

Memories

Hypothermia Staging

Thinking about the first few months of the journey of Street Sense several great memories are still fresh in my mind. There was sitting in the drizzle for two hours with a large box of Cosi squagles the morning of the first issues only to have one vendor come. And there was trying to figure out Pagemaker with cofounder Ted Henson, and singing Madonna's "Justify my Love" every time we forgot to justify a column.

But the memory that stands out the most is a search for "cold people" one very warm November Day. It was the Sunday afternoon before our first issue and we desperately needed a photograph for our hypothermia story. So Fred Anderson (the volunteer vendor coordinator) and I were wandering around McPherson Square looking for the perfect picture. However, it happened to be a freakishly warm late fall day (I was even wearing a tank top and flip flops) so no one was wearing a winter coat, let alone bundled up in blankets.

Consequently, we ended up staging one of our first pictures. So we talked to some homeless guy who had a blanket in his bag and convinced him to wrap up in it. And when taking the picture we had to make sure to avoid including people walking in the back ground in shorts.

So there you have; the secret is out – Street Sense staged one of its first pictures. But desperate times called for desperate measures. And I promise that every other hypothermia weather article to follow ended up having a real, legitimately cold homeless person in it as we surely stocked up on such pictures after this, um, learning experience.

- Laura Thompson Osuri
Executive Director and Cofounder

Production Drives and Badge Pride

During Street Sense's first couple years of operation, Ted and Laura tried to share out layout and proofreading duties to several interested people, but it never worked smoothly. One person's wireless connection would time out, my dial-up connection would always freeze up, and so on. So for a while Ted would do layout at his home in Mount Pleasant. I'd go over in person to kibitz on layout and proof pages as they were finished, and then we'd play Country Gospel songs out on Ted's porch (Ted on guitar, me on mandolin).

At one point we had someone who was able to format photos, but she couldn't send them over the Internet. So I'd drive Ted over to her place in Columbia Heights with the pictures on a CD, we'd hang out while she formatted them, and then we'd drive back to Ted's place with a new CD, to send the whole thing to the printer. By this time it was usually well past midnight, and yes, it sometimes took two trips across town in the middle of the night to get everything just right.

But aside from production dilemmas, my most touching memory comes from a vendor whose name I don't even recall now. I remember the day in 2004 when I saw a Street Sense vendor get her picture ID badge, which made her an official member of the team. She hung the badge around her neck, and suddenly her back straightened up and she squared her shoulders. I've seen this happen time and again, and it still cheers me. Because when a person becomes a Somebody, they have won back a place in the world. That is why we do this work, paid or unpaid – to help people win back their place in the world.

- David Hammond
Volunteer Assistant Editor

Socializing at Street Sense

I came across Street Sense when I was up in the office, wanting to speak with someone of the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH). As I was standing around in the office waiting, I saw a fellow reading the paper. So I asked him about it and he told me that I could become a vendor, which I did. I became a vendor exactly five years ago, on November 15, 2003.

I really like Street Sense. When I am in the office I see vendors come and go, talking about the paper, and telling me about their experience, selling the paper on the street. I too enjoy selling the paper, and I can't help being disappointed when people tell me that I should get a job. But selling the paper is a job. It helps me out a lot and by being a vendor I also got to know two wonderful people; Laura and Ted. I am also glad that I have met some interesting people who are working with Street Sense, including volunteers and interns. That is one of the things I like most about the paper because it gives new insights on what is happening in our community. More than anything Street Sense keeps up the good work in Washington.

I am proud to work as a volunteer for Street Sense. Once a week I come to the office and do whatever is needed. I interact with vendors, and sell them papers. Being in the office also helps improve my computer skills, including checking my email. Better still; by sticking with Street Sense I have landed a part-time job where I can use my new skills.

- Francine Triplett
Volunteer and Vendor

Walkathon Wonders



What I remember most from my years here at Street Sense are the homeless walkathons. Particularly the one pictured above last year when I ran into my favorite customer. Its always great selling on the Mall and talking with some many people concerned for the homeless. And its a big celebration time for Street Sense, too. Watch out for us this year!

- Phillip Howard
Vendor

Out of Gas But Stocked With Papers

I first heard about a newspaper starting up and its need for salespeople through Fred, the first vendor manager at Street Sense, at Miriam's Kitchen in October

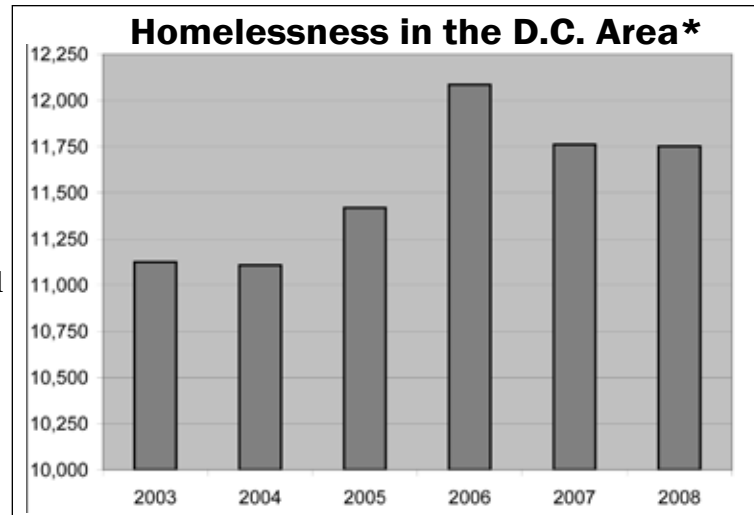
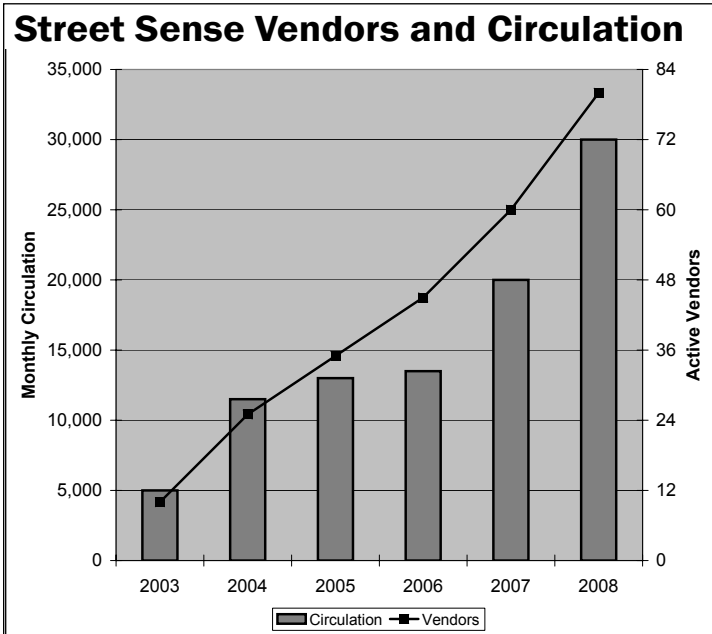
2003. I was still sleeping in my car when Fred passed through Capitol Hill again with the first issue of Street Sense in November 2003. I signed up as a vendor the next day and ran out of gas at the Tidal Basin on my way home. I had no money and no gas can, only Street Sense papers. It felt strange putting on the Street Sense I.D. for the first time, but I did, and by the time I got to the gas station I had sold enough papers to get a gas can and fill it with gas. This made me a believer in the Street Sense paper and my ability to make money in sales.

Street Sense sales have been a constant source of income for me over the last four years. The income has allowed me to rent a room, put gas in my car (when I had one) and enjoy being a respected part of the Capitol Hill community.

- Conrad Cheek
Vendor

TIMELINE *for* STREET SENSE

TIMELINE *for* D.C. Homelessness



2003

- Print first issue (Nov.)
- Pathways DC opens, introducing Housing First shelter model.
- New York Avenue Shelter for men opens.

2004

- Increase page from 16 to 20 per issue (Mar.)
- Gales School Shelter for women closes.
- DC Council passes "10 Year Plan to End Homelessness," emphasizing wrap-around social service in shelters.
- Incorporate and move into own office (Nov.)
- Randall's School Shelter for men closes.

2005

- Receive nonprofit status (Jan.)
- DC Council first proposes closing Franklin Shelter.
- Hold first fundraiser: Street Sense Benefit Concert (Mar.)
- Establish full board of directors (Jul.)
- Redesign layout and change logo (Sep.)
- Hire executive director (Nov.)

2006

- DC Council passes "Homeless Services Reform Act."
- DC establishes Interagency Council on Homelessness.
- Conduct first readers' survey (Jan.)
- Receive first two official grants (Mar.)
- Revamp vendor training; produced vendor training video (Jul.)
- Central Union Mission sold to developer for \$7 million.
- Hold first silent auction fundraiser (Nov.)
- Hire vendor manager (Nov.)
- DC street soccer team participates in first Homeless USA Cup.

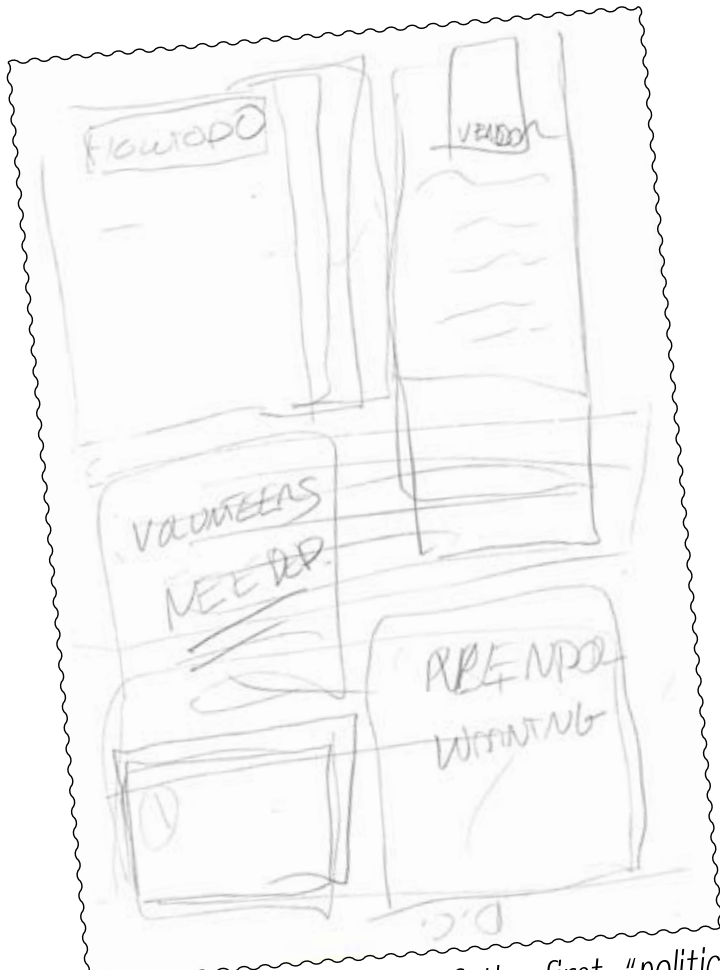
2007

- Adrian Fenty, the head of the Human Service Committee, becomes mayor.
- Implement vendor paper tracking system (Jan.)
- Start publishing two issues a month (Mar.)
- Hire editor-in-chief (May)
- DC Village Shelter for families closes.
- Publish first book: "Street Verses" (Jul.)
- The McKinney Vento Act marks its 20th anniversary.
- Establish Street Sense Writers Group (Nov.)

2008

- Mayor Fenty announces \$19 million "Housing First Fund," promising to house 400 homeless individuals.
- Fenty administration implements "vulnerability index" for counting the homeless.
- Urban Institute releases first comprehension study of D.C. Homeless Services.
- Franklin Shelter for men closes.
- Start biweekly publishing (Jan.)
- Create first strategic plan (Jan.)
- Hold first David Pike Excellence in Journalism Awards Ceremony (May)
- Hold the Homeless USA Cup (Jul.)
- Redesign layout of newspaper (Nov.)

*The number of people living in shelters, on the street and in transitional housing. This does not include those in permanent supportive housing.



The Hand-drawn layout of the first "politics" page in Street Sense.

designs around sell.

Street Sense
 A forum to give homeless their two cents
 A forum for the poor and homeless to earn and give their two cents

Street Sense

- And Earn - Their Two Cents

Street Sense

area's poor and homeless give and earn their two cents

we should have gone with the crazy road.

Read all about it: A paper for the homeless

By Chris Baker
 George Siletti until recently worked as a community support worker at a Baltimore hospital, helping poor patients get a better job, but he found himself living on the District's streets.

Mr. Siletti shares some of his experiences in Street Sense, a new newspaper produced by social homeless people and vendors, including some professional writers. The publication is scheduled to be printed about once a month.

"People think all homeless people are on the street, but I haven't had a drink or a drug in 13 years," Mr. Siletti said. "Street Sense is aimed at changing the public's perception of the homeless," said Deborah Whitehead, executive director of the National Coalition for the Homeless, a D.C. advocacy group that is helping sponsor the publication.

Street Sense also will provide do-it-yourself awareness. Everyone should know the story of the homeless. There is a lot that people don't know," said Mr. Whitehead, who worked on a similar newspaper while living on Connecticut's streets in the 1990s.

Street Sense also will provide...

FROM PAGE ONE

PAPER
 From page A1

local homeless people with a source of income.

Ten thousand copies of the first edition will be printed, and each homeless vendor who agrees to sell the newspaper will be given 10 free copies. The vendors will pay 30 cents for each additional copy, which they will sell for \$1 apiece.

The vendors must agree to honor a code of conduct, including no pressuring customers, no selling after midnight or while drunk or on drugs and no engaging in turf wars with other vendors.

The newspaper will focus on stories about homelessness. The first edition has 16 pages and features a report on the crowded conditions at the Community for Creative Non-Violence shelter, as well as stories on free haircuts and other services available in McPherson Square and a preview of congressional legislation to reduce homelessness.

The paper also features profiles of homeless military veterans, an editorial on "living-wage" laws, poems, recipes and book reviews.

It is not without a sense of humor: Mr. Siletti, for example, will write a regular "how to" column. His first topic: how to sleep on the street.

"When it's cold outside, the best place to sleep is on a steam grate. But when you can't find one of those locations, the average sidewalk will do," he writes.

Street Sense is one of about 45 such newspapers in North America, Mr. Whitehead said. Some of the publications, such as those in Chicago and San Francisco, have been around for several years and are known for solid investigative reporting and aggressive editorials.

There is even a wire service for the papers, the Homeless News Service, and a trade group, the National Association of North American Street Newspapers.

StreetWise, the Chicago paper for and by the homeless, started a D.C. version about three years ago, but it failed because the sponsors didn't know the area well, according to August Mallory, one of its vendors. Mr. Mallory was homeless at the time, but now has a mail-order business and lives in Baltimore.

Street Sense will cover homelessness in the District as well as its Maryland and Virginia suburbs and Baltimore, Mr. Mallory said. It will be sold primarily in high-traffic areas, such as the Metro Center, Farragut North and Union Station Metro stops.

The publication is produced at the National Coalition for the Homeless offices in downtown Washington, where a makeshift newsroom has been set up. The list of volunteers is growing, although individuals still are needed to write, edit and sell advertising.

"We're a very inclusive organization. We don't exclude help from anyone," said Ted Henson, a National Coalition for the Homeless volunteer and Street Sense's editor. He and co-editor Laura Thompson, who works full time at a banking-industry magazine, hope Street Sense eventually will be printed every other week.

The first edition was paid for entirely through donations, but the editors hope that advertising will help fund it in the future. Neither the federal nor D.C. government is helping to pay for it.

Pierre Lewis, a former prison inmate who has been homeless in the District for about three years, said the newspaper has given him a clear direction. He has written three poems for its inaugural edition.

"The homeless aren't dreamless. Writing appears to be my forte. It's a passion of mine. It's my dream to make it a career," he said.

Photo by Bert V. Gould/The Washington Times
 Laura Thompson, co-editor of Street Sense, looks over a copy of the first edition, which goes on sale today in the District. The paper is produced by volunteers at the National Coalition for the Homeless offices.

The Washington Times article on Street Sense. We were on the front page!!!

Name	Author	asgnd length	in?? ETA	edit status
Articles				
children	Laura Thompson		IN	
norton	Muala Jordan	35	no, Thurs	
veterans	Gemini Martinez	55	yes	LT cut, sent back
walkathon	Mai Le	25	yes	GK reworking
BAHA	Jennifer Cotta	?	Yes	TH ?
BAHAside	Ted Henson	25	no, Thurs	
osize	Michael Stoops	15-20	No, ?	
McPherson	Scott Tillett	35ish	No, ?	
providaprosie	Scott Tillett	40ish	no, wed	
history	Rebecca Schiesinger	15	no, Fri	
Dolegolate	Tim Harris?	20	No	
	TJ Sutcliffe	15-20	No, Fri	
Features				
poem1	David Harris			
poem2	David Harris		yes	
poem3	Pierre Lewis		yes	
poem4	Pierre Lewis		yes	
testimony	Ted Henson		yes	
logielala	Maureen Thompson	25	yes	
bookreview	Annie Hill	40	no, ?	TH reworking
vendor	Fred Anderson	30	no, ?	
Editorial1 (gov't)	Maurice King	15	yes	Done, in copy ed
editorial2 (curmfligh)	Chris Herring	25	no	
Editorial3 (the wage)	Richard Troxell	15	yes	LT cut, transcribe
Provedalist	Renee Campbell	15	yes	TH ?
howto	George Siletti	50	yes	LT trimming
recipes	George Siletti	25	No, Fri	
Article maybes				
choica	Chase		yes	
Pierre	Monica Hesse		no	TH, sent back

Handwritten notes: *Muala -> Plus*, *Scott*, *102 Plus*

Our first story budget, complete with hand written notes.

Top Five News Stories

1. Homeless People Hired to Evict Tenants
April 15, 2006
2. Local Union Paying Homeless to Protest
August 15, 2005
3. Panhandlers: To Give or Not to Give?
June 15, 2007
4. Path to Recovery for Drug Addicts Littered with Obstacles in District
April 30, 2008
5. Hospital Patients Routinely Discharged into Homeless
October 15, 2006

Top Five Editorials by Homeless Writers

1. Keep Drug Dealers Away from Shelters, David Pirtle
July 15, 2007
2. Our Society Still Rings of Racism, Martin Walker
April 15, 2007
3. Rules Do Not Apply Here, Brenda Karyl Lee- Wilson
November 15, 2006
4. Life Lessons from Street Sense and the Poker Table, Jeffery McNeil
September 3, 2008
5. Who I Am? I Am Not Happy, Leo Gnawa
July 15, 2005

Why Did We Choose These Stories?

While these articles and editorials are some of the best written ones that have run in Street Sense, this was not the main criterion for why these stories were selected. The main reason these articles and editorials made the top five was because of their impact. All of these articles produced some reaction from readers, other media, homeless advocates and the public in general, furthering the mission of Street Sense.

Reactions range from causing the local media to follow up with stories of their own, like the "Protest" article and "Discharge" article; or prompting neighborhood associations to pass around our suggested tips, like the "Panhandlers" story; or simply causing several readers to write and call-in comments like the "Not Happy" editorial.

"Evictions," was determined the top article because of the reaction from all areas. Most notably it prompted a class action lawsuit against the eviction companies involved. Additionally it prompted the Wall Street Journal to do a front page article about homeless reporters. As for the top editorial, "Drug Dealers," so after this story ran the police took action and drug dealers cleared out – at least for a little while around Franklin Shelter.

Please take a look at the top articles on the left and please look up all others at www.streetsense.org.

Keep Drug Dealers Away From Shelters

By Anthony David Pirtle

In January, the Downtown Service Center closed its doors for the last time after the church where it was located sold its air rights – the right to use and develop the airspace above the property – to a condo developer. Now I could write an entire op-ed about what kind of church would do such a thing, but that's another topic entirely.

Known affectionately as the 9:30 Club, the breakfast program at the DSC was moved to Fourth and E streets, NW. It didn't take long for the homeless to find it. Unfortunately, it took only slightly longer for the dealers. Two weeks after the new breakfast program opened, there were drug dealers conducting business right outside the front door, directly across the street from Judiciary Square.

It got me wondering why exactly the police in D.C., aware that dealers prey on the homeless, don't stop them a mere two blocks from police headquarters, let alone in front of every other District shelter and soup kitchen. It also got me wondering why the service providers don't act. If they are purporting to help the homeless, many of whom have serious addiction problems, it would seem a good idea to keep dealers away from their facilities.

As a resident of Franklin School Shelter last year, I was amazed at the amount of dealing that was conducted in the courtyard of the facility. I



had several friends who found themselves unable to beat their drug habit because of the fact that you can't get off crack if you are living in a crack-house. Not that residents were dealers, only clients, mind you – just like the men from the office overlooking the courtyard who routinely came down to buy.

There was little done to curb this activity until earlier this year, when a man was stabbed in the courtyard. Neither the victim nor the attacker was a resident. Since the attack, the shelter has moved to lock its gates after intake in an attempt to create a more secure environment. But George Jones, who runs Franklin for Catholic Community Services, told me that now dealers are actually trying to get a bed at the shelter in order to set up business inside the facility. As Franklin is a low-barrier shelter, there is little the staff can do to stop them unless they personally witness drug activity.

When I served on Mayor Adrian Fenty's transition team with Sczerina Perot from the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, we held a town hall meeting at One Judiciary Square that was attended by more than 80 homeless individuals from shelters and transitional housing throughout the city. The one recommendation that came out of every discussion group we held that day was the need to get the police to do something about dealers working homeless shelters.

My own organization, Until We're Home, made up of current and former homeless individuals working to reform D.C.'s homeless services, set up a meeting with a Metropolitan Police representative to address this issue. Unfortunately, the officer in question was more interested in gathering information to make a few quick arrests rather than discussing a strategy for dealing with the problem.

So we sent an e-mail to the new chief of police, Catherine Lanier, who sent us this form-letter reply: "Thank you for bringing this to my attention. I am forwarding to Assistant Chief Robinson who will have the appropriate command official contact you. You will be hearing from one of my commanders shortly." We are still waiting.

In the meantime, members of the homeless community, friends and strangers, continue to be victimized while the city turns a blind eye. If we want to end homelessness in D.C., as the new mayor has stated, we need to find a way to give homeless persons a fighting chance to get off the street by removing drugs from shelters, and we need to do it in a way that doesn't further victimize addicts. This means focusing on the dealers.

Service providers know where and when the dealing takes place, and they need to be given the tools to stop it. They need help from the Metropolitan Police Department, and we should insist that the new chief of police provides it.

Homeless People Hired to Evict Tenants

By Laura Thompson Osuri

It's 7:30 in the morning on a clear day in early April, and a crowd of about 35 men starts to come together on the sidewalk front of So Others Might Eat (SOME). Most of these men are homeless, and all of them are there that morning looking for work.

After about 45 minutes a large van arrives followed by car. A woman gets out of the car and starts shouting, "Anyone wanna work? Anyone wanna work?" Several men approach her and are directed to climb into the van. Once about 15 people pile in – some sitting on crates and others on the floor – the van drives off.

A few other vans and trucks pull up following the same routine: there is a call for work, a crowd piles in, and the van pulls off.

While homeless people often take part in the day-labor economy working in construction, demolition and trash clean-up through similar early morning van pick-ups like these, most of the men leaving this morning are going to help with evictions -- in the end, adding to the homeless population.

For at least the last six years, eviction companies in the area and independent landlords have been calling on homeless people to help clear out the belongings of individuals and families who have defaulted on rental agreements.

According to the U.S. Marshals Service, the number of workers required for an eviction ranges from 10 for a one bedroom apartment, to 25 for

National Coalition for the Homeless, sees the situation as inherently negative for homeless people.

"The real culprits are the people who exploit homeless people by not paying them a fair wage," Stoops said. "And then they go a step further by using homeless people to evict people who then become homeless."

Ironically, D.C.'s 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness makes special note of trying to limit the number of evictions to "prevent homelessness from within the mainstream." "More emphasis would be placed on keeping people housed when they face evictions and doing that in a smart way that invests case management support along with cash assistance so that the crisis is addressed and resolved," the plan states.

Stoops added that he does not know of any other state where homeless people are helping to evict residents. This may be because in most states the county sheriff's office performs the evictions, while in D.C. the landlords are responsible for providing labor for the eviction.

The two main companies that rely on homeless people to help in evictions are All American Eviction and East Coast Express Evictions, according to several homeless people, including many Street Sense vendors. But despite these reports, the chief executive officers of both companies deny the practice.

Caroline Lansford, the CEO of All American, said her company never pays homeless people and that all of the workers performing evictions are "part of the staff." But according to a Dunn & Bradstreet report, All American only has one employee, even though the average eviction requires 15 people on site. Since All American (and East Coast) charge landlords \$165 to evict a one bedroom apartment, to pay the required 10 people D.C.'s minimum wage of \$7 an hour for a two hour job would barely be profitable for the company. (Both companies also charge landlords \$200 for a two-bedroom apartment and \$450 for a townhouse.)

East Coast's CEO Nelson Terry claims to find laborers to carry out its evictions through Labor Ready, a temporary service for manual laborers. For an independent landlord to hire 15 people through Labor Ready to evict a two-bedroom apartment it would cost \$930 -- \$15.50 per person per hour for a four hour minimum. So even if East Coast is getting a deal, the cost to hire laborers through Labor Ready would be well above what East Coast charges landlords.

Homeless people report that



independent landlords also occasionally come looking for laborers, but according to Street Sense vendor Donald Brooks, these men and women usually pay better; \$15 an eviction compared to East Coast and All American's \$5 per eviction average.

But many homeless people don't mind helping with evictions, because it is a way to make a little money when other day labor work is hard to come by. In fact, one homeless man, who wanted to remain anonymous, said that he prefers the eviction work over other day labor jobs he has done "because you are just moving stuff all day long" and it is not dangerous or backbreaking. He said that he usually makes \$20 a day for a full eight hours of work.

In comparison, Street Sense vendor Jake Ashford reported that a construction company he has worked for as a day laborer paid around \$50 a day.

Still, other homeless people feel uncomfortable removing people from their homes.

"Here it is I am living on the street and don't have anything, and I can't bear the thought of women and children ending up in my situation," Ashford said. "It sickens to me to know I am helping the problem that is making them homeless. And only for \$5 a day."

In D.C. an eviction, the act of removing personal property from a building and placing it on the street, can only occur 30 days after a landlord gives notice of an eviction to a tenant

for violating a lease agreement. If the tenant does not leave in 30 days, then the landlord can get a writ of assistance from the U.S. Marshals Service and force the tenant from his or her home. For all evictions a U.S. Marshal is present to enforce the eviction order.

And in D.C., since it is illegal to evict someone if forecasts predict a 50% or higher chance of snow or rain or a temperature of below 32 degrees for the next 24 hours, spring is a popular time for evictions.

But just how many evictions occur in D.C. is hard to come by. The U.S. Marshals Service failed to give Street Sense an estimate on the number of evictions in D.C. during the average week, and both East Coast and All American were hesitant to give an exact number. But by looking at All American's reported annual sales in 2005 of \$62,000 (according to Dunn & Bradstreet), and the average amount charged per eviction, Street Sense estimates that the company performs around 310 evictions a year, or just under 6 a week.

After saying that he could not give an estimate of how many evictions his company does a week, Terry did say that East Coast does evictions for landlords of all sizes.

"We do everything," he said. "We have helped the federal government evict from the federal embassy of Iran and we have even evicted airline terminals."

Mark Youssef, James Davis and Jake Ashford contributed to this story.

“It sickens to me to know I am helping the problem that is making them homeless. And only for \$5 a day.”

- Jake Ashford

a house or commercial property. And on a clear day in the spring as many as 10 eviction jobs are available, homeless people report.

The companies pay between \$5 and \$15 per eviction job, each of which usually lasts from two to four hours, including travel and waiting time, according to several homeless people. This equates to a wage of between \$1.25 and \$7.50 per hour.

Michael Stoops, acting director of the

Vendors: Then and Now

Street Sense gets a picture of each vendor soon after they join the organization when we take their picture for their permanent badge. Often times this one of the lowest point in the vendors' life and they don't care how they look and are just happy to be making a few extra bucks. Then a few months later they realize just how awful their badge picture looks, (often times they refer to it as their "mug shot") and they insist on taking a new badge picture.

So below are several before and after shots of vendor badges along with their quite remarkable before and after stories. Who knew Street Sense would get into the makeover business!



**Jeffery
McNeill**

Start Date:
August 9, 2007



Jeffery arrived in D.C. in the summer of 2007 with 30 cents in his pocket, no home, and trouble getting government benefits. He came to D.C. from Atlantic City after losing most everything he had gambling; he was told that services were better in D.C.

Now Jeffery has been through an executive training program and has resumes out for several jobs. He is now paying rent living with a friend working on getting his own place.

"Streets Sense allowed me to get back on my feet. I have been able to find contacts to get myself out of my situation, and resources are opening up that I would not have without Street Sense."



**Reginald
Black**

Start Date:
July 6, 2008



Reggie was sleeping on the streets in southeast where panhandling every day trying to survive when a Street Sense vendor approached him in the summer of 2008 and told him to come to a training.

Now Reggie is staying with a friend and involved in all sorts of projects he made through connections at Street Sense. He said Street Sense "jump started his passion for writing" and now contributes regularly to the paper and also helps the layout of the Writer's Group page. Additionally, he recently he took part in Hip Hop for the Homeless.

"I'm now part of a community freedom fighters and I feel like street sense has given me hope light at the end of tunnel."



**James
Davis**

Start Date:
Nov. 15, 2003



James was resident of Central Union Mission in search of a job in the electronics field, when volunteers showed up trying to recruit vendors for Street Sense back in the fall of 2003. James had recently been laid off from electronics engineering job he held for 25 years.

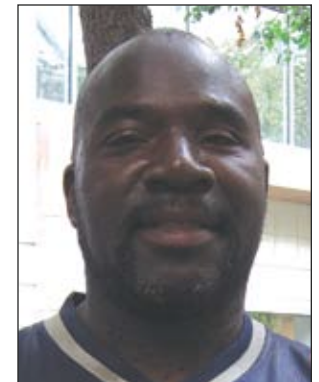
Jame now has a fulltime job at Ritz Camera and is renting a room while awaiting paper work to buy his own home. Through Street Sense he joined the National Coalition for the Homeless's Speakers Bureau and is on the Board of Directors of Street Sense.

"I would like to thank Street Sense and all my dedicated customers for helping me get back on my feet."



**Donald
Johnson**

Start Date:
May 15, 2008



Don, a Gulf War Veteran, became homeless after a divorce and before Street Sense was living in Franklin Shelter doing odd jobs for work. Then a friend told him about Street Sense.

Now Don has his own place, furnished with the help of several donations through Street Sense. He regularly sells Street Sense at the corner of 11th and E streets, NW, and said his success has come through treating it like a "real job."

"I love Street Sense. It put me in touch with so many great people and I have made so many connections."