

EDITORIAL

Demonstrations' reception depends on occupiers' actions

For the people fed up with their representation in Washington and the unchecked corporate control over our lives and policies as a nation, it has been a remarkable few weeks of attention paid to We, the People.

The Occupy Wall Street movement has galvanized the masses, not the least of which, and actually one of the most numerous, is Occupy Portland now encamped in Chapman Square in the heart of the city.

Half a mile away, another group has staked a claim at the corner of NW Fourth Avenue and Burnside, creating a place where people who live homeless can find respite against the culmination of misguided policies being

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protested down the block.

It is a movement in solidarity, and it is no doubt lost on the demonstrators in Chapman Square that as they glance down the road they might catch their

reflection in the mirror and see their future.

Unemployment, high housing costs, and a health care system that isn't there for the uninsured is a threat to the masses, but a reality for thousands of people in Portland every day. Played out, it means homelessness.

This winter, more than 1,700 Portlanders were counted sleeping outside, in a vehicle or an abandoned building. In addition to that, several thousands were in shelters, hotels, and in transitional housing. These are the people who already occupy Portland, but struggle each day for basic survival.

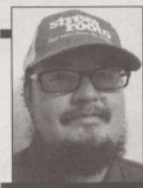
It's important to note that while direct action has taken over Portland, and many cities across the country with a fever for change, it's also the collective responsibility of those individuals protesting to offer solutions and to work to better the community. That means offering community service downtown, maintaining the parks, and creating an environment where the masses are actually engaged in civic duties that the so-called 99 percent believe in.

Street Roots believes in the message for change, and understands the frustration that lies at the heart of a growing movement. Saying that, if the Occupy Portland group is to maintain its momentum, it's going to need to look at ways it can help downtown and other parts of the region. This means maintaining clean and safe public places and creating teams of people engaged in improving their local community. Neither R2D2 nor Occupy Portland will further their cause if their statement becomes landlocked; anchored to their occupied territory. Now that they have the public's attention, let's expand it, because we all want to be a part of a winning team and create change.

Street Roots knows good and well that you can't reach the masses without changing perceptions. That doesn't mean that everyone speaks and acts as one — such homogeneity has never been the hallmark of a progressive movement anyway. But we can all recognize the common tenets of justice, and each of us knows what it feels like to have justice denied. In its most simplest forms, that is the bridge that will connect us all.

Readers give props for SR coverage, vendors

Street Roots' recent readers survey asked Portlanders to chime in on important issues related to the organization. It was by no means scientific,



DIRECTOR'S DESK

By Israel Bayer

Israel Bayer is the executive director of Street Roots. You can reach him at israel@streetroots.org

but it does give us a snapshot of the people who support vendors and read the newspaper. Here is what we found out.

The vast majority of SR readers are college educated, and

female. People of all ages support SR, but readers 21-35 have increased dramatically in the past two years since we last did a survey. Sixty-three percent of readers found out about the newspaper through an interaction with a vendor, while another 25 percent found out through a friend or word of mouth. That means by helping spread the word and introducing SR to your peer network, you can make a big difference.

More than 70 percent of those surveyed thought that SR was a window into their community, politically relevant and a strong advocate for people experiencing homelessness.

In-depth news coverage was by far the most popular aspect of the newspaper followed closely by the SR editorial and opinion pieces from a wide range of community members and organizations.

Nearly 80 percent of readers said that if SR went weekly they would purchase the newspaper every week from vendors.

On the vendor side of things readers showed lots of love. When asked if vendors conduct themselves professionally in the community — more than 90 percent of

people said yes. One person wrote, "Yes, vendors are very professional. Vendors are polite, friendly and make good small talk, while saying nice things like, 'Thank you' and 'Have a good day,' after buying a paper." Another reader wrote, "Yes, and if there is an issue, Street Roots is quick to address it." Big kudos and love to the vendors selling the newspaper week-in and week-out.

Sixty-one percent of readers say they do not seek out a specific vendor, while another 26 percent said they do.

Seventy-nine percent of the community told us they are familiar with our advocacy work, with 74 percent of people saying that we make a positive difference through our policy advocacy and muckraking journalism. When asked what difference readers witnessed SR making in the community responses ranged from working with the business community, to "not being afraid to say or do the unpopular thing, regardless of outside agendas," to putting a working face on people who are homeless. One reader wrote, "Street Roots provides a clear, unapologetic voice for social justice in our community."

We thank all of you who took part in the survey, and look forward to the on-going support Street Roots is providing both for those experiencing homelessness, and for the broader community. It's a team thing, and we couldn't do it without you.

Last, but not least, check out the back page of this edition, and save the dates for both the on-line auction starting Oct. 27, and a best of SR photography show on Nov. 3. It's going to be a party!

LETTERS

Riders want longer transfers, enforcement on TriMet

One way that TriMet could increase revenue without raising fares is to enforce the fares that already exist on the MAX.



While daily commuting from North Portland to downtown over an 8-month period between 2010-2011, guess how many times I was asked to prove my fare? How about 0 times! That's right, not at all. It made me feel like a sucker for having actually paid.

— JOHNNYFIT

Many of the individuals who are transit-dependent are not physically able to ride a bicycle. A longer time limit is needed on transfers because it can take longer than two hours to get to your destination, especially if you are not traveling during rush hour, you have a long wait for your transfer, or you need to make more than one transfer.

— LINDA

TriMet has to offer a service that can be sold. They have to sell transfers, and to offer a window of time that is about an hour is not going to make any sales. Not as much as a larger window of time. Allowing for a trip to, and a trip back on one transfer, makes people think... hey, I'll buy a transfer or bus ticket. Otherwise, people choose to put off their pet projects and less necessary travels. They will only do what is absolutely necessary, and then they will stack their errands and travels into one or maybe two days of travel on the city buses. So TriMet has made a stupid economic move by making the trip undesirable, even to the very poor.

— MS

Marlon Crump (Vendor Profile, Sept. 16) is a man with a deep sense of righteousness and dignity who will always come out on top. This is because he never compromises who he is and the values that make him so great, a shrewd businessman with a conscience. For a man who has done so much for others, it is amazing to me that he's at the very beginning of what is sure to be a very remarkable career which I look forward to following.

— ANONYMOUS

Our mission

Street Roots creates income opportunities for people experiencing homelessness and poverty by producing a newspaper and other media that are catalysts for individual and social change.

Street Roots publishes every two weeks, launching on Fridays, and is available exclusively through our street vendors or by subscription. We are proud members of the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers.

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Street Roots Rose City Resource

Street Roots publishes the Rose City Resource, a comprehensive booklet of services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty. To inquire about getting an order of the Rose City Resource for distribution, please write to pdxrosecityresource@gmail.com. Resources are also available online at www.rosecityresource.org.

Vendors

Street Roots vendors buy the newspapers for 25 cents each and sell them for \$1, keeping the 75 cents in profit for themselves. In order to keep the cost low to our vendors, we receive additional support from donations and in-kind contributions.



**75c**  
goes directly to the vendor who sold you the paper

**25c**  
goes toward printing costs

Vendor orientations are at 1 p.m. every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at the Street Roots office.