

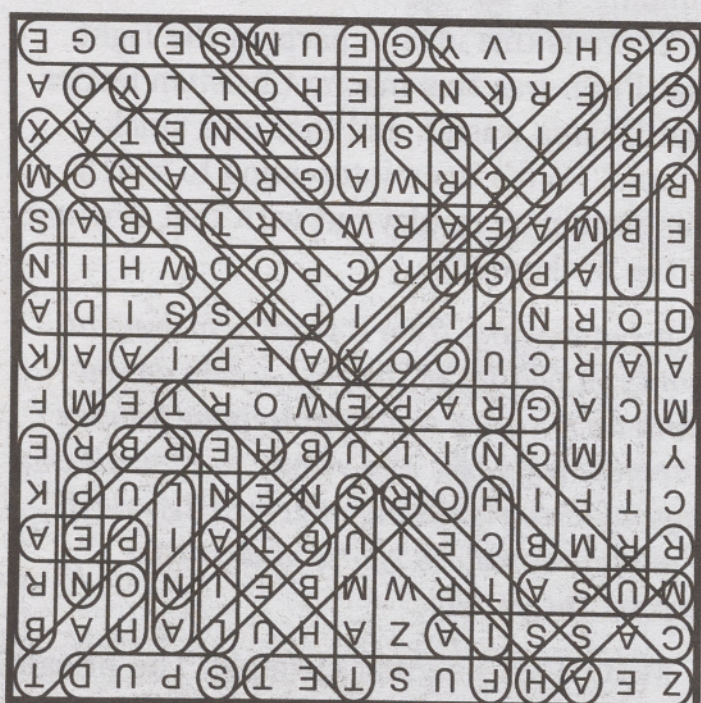
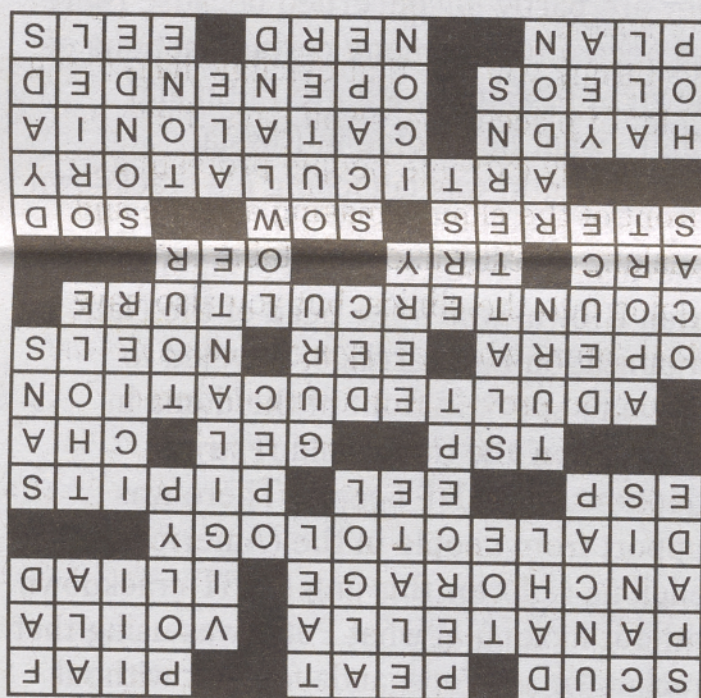
Barry Richard Mattern

May 31, 1945 - August 13, 2017

Barry Mattern, a long-time Street Roots vendor, passed away Sunday, Aug. 13. Barry sold the paper outside Starbucks at Fourth Avenue and Oak Street, and the former Zupan's on Belmont Street

A memorial service is scheduled for 11 a.m., Tuesday, Aug. 22, at the Macdonald Residence lobby, 605 NW Couch St. in Portland.

Answers to Page 15 Puzzles



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

VENDOR PROFILE

David B.

BY LEONORA KO
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

As a middle-schooler, David B. couldn't read. Now he wants to tell the world his story, so he wrote a book about it.

David grew up as the youngest of eight children in St. Louis, Mo.

"My mom passed away and a couple of years later my dad passed away," said David. "I was taken out of school for a long period of time until my aunt finally took custody. So when I got into kindergarten, I had a learning disability and the school system back then sucked. They passed me from kindergarten all the way to middle school, without knowing how to read."

His widowed aunt took over raising David and three of his siblings. When she had to quit her job, life became even harder.

"That's when everything went downhill," he said. "There were times where I would come home and there would be no lights. Or there would be no food and we would have to go figure out which church was giving out food."

He was often in trouble at school, he said.

"The reason why I would misbehave is because I didn't want the kids and the teachers to know that I couldn't read. Because then I would become a target and bullied. It was bad enough getting tormented by my siblings. They knew I was a little bit slow."

He clearly remembers the turning point when he was in seventh grade.

His aunt was keeping an eye on him and sat him in the kitchen to do his homework. As she was cooking, she asked him to get some baking soda from the pantry.

David recalled: "After a while of me just standing there trying to figure it out, my auntie came. She was like, 'What's wrong with you? Didn't you see the baking soda? It's right in front of you. Can't read or something?' I just kind of stood there with a blank face."

The next day, his aunt asked him to read the back of a cereal box and David knew he was

busted. My auntie looked at me and she calmed me down. She wiped my tears and she said, 'It'll be all right. I'm going to get you some tutoring.' And that was a huge sigh of relief because I thought I was going to be in trouble. So she got me tutoring at this church and a nun tutored me and taught me how to read."

After that, David was on fire. "I had to constantly learn," he said. "The more and more I read, the more and more I became fascinated with literature - and that's when I started writing."

At first David wrote stories in notebooks. He eventually transferred his stories to a broken-down computer and flash drive. Unfortunately the flash drive was lost awhile back.

"I've been homeless off and on since I was 18," he said. "And moving around, you lose things."

David returned to Portland in 2013. He first discovered the city through a job with a traveling crew that sold magazines door-to-door: "All I could think about was Portland and how cool the place was. How chill the people were."

As a Street Roots vendor, David is clean cut, articulate and has an easy laugh.

"When I'm between jobs or I'm not having luck with jobs, Street Roots is a way of keeping my head above water," he said.

So far, David's biggest writing project is "an exaggeration of my life," he said. He wrote a plot summary, notes, characters and backstories, and then created chapters from there. David transformed the novel into a script by downloading a scriptwriting program and writing during his two daily allotted computer hours at the local library.

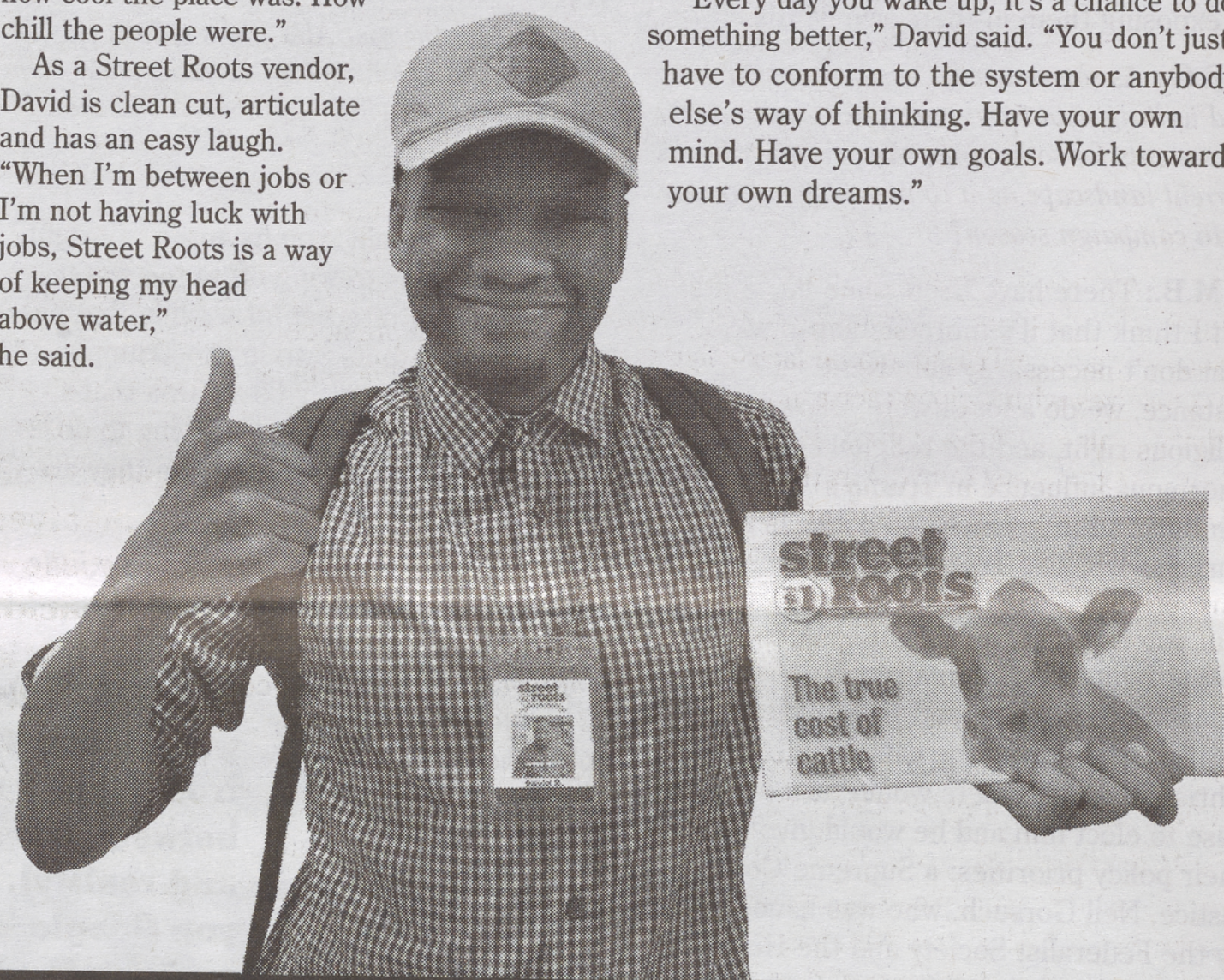
"But within that two hours I would just jam it. Jam, jam, jam," said David, rapping his fingers on the table.

In the end, David said he completed and copyrighted a 138-page script and a 240-page novel.

David described the act of writing as being productive and doing what he loves. "Writing is really what kept me out of trouble, to be honest with you. Because it gave me something to look forward to - to be passionate about."

He has travelled to Los Angeles twice to look for support for his life story, but has not had luck. David remains positive in spite of the struggles.

"Every day you wake up, it's a chance to do something better," David said. "You don't just have to conform to the system or anybody else's way of thinking. Have your own mind. Have your own goals. Work towards your own dreams."



Sheeptoad

by Elizabeth Considine

