

Newspaper's voice rises above

It's not a typical newsroom — very little about Street Roots is typical. But every other Friday morning, Street Roots is unlike any other news hub in Portland.

On those days, the office is filled to overflowing with men and women experiencing poverty and homelessness, turning their attention to the morning rundown of the new edition. It's a time when vendors give feedback on what customers are interested in, what they like or don't like about the new edition, and how their customers are going to receive the latest Street Roots. Some editions are edgy, some are fun — some are everything in between.

In the past year, we've brought you big names and new faces, covered national issues and shined a light on the notable work happening in our community. We've spoken with syndicated commentator Thom Hartmann, NPR's Ari Shapiro and the Nation's Greg Kaufmann on issues of political engagement and poverty.

While downtown dynamics often get the bulk of the media's attention, we turned our eyes and ears to the suburbs and the communities around Portland where poverty has doubled this past decade. It's an issue we will continue to cover as suburban poverty outpaces its urban counterpart, drawing down tens of thousands of families and individuals along with it.

Our coverage on regional farmworkers and the challenges they face economically and socially took us into the homes of people working hard to rise above and create a better life for their children.

And of course we've never lost our voice with people experiencing homelessness, from the hard realities to the stories of friendship, camaraderie and hope.

We were honored this year to partner with The Mission Continues to bring Army veteran and writer Robert Britt to cover veterans' issues. Likewise, we're proud to publish commentaries and opinions from the Coalition of Communities of Color, Partnership for Safety and Justice, the ACLU and of course our local and state representatives.

Street Roots has expanded coverage of the music scene, both local and national, featuring interviews with Natalie Merchant and the Indigo Girls, along with Liv Warfield and Sallie Ford, among many others.

Of course, media today cannot thrive on paper alone. This winter we experimented online and in print with #SR24, a 24-hour Twitter project to observe and report on the lives of people on the streets one night in Portland. We echoed that project this spring, spending a day covering the lives of our vendors, from the first cup in the morning to finishing a busy day of sales on turf.

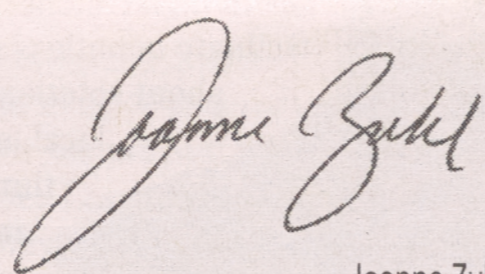
Behind every edition are dozens of volunteers who write columns, poetry, take photos, help copyedit and do all the things that it takes to make this paper and the organization one of the best in Portland.

This past spring, our journalism took home four awards from the Society of Professional Journalists of Oregon and Southwest Washington, including three top honors for investigative, social issues and arts reporting.

Next year, as we reach the ripe old age of 15, we hope to be bringing you even more. As an organization, we're ramping up our operations to prepare to publish weekly. It's a big move and a big investment, but one that will mean more income and sustainability for vendors, and a stronger arm for news and advocacy for readers.

This means more coverage of issues affecting nearly everyone in our community, and delving into the big picture concerns that connect all of use around the globe

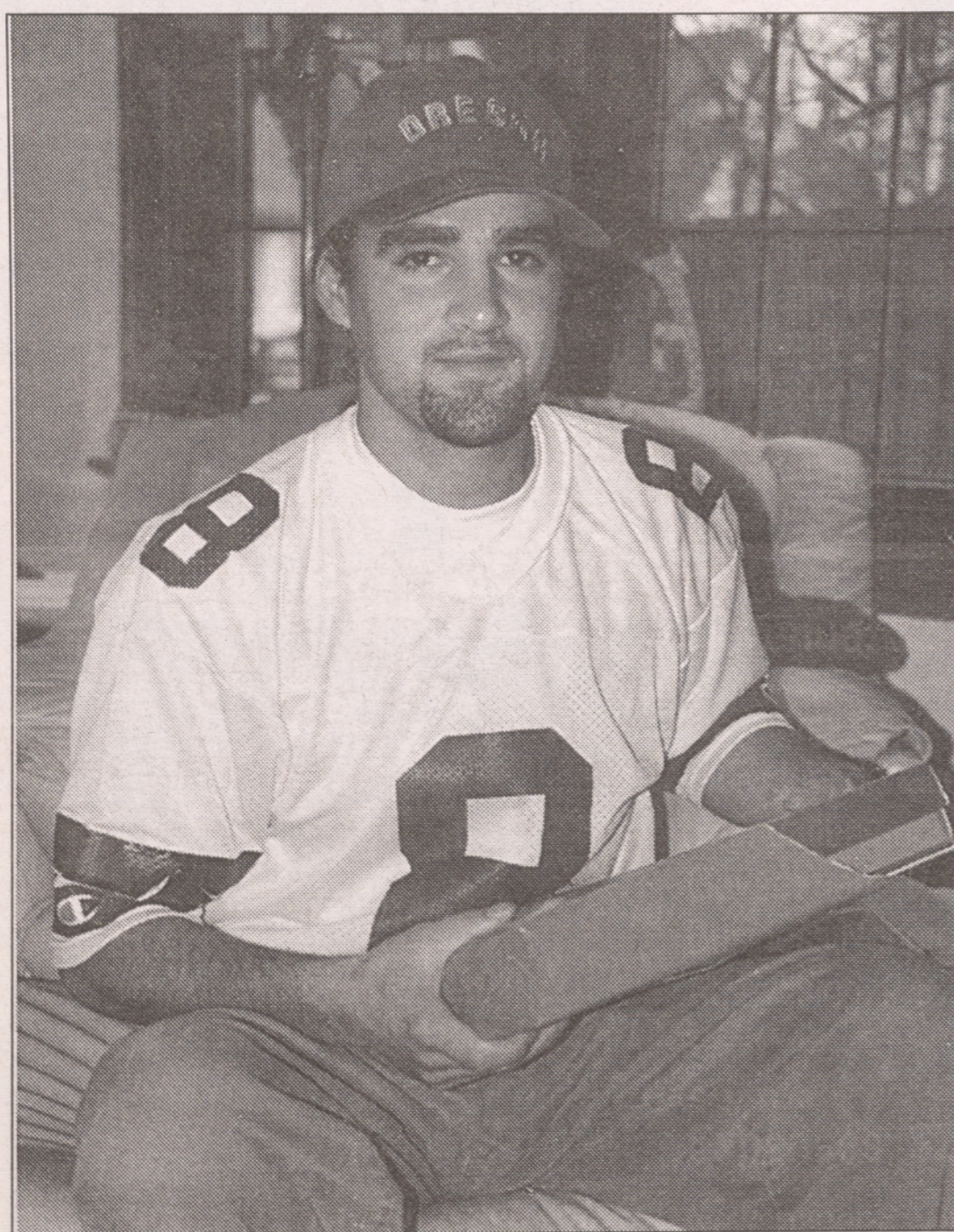
Of course none of this is possible without you, and all of us at Street Roots are immensely grateful for your continued support into the coming year. Together, we look forward to another great year ahead.



Joanne Zuhl
Managing Editor



Newspapers from the past year, covering a night on the streets, suburban poverty, Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek, 1968 Olympian John Carlos, musician Natalie Merchant and author Paulo Coelho.



Nick Gefroh, a former vendor and volunteer with Street Roots.

The Nick Gefroh Vendor Fund

This year, Street Roots launched the Nick Gefroh Vendor Fund, made possible through a generous annual contribution from Nick's family to support vendors experiencing homelessness and poverty at Street Roots.

Nick Gefroh was a humble human being. He gave back to the community and was a mentor for many individuals who walked through the door at Street Roots. Nick served as a board member for two years with the organization, and was a longtime vendor at Northeast Ninth Avenue and Broadway. Nick also contributed poems, op-eds and artwork to the newspaper. Nick's life was cut short at the age of 41, but he left behind a legacy of great stories and laughter, a reminder to all of us of a youth of carefree memories and an adulthood packed with beautiful peaks and troubled valleys.

Nick, along with many fellow vendors who have died before their time, remind us of how fragile and short life really is, and that each one of us should never be afraid to go above and beyond for others.

This fund is dedicated to the many Street Roots vendors who are working to improve their lives and those at Street Roots who passed before their times. They include: Nick Gefroh, George Kay, Roger Gates, Ted Jack, Nathan Roper, Alan Fitch, and other beloved friends who are missed every day.

You can be a part of this fund with a donation at streetroots.org



"I show people (the paper), and say, 'Hey, how was your day at work?' 'How's your day?' I'm like, 'My work day's going great!' I'm actually working and that makes me feel more confident in myself."

Support Street Roots with an ongoing donation at www.streetroots.org