

concrete reminders
by j.mccurdy

to the ones
whose shivers
remind us
of the work
we have yet to do
thank you
for your strength
thank you for the gift
your survival represents
to those who stand apart from
remember
you are related
respected
and loved
you and your part in things
are as necessary as the next
don't take in
strangers' opinions of your circumstance
they don't pay your rent on the concrete
and they can't see
what took you there
or where your journey will end
they are lost
in the illusion of a security that doesn't
exist
and addicted to outdated antiquated
notions
hold your head up
you are wild
feral
free
far more gifted at survival
and the real
than they
will ever be
remember
you
don't require
the approval of inadequate
assessment

A welcoming
sight for new
arrivals

BY COLE MERKEL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Union Station, often bustling with activity, is a gateway to the city for many commuters and visitors. Situated adjacent to the Bud Clark Commons, it is also at a crossroads of people who are homeless in the downtown core. Eric Bradley, a Street Roots vendor for the past six months, who has been selling at Union Station since before Christmas, is an ambassador between these two worlds. Bradley stands quietly under the awning of Union Station with papers under his arm and a smile on his face. He greets people as they come out of the building with a short, friendly welcome, "New Street Roots. Hot off the press." Even if the potential customers don't acknowledge him in their haste, he still keeps smiling.

VENDOR PROFILE
Eric Bradley

Bradley knows the security guards and bellhops of Union Station by their first names and they all get along well with him. Each morning, he memorizes the schedules of the trains and buses to know when his peak sales times will be. He engages with a customer who was delayed for three hours outside Seattle.

As the only vendor at the train station, Bradley has many regular customers — people who travel to Portland regularly on business from Eugene or Vancouver. He also encounters many individuals who have never heard of a street newspaper before. His solution is to educate them.

"I explain to them that it's a paper that helps people in poverty and people who are homeless, to give them jobs so they're not out here just begging, they're actually working and doing something with their lives so they can earn income," he says. He is fluent in sign language, the result of

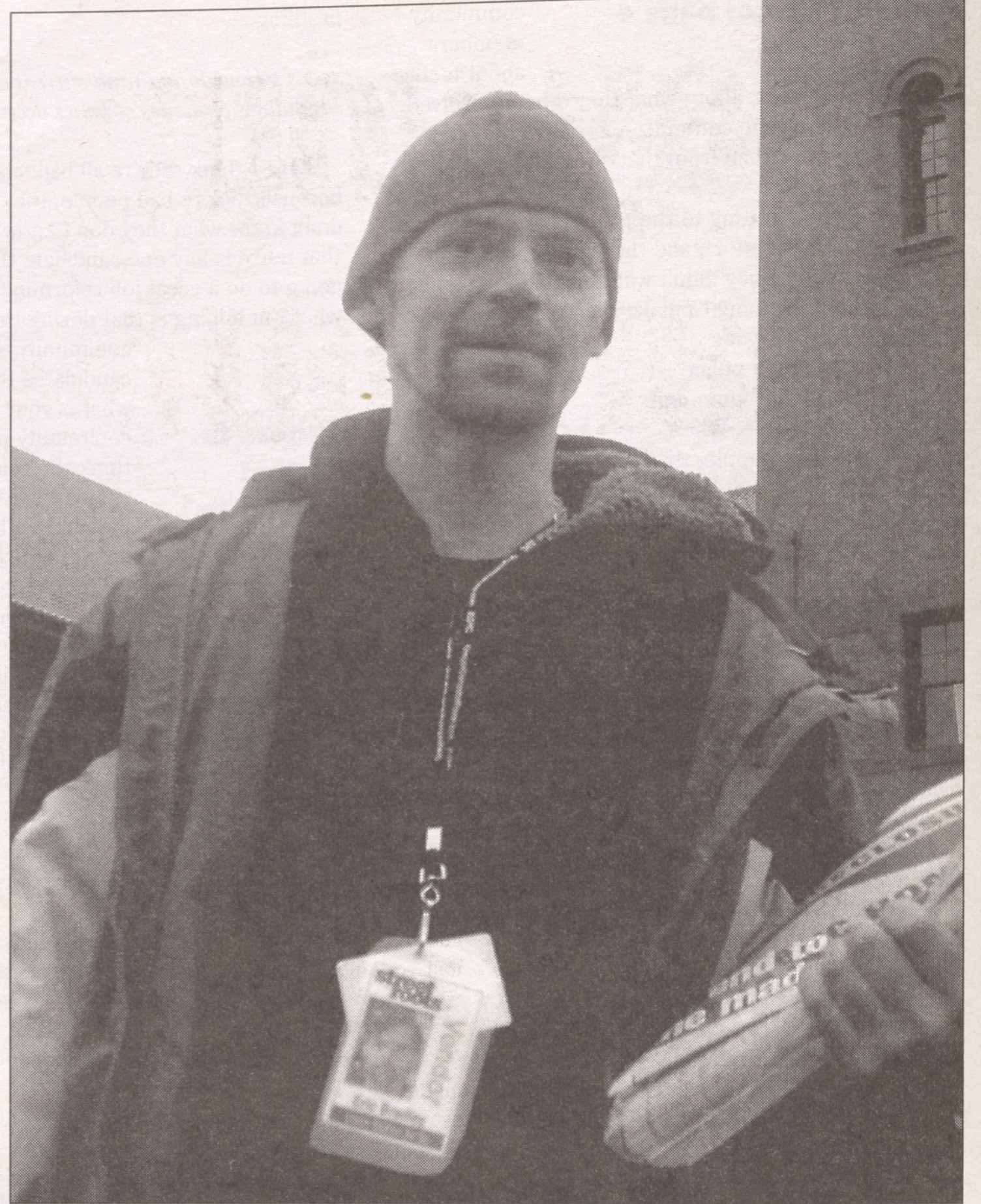


PHOTO BY COLE MERKEL

volunteering at a deaf camp in his late teens, and has been able to engage with some deaf customers as a result.

"Help a family in poverty today," Bradley says to a person leaving the building. Family is his main motivation for selling the newspaper. Six months ago, after losing his job in Eugene as a maintenance mechanic, Bradley had to move away from his wife of three years and 18-month-old son Elijah in order to find work. "It's hard," he says. "I send them money every week, if I can, and I try to get down there and visit them as much as I can. We talk to each other a lot."

Bradley is working toward relocating his family to Portland. "I'm trying my hardest,

trying to get back on my feet so I can get back with my wife and son again. That's the main thing. There is more opportunity up here," he says.

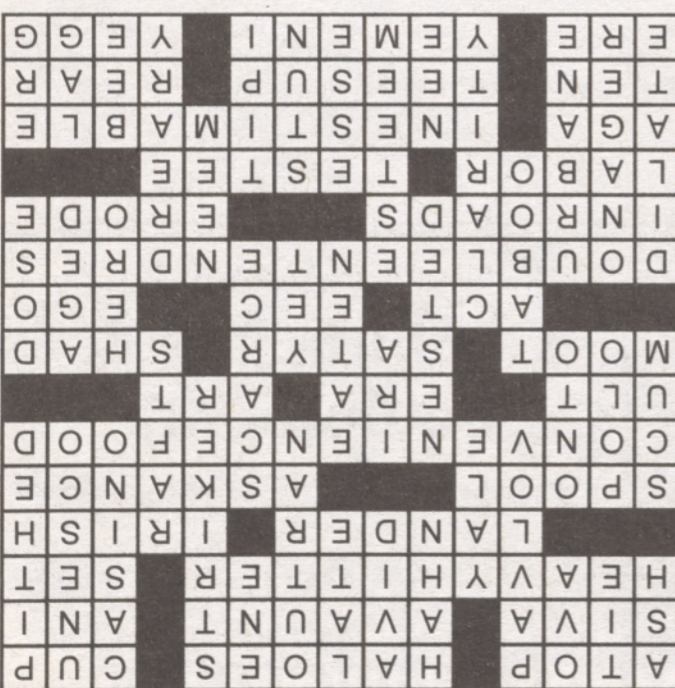
As our interview drew to a close and I took Bradley's picture for this article, a man who was homeless asked if I could take a similar picture of him with his wife. "This is for Street Roots," Bradley told the man. "I'm going to be in the paper. But you could do it too and make some money. Come to an orientation."

With that, Bradley sent out a little hope to a stranger, reaching out to others to help them help themselves.

We tip our mugs to Coffee Bean International for donating coffee to Street Roots and keeping our vendors warm in the morning! Thank you!

coffee bean
INTERNATIONAL

Answers to puzzles on page 15



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

CORRECTIONS

Re: Manufacturing their own community, Street Roots, Feb. 3:

Two corrections: State law preempting local governments from adopting rent control — on any rental housing, not just MH parks — is in state statute (ORS 91.225), not the state constitution. The difference is significant, since the constitution can only be amended by a vote of the people, while a statute can be amended or repealed by a majority vote of the legislature.

Second, Oregon's law allowing for Manufactured Dwelling Park Nonprofit Cooperatives does not use the terms "stock" or "stockholders." The park residents who join a MDP NP Co-op are members, and own a membership.

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
- Hygiene items
- Towels
- First-aid supplies
- TriMet bus tickets/passes
- Printer paper
- Toilet paper

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



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