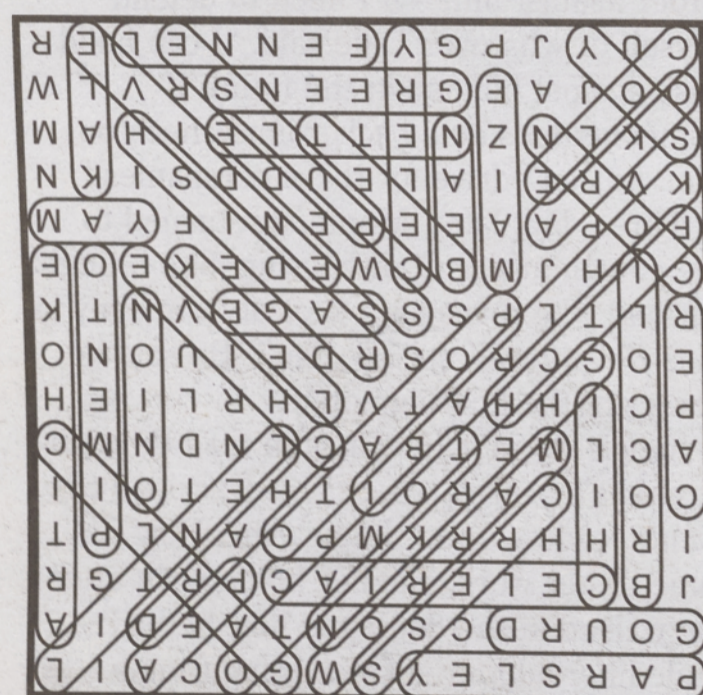


No Longer Homeless

by Maddy Brown-Clark

A time ago I had no home
I slept in cardboard castles
I roamed the street
For something to eat
And I was often hassled
On lonely nights
I slept alone with no way
To keep warm
And after dark in Lilac Park
I slept on a bed of grass
There were clouds in my head
And voices too
I didn't know what to do
But I finally got some help
And I'm no longer homeless
I didn't lose hope
And even though I'm low income
It's so much better
Than the street
In my shared housing safe,
Clean kingdom.

Answers to Page 15 Puzzles



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

VENDOR PROFILE

DeMario

BY HELEN HILL
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

DeMario was born in San Francisco, the oldest of four children and part of a large extended family that stretches across the country. His family owned a barbecue restaurant in San Francisco called Blackburn's Barbecue Pit. Some of his earliest memories are of chopping wood for the barbecue, cooking with his family, and visiting the candy store next door. He did well in school and was "a good kid," optimistic and a strong basketball player. Friends and family told him his warm, friendly smile would take him far.

In 1998, when he was 14, he moved to Portland with his mother. At first he was excited to be in a new city, home of the famous Nike company, but he wasn't prepared for the rain and the intimidating challenge of a new school where he had no friends or allies. He remembers his early days in Portland as very dark, literally. He left for school before daylight at 6 a.m., in the rain, and by late afternoon, when it was time to go home, it was dark again. He felt unprepared and unsupported, and he couldn't find the help he needed. The other parents "had money," he said, and he "wasn't getting enough one-on-one help in school. There was no one to turn to."

DeMario eventually ended up in an alternative school, where he began to make friends, but said he "gave up too

early" and began cutting classes and lying to his mom, who was working at a halfway house. By 2003, he was living on the streets. He got by, but struggled with depression, drinking and overeating. He never considered leaving Portland, though. "I love it here," he said. "Portland's just my kind of town."

There came a time when DeMario couldn't live with himself anymore, he said. Through strength of will and heart, he began to get back in shape, losing the extra weight he'd gained. He started by running to build up his stamina. He stopped drinking, holding himself to no more than one beer. "More than one is trouble."

He began doing push-ups and discovered working out restored his energy, faith and natural optimism. One Friday night, on a Burnside sidewalk, he did 500 push-ups, in sets of 20, with the encouragement and cheers of passersby. Working out brings him a clarity of mind, as

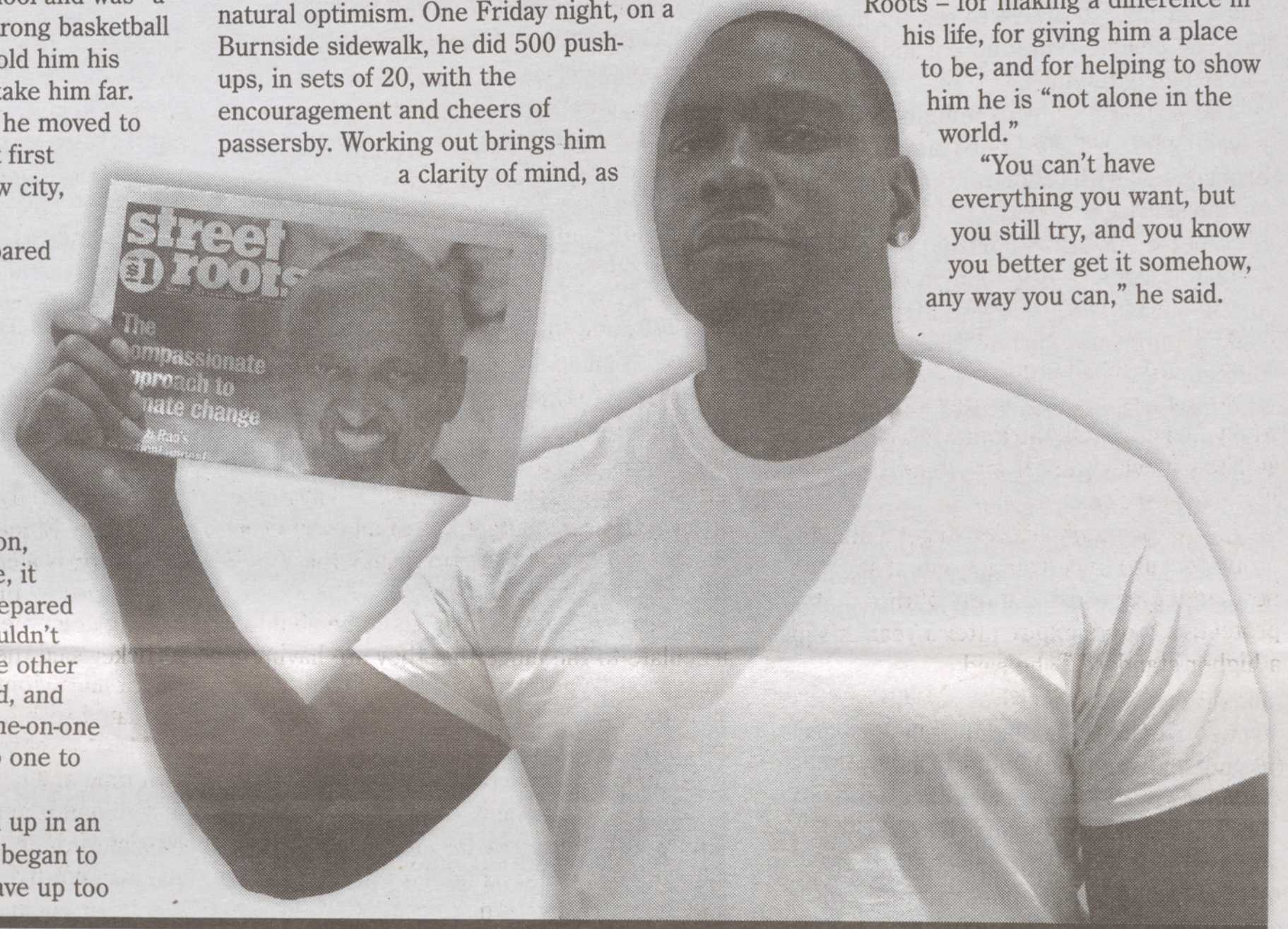
well as a daily challenge he thrives on. Street Roots provides a similar challenge, he said.

DeMario heard about Street Roots from a friend. He attended an orientation, and it felt right. At the very least, he thought, he would be gaining knowledge. He said he likes that people can say yes or no and leave it at that. He feels good when people who have been searching for the new edition find him and are able to buy from him.

DeMario is in a shelter now, and he enjoys working out in the basement – stair stepping, running in place, and doing pull-ups on a bar in the doorway. As well as being a Street Roots vendor, he works for a landscaping company from time to time.

DeMario would like to thank Street Roots – for making a difference in his life, for giving him a place to be, and for helping to show him he is "not alone in the world."

"You can't have everything you want, but you still try, and you know you better get it somehow, any way you can," he said.



Sheeptoast

by Elizabeth Considine

