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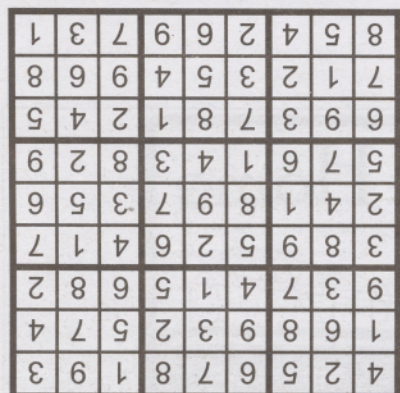
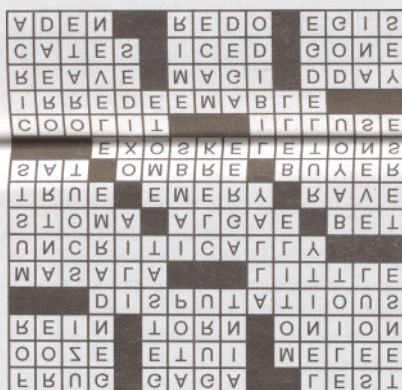


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Answers to puzzles on page 15



VENDOR PROFILE Jermaine Johnson

BY LEONORA KO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Jermaine Johnson likes living in a place that has low crime and no hurricanes. He lived through Hurricane Katrina, with his home knocked off its foundation, alligators in the streets, and a local man robbed and shot for his shoes.

When Jermaine moved to Spokane, Wash., in 2010, he met the mother of his daughter and, when things didn't work out, he moved to Portland in 2012.

When Jermaine first came in for this interview, he was focused on earning money through Street Roots and reuniting with his daughter. But sales were difficult his first time around.

After his fiancée urged him to get a job, Jermaine told her, "I'm going back to Street Roots to see what I can do. The only thing I can do is try."

This time Jermaine says, "I watched the video. When I found out that the paper sells itself and we just have to be courteous with people, I knew that I could do that. Ever since then, I've been bringing in money."

Now, he says, "I'm just happy to get up in the mornings, to have somewhere to go, and to go out to my spot. Sometimes business is slow, but then I've got people who come up to me and say, 'Oh, are you going to sell today? I'm going to get you when I come out of the store.'"

His supporters tell him: "You're doing something constructive."

Jermaine's vendor spot is at the Safeway on Northeast Broadway Street between the Lloyd Center Mall and Goodwill. He says, "The Safeway managers know that I'm not a panhandler. I wear my badge where it can be seen, they see my hat and they see the shirt. The manager told me yesterday, 'I'm glad they sent you here; we like having vendors.'"

Jermaine's dreams for the future are to have his daughter and his own place and to raise his family. He is on two waiting lists for housing, but most places only allow single residents and have fewer options for families.

Street Roots has given Jermaine a start toward his goals of permanent housing and reuniting with his daughter.

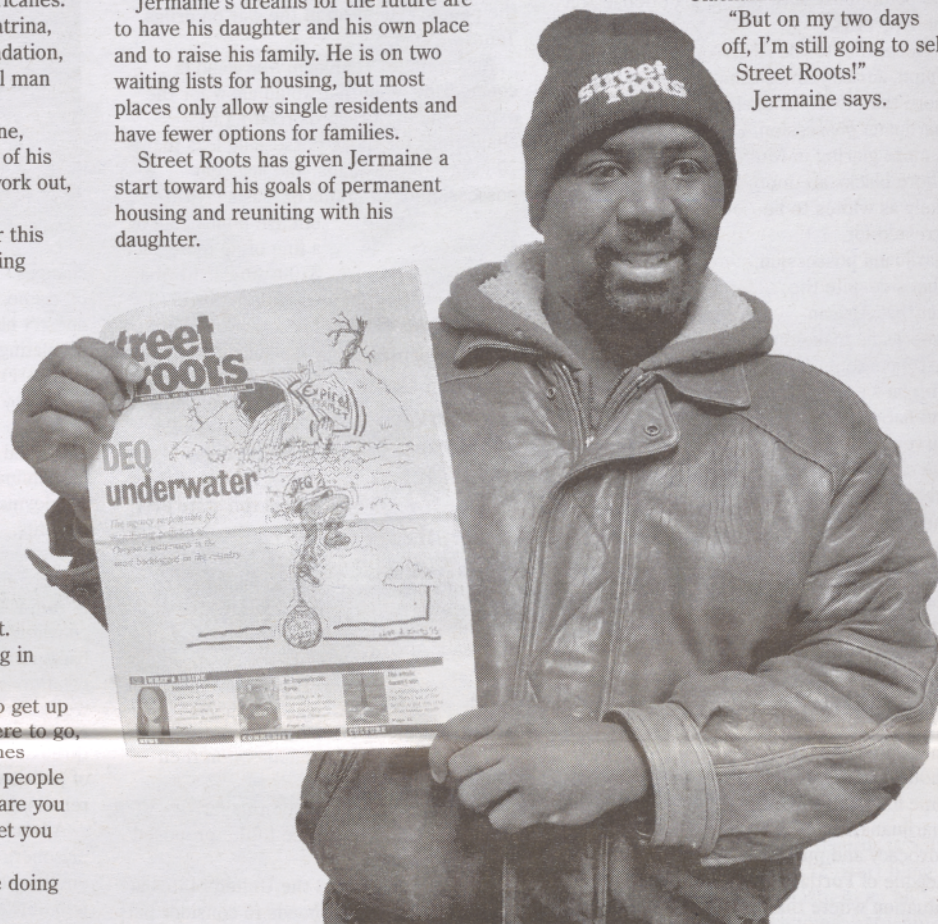
"When you get a lot of those dollars throughout the day, they all add up," he says.

Jermaine's perseverance and positive attitude have paid off. A few weeks after this interview, he came into the Street Roots office with a big smile on his face. He had just gotten a job washing dishes at the Old Spaghetti Factory near the

Clackamas Town Center.

"But on my two days off, I'm still going to sell Street Roots!"

Jermaine says.



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