

There's a new coffee in town – Street Roast

Street Roots has an exciting announcement to make.

A new coffee is coming to Portland.

We are proud to announce that in December, Marigold Coffee is launching a Street Roast. Proceeds from the sale of each bag will support the Street Roots vendor program and the newspaper itself.



DIRECTOR'S DESK

By Israel Bayer

Israel Bayer is the executive director of Street Roots. You can reach him at israel@streetroots.org or follow him on Twitter @israelbayer.

Boulevard.

We couldn't be more excited at Street Roots.

The story of Street Roast is a story of how the private sector and the nonprofit sector can come together to support social change in our community.

Feeling devastated after last year's election, Seth Walker with Curate.org, along with Jeremy Ehn and Brenden Schild with Ideaville, wanted to give back to the community. It wasn't the first time they did a project like this.

Seth Walker has been working with speakers with TEDxPortland for years, including myself.

Jeremy and Brenden had already helped dream up Happy Cup Coffee, a coffee company created to support and employ adults with disabilities.

Both Ideaville and Curate.org have a specific mission to help deliver creative solutions for brand marketing and supporting greater good in the community. This

summer, they approached Street Roots about creating a product to support the organization.

For months, four graphic design interns from Oregon State University supported by Ideaville helped hatch the idea of Street Roast.

The company ended up donating about \$50,000 in creative services to the project.

The team was eventually introduced to Marigold Coffee by their colleagues at Good Coffee, a neighborhood coffee shop who'd heard about the emerging social venture from Business For A Better Portland.

Business For A Better Portland is a new membership organization of Portland's business community working to support a range of housing and homeless policies, among other things. It's also their goal to connect local businesses with nonprofits to do mission-driven work and have a more progressive business voice in the community.

Marigold Coffee was not only thrilled to be a

part of the project, but ultimately became the driver the entire production.

Marigold Coffee has their own story. A mission-driven small business owned by Joey and Cassy Gleason, two sisters who have a vision to create spaces for where coffee and people come together.

"We immediately saw the benefits this project could bring," said Cassy. "We saw how Street Roast could provide a regular revenue stream for a wonderful, well-respected organization in Street Roots. Getting to know Israel and the folks at Street Roots, we also recognized this opportunity as a way to contribute to something much bigger."

"This project, however, offers a small, but an important opening for ordinary Portlanders to help address the struggle of homelessness by humanizing the people experiencing it," said Cassy. "Coffee has always been a connector. It bridges the hemisphere between producers in the tropics and consumers in the north. It serves as a bridge between people sharing a moment together enjoying a warm cup. Coffee, like any produced good, creates a mysterious web of interconnecting economies of trade and pleasure and interdependence, perhaps more than any other commodity when you take into consideration the

growers, the pickers, the importers, the shippers, the roasters, the grocers, the cafe owners, the baristas and finally the people – all of us! – who finally enjoy this marvelous drink."

Yes!

In the end, we collectively approached New Seasons about the project. They were ecstatic about the idea of having Street Roast on their shelves.

If there's one thing we all learned, it's that given the chance, local businesses and nonprofits have the opportunity to create an

environment where we are all working toward the common good of our community.

When Street Roast hits the shelves in December, it will be an example of how we can all be working together to create social change, one cup of coffee at a time. It will be a whole new stimulus package.

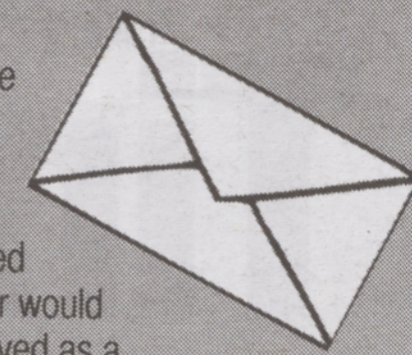
"Portland is a big-hearted city," said Cassy. "Yet the problem of homelessness and the housing crisis can seem too big and too complicated to solve. There is no magic bullet to fix a problem. We see pain and despair on the streets, but too often ordinary Portland residents tune out and stop seeing the person caught in a bad situation as a human being with a unique story full of hope and fear, needs and gifts same as their own. We couldn't be happier to be a part of helping Street Roots."

Thank you to everyone who made this happen, and to all of our amazing supporters. We're looking forward to sharing a cup with all of you!



Write in

If you would like to have something that you've written published in our pages, or would like to get involved as a member of our reporting staff, contact Executive Editor Joanne Zuhl at 503-228-5657, joanne@streetroots.org. We ask that all submissions include the author's name and contact information, if available.



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