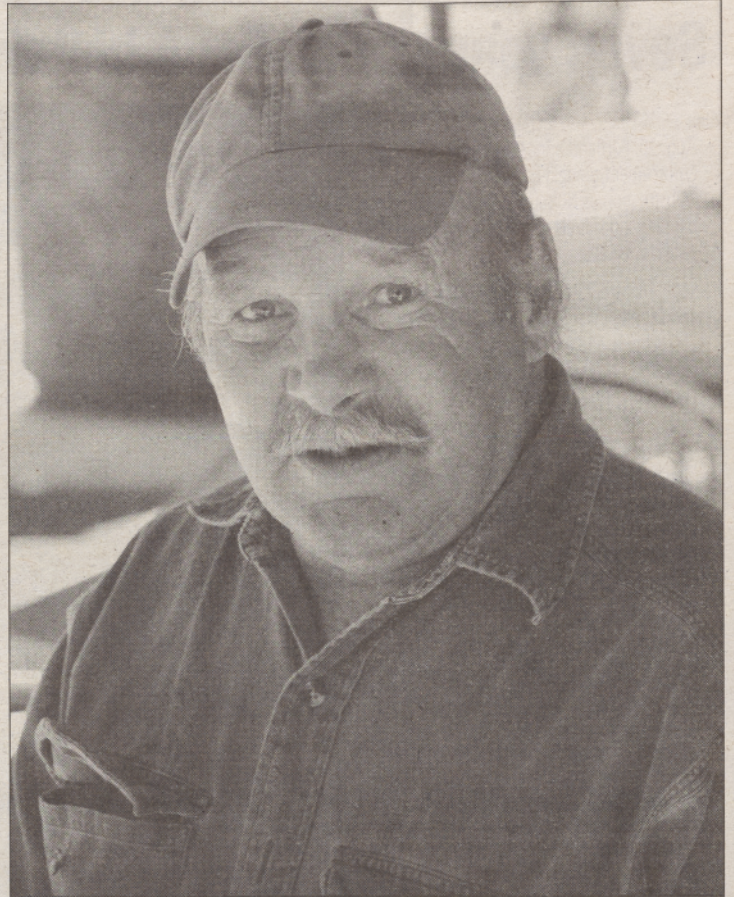


PHOTO BY ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ

Greek community together," David says.

David wanted to talk to me about panhandlers, but had to return to the subject several times during our interview because he found it difficult to express his concerns about what is happening. Lots of people tend to confuse Street Roots vendors with panhandlers. But David draws a sharp distinction between himself and the panhandlers. "I have ID. I have a passport. I don't do drugs. I don't have a record."

Selling Street Roots, says David, "keeps me active and connected." It even helped him find housing.

"I was camping for two and a half years. I was selling Street Roots. A customer took me to Central City Concern." She put him on a waiting list for housing. "Stop this camping," she reportedly told him, "you're too old for it." He has had secure shelter now for about two years. The current economic situation may undermine that security. David is concerned that the money that allows him to stay in his place might

dry up. He is 55 years old.

When he was much younger, David bought a copy of the book "Europe on \$5 a Day."

It was a classic in the 1960s. I had a copy of it myself when I traveled Europe during my junior year in college. He went to West Berlin and worked in a factory with a lot of other "guest workers," mostly Greeks and Turks. He made good money, enough to travel all over Western Europe between work stints at the machine factory. The wandering life got old and he settled down in Greece at a time when the Greek government had lenient policies regarding immigrants.

The Berlin Wall fell in 1989. David said that was the beginning of the end for him. Economic refugees from Eastern Europe flooded Greece and other parts of Europe. With them came resentment against all immigrants. Eventually he was deported back to Portland. Selling Street Roots keeps David's mind occupied and off his troubles.

THE LEFT COAST EISTEDDFOD
a Welsh-American performing arts festival
21-22 August 2009

SONG
STORY
WALES

Online Poetry, Short Story and Image competitions, now till August 2009

Win \$100 and International Acclaim - enter at
americymru.ning.com

Winners announced at the live event at
the Crystal Ballroom 21-22 August 2009

people's
FOOD CO-OP

good food. free classes.
real community.

3029 SE 21st Ave
open 8a-10p daily
EBT accepted
(503) ORGANIC
www.peoples.coop

