

EDITORIAL

Online marathon brings a new audience together

Last week, Street Roots took to Twitter to highlight the issue of homelessness in Portland.

Over the course of 24 hours, Street Roots visited with local social service agencies, spent time with park rangers, policy makers and most importantly people experiencing homelessness in our community. Street Roots reporters sent out more than 1,700 tweets during the project. (See our cover story, page 8)

The goal of the project was to raise awareness about the degree of homelessness in our community, while giving voice to people on the streets. Street Roots, like many nonprofits, finds itself exploring and experimenting with

new ways to deliver a broader narrative on social justice issues in our community using social media.

Halfway through the project, we realized, what if we did this next year with every street newspaper around the globe, in more than 120

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cities? What kind of impact could we have? What kind of impact are we having today?

The project engaged thousands of people not only in Portland but beyond. According to many responders, it inspired people to see the issue in new ways and motivated people to get involved.

It's not the first time Street Roots has helped spearhead something of larger value using social media. During the spring, Street Roots, along with many other nonprofits in Portland, created the "I support the Portland safety net," campaign. The campaign asked supporters to take a photograph with a sign saying they supported the safety net and post it on Facebook. The goal of the campaign was to secure millions of dollars for housing in the city budget. The campaign was a success, not only because it secured funding for homeless and housing services, but also because it gave people the opportunity to publicly support something they believe in.

The beautiful thing about Street Roots is that we aren't afraid to take risks. At the same time, we learn from our mistakes.

In a time when the worlds of journalism and media are being turned on their heads, Street Roots offers something of value through the vendor program, while also challenging the status quo through projects such as the 24-hour news feed.

Street Roots believes in partnering with the larger community. We are constantly looking for new ways to bring different voices to the table, whether they're opinions from local nonprofits working on a broad range of issues, or highlighting different voices that believe in a collective, social responsibility.

Street Roots is launching our news site this week — www.news.streetroots.org — and in the coming year we will be inviting a spectrum of policy makers and experts, community organizers, people experiencing poverty and others to take part in our new blogging platform that will be available on the site. We will continue to foster a public conversation about social justice issues using new technologies and our website.

We invite you to the table, as a guest and a friend. We hope you will take advantage of these exciting platforms, to let your voice be heard and to take part, one newspaper, one tweet, and one conversation at a time.

Finishing the year on a high note with great friends

A big thank you to the many people and families that have taken the time to give to Street Roots this holiday season.

If you've yet to make a donation, Street Roots needs your support now more than ever. A donation to Street Roots this year means giving people experiencing poverty

a hand-up through the sales of the newspaper and supporting our award-

winning newspaper. It also means supporting the Street Roots Rose City Resource Guide and the organizations important advocacy work.

Ways to give include giving online at www.streetroots.org or through the Willamette Week Give!Guide at giveguide.oaktree.com/Welcome.aspx. You can also send a check to Street Roots; 211 NW Davis, Portland, OR. 97209.

Street Roots can't exist without supporters just like you. It means the world to all of us at Street Roots nation. Thank you!



DIRECTOR'S DESK

By Israel Bayer

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



Street Roots vendors gather at the office with a message of peace before the morning sales.

PHOTO BY ISRAEL BAYER

Vendor stories strike a chord with reader

I just finished reading the Dec. 7 issue and once again couldn't help but be impressed by the paper. The front page interviews and profiles are consistently outstanding, and the interior stories genuinely compelling. My favorite section however — and likely the most important — is the vendor profile. Telling the stories of your vendors, or rather providing them a platform to tell their own story, and to describe their relationship to and around SR is the strongest possible statement for your work. Each issue's vendor column reminds me that we are a community of people, closer to each other than we know.

— SHANNON
Portland

Silent Rage

By Eileen Kennedy

I look at you and smile.
I look away and look again, and smile.
Laughing, I tilt my head flirting with you.

You sit like a sphinx,
all knowing yet unknowing.
You neither speak nor listen.
You are unaware of my being too cute.

I see the rage incinerate across your face
And burn like hot coals in your eyes.
You are consumed.

I'm afraid of such anger.
Where does it come from?
Where does it go?

I reach out.
All I can feel is the hard, cold metal
That locks your soul.

Like a chasm,
I can no longer reach
and hold your face in the palms of my hands.

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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through Facebook and Twitter



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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.



75¢
goes directly to the vendor
who sold you the paper

25¢
goes toward
printing costs

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