

## 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 to joanne@streetroots.org.

The Sept. 18 edition of Street Roots erred in a photo credit for the picture of Andrea Vedder ("Students ride for sex trafficking victims") The photographer was Jennifer Janson. Thank you, Jennifer!



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GET TO KNOW YOUR  
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VENDOR



## A new chapter

Longtime  
vendor  
expands  
horizons with  
computer  
certification

BY ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ  
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Longtime readers of Street Roots are probably familiar with Brent Synder, a vendor from the first days of the newspaper, when it was the Burnside Cadillac. He now holds a post in the Pearl District selling Street Roots. He has always been open about his life, telling his trials of getting off of the street and earning his GED.

He recently passed another milestone; earning his Certificate of Completion from Portland Community College for computer tech support.

Brent morphed from student to a volunteer, then to a board member of the former Bridge School when he was in his 20s. It was as a board member that he helped establish Portland's first street newspaper, the Burnside Cadillac, and became the paper's first vendor. 10 years ago, the Burnside Cadillac became Street Roots, Brent is still a vendor, and although he hopes to start making his living as a computer tech, he plans to remain connected to Street Roots in some capacity.

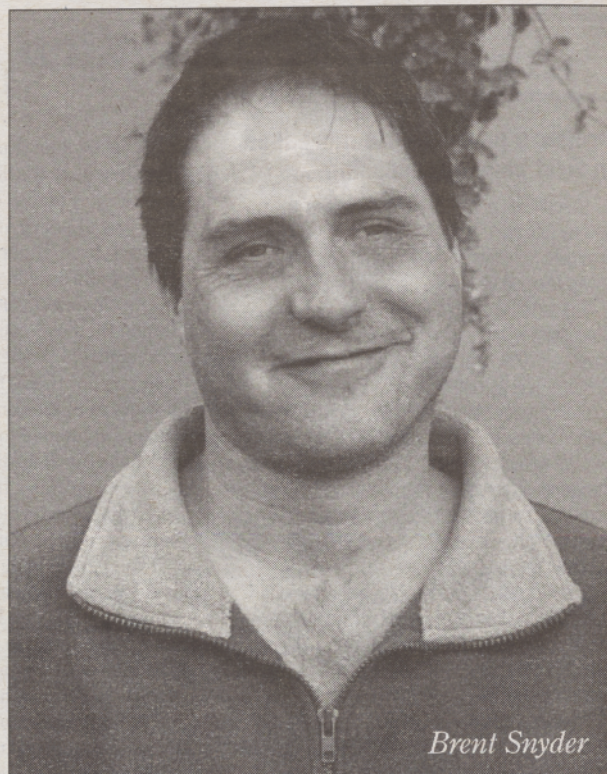
"Whatever happens in my life," he says, "I think I'm always going to be a part of Street Roots because I believe it provides unique opportunities for homeless, disabled, and vets to better themselves." He went on to say that he believes the difference

between Street Roots and social-service agencies is that the newspaper's main purpose is to provide opportunities to earn money rather than to

give away food, clothing or counseling.

"I have been housed for eight uninterrupted years now," Brent says. He paid fair-market rates for his first apartment in 2001 and now receives Section 8 housing assistance, which has allowed him to reduce his hours selling newspapers and to earn his computer tech certificate at Portland Community College. He is on his way to being a professional and likes to dress the part. Sometimes, potential customers get confused because he "doesn't look homeless."

Dressing for success has been part of Brent's process of becoming self-sufficient and a productive member of society. He is also building the social skills he will need to



Brent Snyder

PHOTO BY ELIZABETH SCHWARTZ

work as a computer tech some day.

He says his ideal job would be to work part-time, about 30 hours a week, because he is disabled and would need more down time than a full work week would allow. His employer preferably would be on a bus line and in the Portland, Beaverton or Tigard area.

Brent is working on passing the Microsoft Desktop Support Specialist Certification and CompTIA+ Certification exams while waiting for an employer who would like to hire someone with his skill set. In the meantime, he would like his own laptop computer so he can advertise in Street Roots as a free-lance computer tech for diagnostic and trouble-shooting work. Street Roots runs work ads for vendors without charge.

I would find it difficult to stand around selling Street Roots for a month. I cannot even imagine doing it for years. Brent's amazing tenacity has brought him close to achieving economic self-sufficiency. He knows that he could not have come so far without the people who buy Street Roots month after month and year after year.

Brent Snyder thanks all of you for your support.

VENDOR PROFILE  
Brent Snyder

## Street Roots vendors launch advisory committee

The new Street Roots Vendor Advisory Committee. The group came up with a mission statement and will be responsible for overseeing a process to elect vendors to the board of directors. The group also will put together a vendor newsletter and work on ways to improve the vendor program, including creating a vendors' speakers bureau, monthly trainings for new vendors hosted by senior vendors and overseeing a monthly social event for vendors. The Vendor Advisory Committee exists to empower and give voice to Street Roots vendors.