

News that truly has an impact

Fifteen years ago, Street Roots was an organization with little more than a big heart to build upon.

Today, we're laying the foundation to go weekly.

Going to a weekly publication cycle will mean more news and features in a newly formatted publication. It will still be the familiar Street Roots, but brought to you in a more timely fashion. At the core of this decision is the significant benefit this will have for the vendors. A weekly cycle means a more stable income and, over the long-term, increased sales. This is community journalism with a real impact.

With each year, sales of the newspaper increase, and this year was no exception. We're delighted to reach more readers with each edition, which we know means more interaction among the community.

This year, we were proud to highlight some of Portland's dynamic residents, spanning the arts, advocacy and social justice. They include reproductive rights maverick Judith Arcana, artist Samir Khurshid, Sen. Ron Wyden, in addition to local lawmakers and officials.

We've investigated stories about Nevada sending mentally ill patients on one-way bus trips to Portland and other cities with little or no support, and the impact of a payee service closure that left a thousand low-income and homeless people struggling to restore a vital financial service.

We reported on the lawsuit Oregon spearheaded against the Drug Enforcement Agency after it was discovered that the DEA was tracking your prescription records.

we told you about continued concerns regarding the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office close ties with federal immigration efforts to detain undocumented immigrants.

We brought you an in-depth interview with author and journalist Todd Miller on the militarization of our borders. And we told you about local efforts – and challenges – to helping Iraqi and Afghan interpreters who have become targets in their own countries.

Some of our most compelling stories come from guest writers. Among them was an insightful, first-person piece by Al Jazeera America reporter Paul Beban, who was covering the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines.

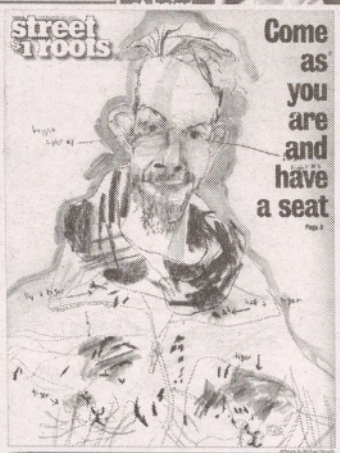
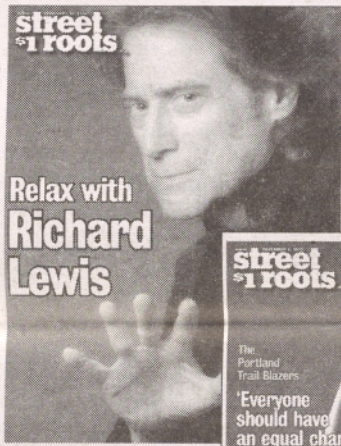
We covered famous names, including comedians Richard Lewis and Matt Braunger, author Ann Patchett and director John Waters. And we introduced you to some not-so-famous names with compelling stories, featuring the voices of people from all walks of life.

But there's no question that our most popular stories are about our vendors. We were delighted to tell the story of Raymond Thornton, a long-time vendor who has persevered through physical challenges and addiction and is now in recovery. His customers pooled together the money to restore his smile – literally – by paying for dental care and dentures. And the life of soft-spoken Allen Bennett was documented in a photojournalism package, from his early mornings and helping out his roommate to greeting customers and selling the newspaper. They join the dozens of vendors who appear in our paper every year in our regular profile feature.

And of course, we wouldn't be Street Roots without poetry. From our first printing, our poetry has provided readers with another view to the streets – both the good and the bad, from thoughts of whimsy to despair. It will always be a part of this newspaper.

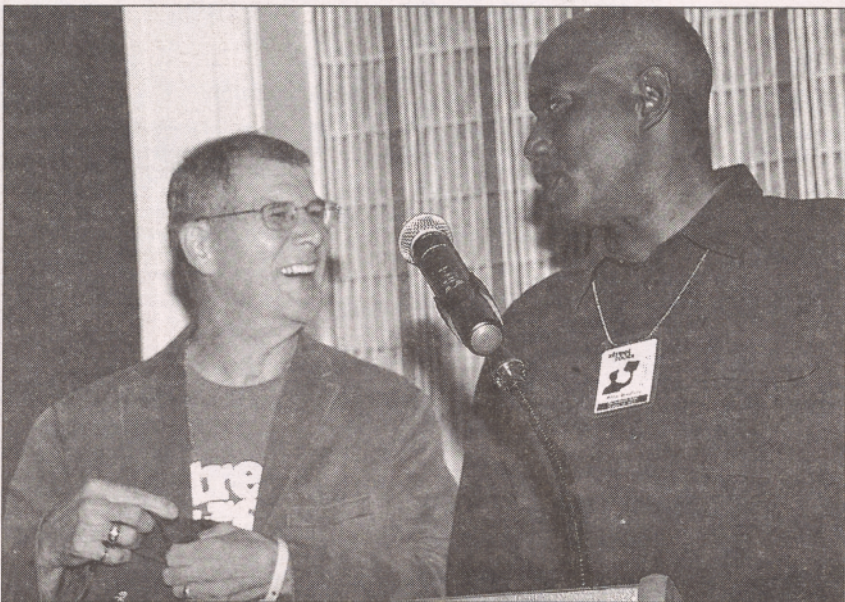
So often, when students and community members come to visit our organization, they ask how we develop our stories. Street Roots relies on people like you, our readers, along with people reporting from the streets and the tremendous experience that our city has to offer. Our Editorial Committee brings together people from many walks of life, and we're proud to share the table with so many creative and innovative minds. Together with our expanding team of talented reporters, we produce a newspaper vendors are proud to sell.

That's why we're looking forward to the coming year, to a new weekly product and bigger and better opportunities for our vendors. And we're excited to be sharing this remarkable journey with readers like you!



Joanne Zuhl
Managing Editor

And



Paul Gefroh, the father of Nick Gefroh, awards Willie Bradford the 2013 Vendor of the Year honors at the Street Roots Family Breakfast. Bradford received the honors for his work in the community and being a mentor for many Street Roots vendors.

The Nick Gefroh Vendor Fund

Last 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, reminds 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 time. 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.