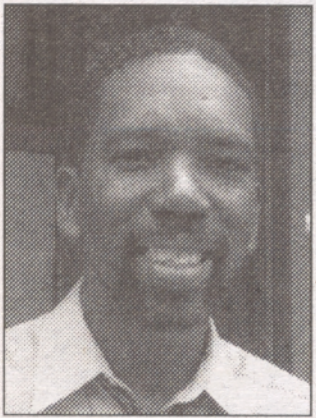


No man knoweth the hour

BY MARLON CRUMP
STREET ROOTS VENDOR

These are more than words scripture d in the Bible pertaining to the reality of death when I think of birthdays, in present day. Traditionally, birthdays for many is gathering around a cake lit with candles, and blowing them out. Making a wish is often expected soon thereafter. In some cultures, ceremonies are celebrated to honor one's new age.



For me, as I approach the age of 34, I hold in high regard of all my struggles, sacrifices, and success of being blessed to survive for yet another year.

Before I can say (or people say to me) "Happy Birthday" what of the ones responsible for it? Biggest celebration should go to the very life that's responsible for it: my mother. Twelve days after my mom's 18th birthday, she herself gave life on Feb. 22, 1978, to me!

A friend of mine, single-mom Karen Pringle, a.k.a Shaman'a Ital Jahroot, recently stated her opinion about birthdays. "I think that we celebrate (both) the day the mother gave birth and the birth of the child."

In every single second, minute, and hour of the day towards waking up to a "good morning," I often pray for a "good night" sleep. Sleeping is a short death. Wide awake could be my last breath. Reborn from near death experiences I've encountered and conquered. Birthdays are a celebration of not only being born on a certain day, but to cherish it every day.

Every day is my birthday, not just the year thereafter!

Inspired from within and without

BY COLE MERKEL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Oregon's relentless rainy months between late summer and late spring are difficult for many, including Debra Knauf, who admits that the winter is probably the hardest time to sell Street Roots. "Not very many people want to come out in the rain and buy a paper," she says. "You have more luck in the snow than in the rain."

Still, Debra finds inspiration in the environment, both natural and physical. She is a poet. She has been published in Street Roots several times in the last few months and continues to produce and turn in new work. "I find a space to write about things that happen in Portland," Debra says. While her poems revolve primarily around being homeless, they often display great depth,

VENDOR PROFILE Debra Knauf

exploring topics of femininity, race and spirituality, sometimes simultaneously. Take for example this extract from, "Write A Page," published in Street Roots on Jan. 20:

"I've seen their stories on the news but I haven't lived them.

I'm no stranger to poverty, but I'm white, white bread, white wine —
New grapes of wrath vintage.
Poor and white is not poor and black,
Poor and Asian, poor and Mexican.
They're right: I won't know their truths.
They don't know mine either."

"She Emerges" was published in Street Roots on Dec. 9:

"Spine Elongates
Tension releases
Hips off the ground
Arms strong
Head upright looking forward
Breathing
This is just what it is."



PHOTO BY COLE MERKEL

Debra's poems grapple with the beautiful mystery of being human, the difficulty of being homeless and ways that she relates to others. Often viscerally focused on her own body and mind, Knauf's poems focus on coming to terms with our own human interconnectedness. Her poetry is stark in its simplicity yet striking in its depth.

Poetry speaks to Debra because it allows her to employ her love for rhyming words coupled with topics she thinks are important. Debra says, "I am working on a poem about the environment and keeping Oregon green. It's really important that we get the message across somehow that we need to start recycling and doing better for the environment before it's too late."

Knauf considers herself an environmentalist and is an avid recycler.

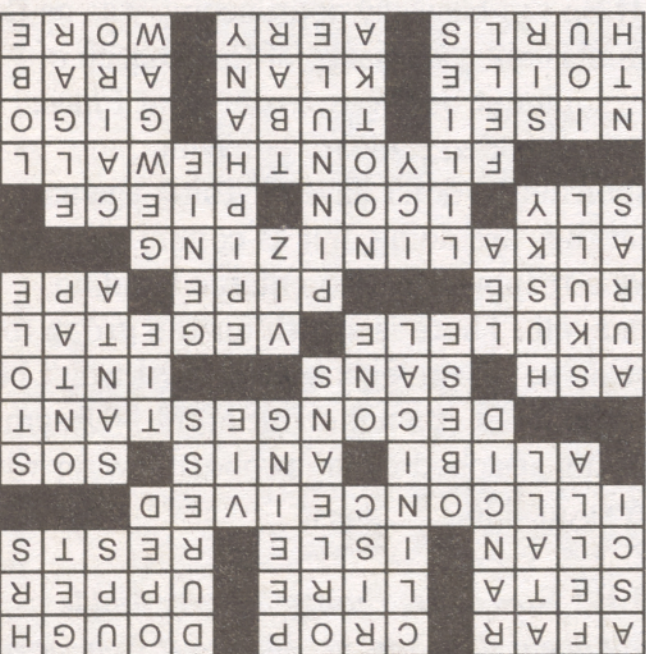
"I don't like seeing trash all over the ground and people not even trying to pick it up or get rid of it. It causes a lot of damage to the ozone and the living creatures that are among us," she says.

Street Roots is the best job Debra has ever had, and as she moves toward the future she would be interested in going into publishing, which would allow her to keep writing poetry and help others do the same. Until then, she would like to find an apartment: something simple with a bedroom, bathroom and kitchen and maybe a cat like one of the many she had as a child.

Debra can be found selling Street Roots most weekday afternoons at the Starbucks on SW 3rd and Jefferson.

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Answers to puzzles on page 15



9	2	4	8	7	6	3	5	1
7	6	3	5	1	9	8	2	4
8	1	5	4	3	2	9	7	6
5	4	2	9	6	3	1	8	7
6	3	5	8	4	2	1	7	9
3	8	9	1	5	7	4	6	2
1	9	8	6	2	5	7	4	3
2	5	7	3	9	4	6	1	8
4	3	6	7	8	1	2	9	5

VENDOR WORK ADS

Craig Preston: Labor work, \$12 an hour, please call the Street Roots office to inquire: 503-228-5657

Tibor S.: Available for any labor work around a house. 1-201-539-1888.

Cassidy Morse: Looking for work. Will do most anything, light and heavy. \$10 an hour, four-hour minimum. References supplied. Please call 503-224-5398 or Street Roots at 503-228-5657

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

Vendor Wish List

Donations keep Street Roots and our vendors working by keeping our operating costs low.

- Socks
- Lil Hotties
- Paper cups
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- Towels
- First-aid supplies
- TriMet bus tickets/passes
- Printer paper
- Toilet paper



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