And new friends

Welcome to the 2008 Street Roots annual report. The past year has been an exciting year full of growth at Street Roots. The organization has reached out to more individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty than ever before. The publication’s readership has increased significantly and the organization is working on building the groundwork for expansion and continuing to fulfill our mission.

In 2008, Street Roots increased the circulation of the Rose City Resource guide from 40,000 to 80,000 annually, while introducing the first Spanish resource guide to the region. We now work with more than 150 nonprofits, private companies and government institutions to deliver more resource guides to those in need in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties.

Street Roots was given three awards in 2008. The Portland Trail Blazers and Hands on Great Portland gave the organization a “Volunteer Innovation Award,” for the work done with dozens of volunteers throughout the community. The Oregon Coalition of Housing and Homelessness gave Street Roots an award for its work on the homeless front statewide. Lastly, the city of Portland awarded Street Roots the “Spirit of Portland” award for nonprofits for the work we do in the community.

One of Street Roots’ more popular vendors, Roger Gates, died of natural causes this year. Roger is missed. More than two dozen individuals experiencing homelessness became housed while with Street Roots in 2008. The organization endured six months of construction while the Musolf Manor was being rehabilitated. Thanks to Innovative Housing, Street Roots now has a brand-new storefront and interior lighting along with a brand new counter top and interior flooring. During that time, Managing Editor Joanne Zuhl and the entire editorial team were relocated to an alternative office provided by the Julia West House. Thank you.

Street Roots revisited its three-year strategic plan and is in the process of developing a business plan that will take us into 2012. Some highlights for the new year include opening a satellite office for vendors in outer Northeast Portland. The new office is scheduled to open this summer and will be a centralized location for individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty in East Portland. The new office will also open up a series of new sales locations from Northeast and Southeast Portland from the Willamette to I-205, SE Powell to NE Broadway. A new vendor coordinator will be hired to oversee the new office.

Street Roots has also hired a part-time reporter, Mara Grunbaum, to support the newspaper, and brought on a development director, Kate Cox. All of this will ensure that Street Roots is able continue to fulfill its mission to create income opportunities for people experiencing homelessness and poverty by publishing a newspaper that is a catalyst for individual and social change.

We thank you all for your support throughout 2008, and look forward to spending 2009 with you.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Israel Bayer
Executive Director

Rose City Resource provides independence, answers

The Rose City Resource is a publication of Street Roots and is Portland’s most comprehensive, updated list of services for people experiencing homelessness and poverty. The 104-page booklet serves people who may not otherwise have access to a computer or social-service agency, and allows individuals the opportunity to be independent in their search for services that fit specific needs. The resource is free to individuals and organizations working with people experiencing poverty. The Rose City Resource Guide is also available in Spanish.

The pocket-size resource is made possible in cooperation with the City of Portland, United Way of Colombia-Willamette, 211 Info and Street Roots. The guide is published quarterly and is also available online at www.streetroots.org.

For more information on the resources, call Eddy Barbosa at 503-228-5657.

"We love the Rose City Resource guide and clients find them to be very helpful and always ask for them. Many of our clients are losing their jobs right now in this economy and are not aware of what kind of resources there are out there."

—Sue Gano, Volunteers of America

NETWORK Affiliations

Street Roots is part of an international movement of Street Papers. We are active members of both the North American Street Newspaper Association and the International Network of Street Papers.

The North American Street Newspaper Association exists to support and build effective, self-sustaining street newspapers that promote power and opportunity for people living in poverty. NASNA offers technical assistance to new and growing street newspapers, content sharing with the Street News Service, and an annual conference featuring skills-building workshops and other topics of common interest. Learn more about NASNA at www.nasna.org.

The International Network of Street Papers is a global organization set up to promote the concept of the street paper as a means to address homelessness, social exclusion and poverty in our society. INSP is a network of 80 street paper members situated across 27 countries. INSP’s head office is in Glasgow, Scotland. INSP offers support and developmental opportunities to its members and provides advice to individuals or projects seeking to develop street papers. Learn more about the INSP at www.street-papers.org.

The Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP). The organization is made up of organizations up and down the West Coast. WRAP exists to expose and eliminate the root causes of civil and human-rights abuses of people experiencing poverty and homelessness in our communities. WRAP was founded with the belief that social change comes through building power, and that poor and homeless people are part of the solution. We are dedicated to exposing the roots of the housing crisis, building pressure for more just federal priorities, and defending the human and civil rights of low-income people.

The Oregon Opportunity Network. The network is made up of more than 90 organizations and members in Oregon dedicated to creating and preserving low-income housing throughout Oregon.
Vendors are at the core of Street Roots’ mission

Our vendors, those men and women out selling the paper, rain or shine, are at the heart of Street Roots’ mission. The relationships built with the broader community and more than 70 active vendors who sell Street Roots in the Portland metropolitan area and Vancouver are at the heart of the program. Over the course of a year more than 250 individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty sell Street Roots. Last year, more than two dozen individuals gained housing while with the organization. Through them, approximately 14,000 copies of Street Roots are sold or distributed every month.

Vendors purchase papers for 25 cents each and sell them for $1. The 75 cents that a vendor nets from each paper sold helps him or her meet basic housing, food, clothing and hygiene needs. Many vendors support themselves primarily through the sales of the paper. The 25 cents from each paper that remains with Street Roots is used to cover printing costs of the paper itself.

Vendor applicants must attend a one-hour training orientation to earn a badge certifying them as a Street Roots vendor. The orientation outlines the rules and regulations of Street Roots, while offering vendors sales techniques and empowerment tools through a sales training video for getting involved in the organization. We are a low-barrier organization, giving new vendors the opportunity to start from scratch and develop their own sales schedule. New vendors receive 10 free papers to sell to kick-start sales.

To help our vendors, we work to provide an engaging newspaper every two weeks. Vendors are a key part of the process, offering suggestions and support for the continued improvement of the newspaper’s presentation, as well as the operation of the vendor program itself.

The popularity of our vendors has created many new friendships within and beyond our community. Many have made connections that have led to employment, housing and new opportunities. And on a day-to-day basis, they are changing the paralyzing stereotypes directed at the streets.

So the next time you see a vendor, say hello and buy a paper — and stop and chat if you have the time. You can find vendors selling the paper 365 days a year, in all kinds of weather, waiting for you to come along.

Roger Gates captured the hearts and minds of Portland’s Northwest neighborhood where he sold the paper for seven years. In the two days leading up to Street Roots finding out about his death in July of 2008, nearly a dozen customers called the office asking where Roger was. In the days after his death Street Roots received more than 200 cards and phone calls requesting information about Roger’s life and asking when a memorial would be held.

At a memorial held in Northwest Portland more than 200 of Roger’s family, friends and customers paid tribute to Roger’s life.

Roger embodied what it meant to be a Street Roots vendor and why the organization matters. In 2009, Street Roots will be creating a Roger Gates Memorial Fund for the Street Roots vendor program. Any donations received for the fund will go directly to the vendor program to help individuals experiencing homelessness and poverty with daily supplies meant to improve the lives of our vendors. For more information, contact Israel Bayer at 503.228.5657, or e-mail him at streetroots@hotmail.com, or make a donation to Street Roots, 211 NW Davis, Portland, OR 97209, noting that the money donated is for the Roger Gates Memorial Fund.
Dear readers,

There’s no doubt about it — there have been better times to be a newspaper. But then, we’re not just any newspaper. For 10 years now, Street Roots has held to the principle that people want to learn from the individuals and events around them, and readers have responded with their increased attention to our vendors and our content. It is that simple equation that is at the foundation of our organization — with the support of our readers comes the support of our vendors.

For years, Street Roots had been tagged as "the homeless paper," a moniker that was entirely fitting in our early years, but one that has not kept up with the times. Today, we have to look at the bigger pictures, still keeping an eye focused on our community, but put in the context of issues affecting all of our lives.

Our editorial team now boasts about 40 volunteer writers, columnists, artists, poets and photographers from on and off the streets, and reaching beyond Portland. Locally, we’re bringing you coverage on important issues that effect not just the streets, but all of us as a community. When people on the streets protested City Hall, no one provided more comprehensive coverage on the history behind the street movement to end the criminalization of the homeless. We brought you the frank and stirring series from Tye Doudy, chronicling his life under addiction on Portland’s streets. And we introduced you to some wonderful people, many of them our own vendors, and said goodbye to Roger Gates, who’s passing brought to the surface the impact one man on a corner can have.

It is important to us not only to provide engaging articles and photography, but also to educate. In our recent special edition on affordable housing, we hope we helped sort out the complex and often confounding world of affordable housing development and all the strings attached.

In the year to come, we hope to infuse the paper with more culture, including inspiring interviews with creative and intriguing personalities. And we have a world of sister papers in partnership to deliver more news and commentary to our Portland neighbors.

We will also be publishing our first poetry anthology. To keep up the pace with all that’s going on, we’ve hired our first part-time reporter, Mara Grunbaum, and launched a blog, www.streetroots.wordpress.com, to provide sneak peaks into new editions, keep you posted on events, and generate a wider dialogue on the topics important to our community.

We send out a special thanks to everyone who help make Street Roots a great newspaper and a publication like no other in the Portland area. Because of your support, as writers and readers, 2008 was a great year, and with all the changes upon us, here in Portland and across the nation, stay posted in 2009.

Sincerely,

Managing Editor
Every month more than 70 vendors experiencing homelessness and poverty earn money they need while helping build a better community we all live and work in.

Our biweekly newspaper brings you community voices you can’t find anywhere else, and professional journalism on the issues Portland cares about. We offer you the information you need to take action, and make a difference in the world.

Street Roots is readersupported. Last year, thousands of people helped make Street Roots a better paper by supporting the work we do. Wouldn’t you join us?

Financial Summary

Total income: $231,765

Advertising & Subscriptions: 3.6%

Government support (Rose City Resources/landscaping expansion): 17%

Individual donations: 20.3%

Total Expenses: $193,939

Administrative: 11.5%

Newspaper sales: 13%

 Newspaper & Vendor program: 59.5%