

METRO *Life*

The Portland Observer

SECTION B

Community Calendar

Wishes on Wheels

The fourth annual Wishes on Wheels event on Thursday, Oct. 17 will feature gravity-powered pinewood derby model cars racing around the Emanuel Hospital atrium. Teams will compete for the title of the fastest vehicle on the track. Event funds benefit the Emanuel Children's Hospital. The hospital is located at 501 N. Graham and the races begin at 6:30 p.m. For more information call 503-415-5725.

Community Celebration

Come rain or shine Saturday, Oct. 19 for a day of live music, food, games and information hosted by Big City Produce and Small World Café, 722 N. Sumner. Music starts at 11:30 a.m. and goes to 5 p.m. The day of fun also features food samples and snacks. Back to Scrap, Food Not Bombs, the Food Alliance, the Humboldt Neighborhood Association and the POIC School will be available throughout the day. Call 503-460-3830 for information.

Focus on Domestic Violence

In recognition of Hands are Not for Hurting Week and Domestic Violence Awareness Month, come and learn about crimes against children, women and seniors. The Crime Prevention program of the City of Portland's office of neighborhood involvement will host four one hour presentations on topics ranging from protecting children from child molesters, domestic violence and elders safety. Presentations begin at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Oct. 22 in the US Bank room at the Multnomah County Central Library, 801 SW 10th Ave. For information call 503-823-5532.

Business Crime Prevention

From local crime prevention staff attendees of this free public workshop can learn information about crime prevention services available to businesses as well as information about common challenges for retailers. Issues of fraud, shoplifting and trespassing will be addressed. Training on Wednesday, Oct. 23 begins at 7 a.m. in the Social Room at the Providence Portland Medical Center, 4805 N.E. Glisan.

Oriental Medicine Open House

Members of the public can attend a celebration for Oriental Medicine Day and receive information about acupuncture, Oriental therapeutic massage, Chinese herbal medicine and Oriental meditative exercise. Supervised by licensed practitioners, OCOM interns will provide free sample treatments to the public from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. on Thursday, Oct. 24. The school is located at 10525 SE Cherry Blossom Drive.

Lifetime Business Support Club

During a free workshop for entrepreneurs, new and current business owners can learn the steps to accelerate business through raising capital, obtaining resources, mentorship, team and new skills building for free enterprise ventures. Workshops start at 7 p.m. at the Fairfield Inn in Lake Oswego. Dates are Oct. 24 and 31, Nov. 7, 14, and 21. Call 503-574-4445 to register.

Family Serves Up East African

Queen of Sheba builds empire on MLK Boulevard

By WYNDE DYER

THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Two thousand years ago, the Queen of Sheba was the "strongest" queen in East Africa. Today in northeast Portland, native African brothers Alem and Getachew Gebrehiwot do their best to keep her legacy alive at an Ethiopian restaurant named in her likeness.

After 10 years of business, it seems the brothers are doing pretty good. *The Oregonian* rated Queen of Sheba as one of the top 100 restaurants in Oregon and it appears each year in the *Willamette Week's* list of Cheap Eats.

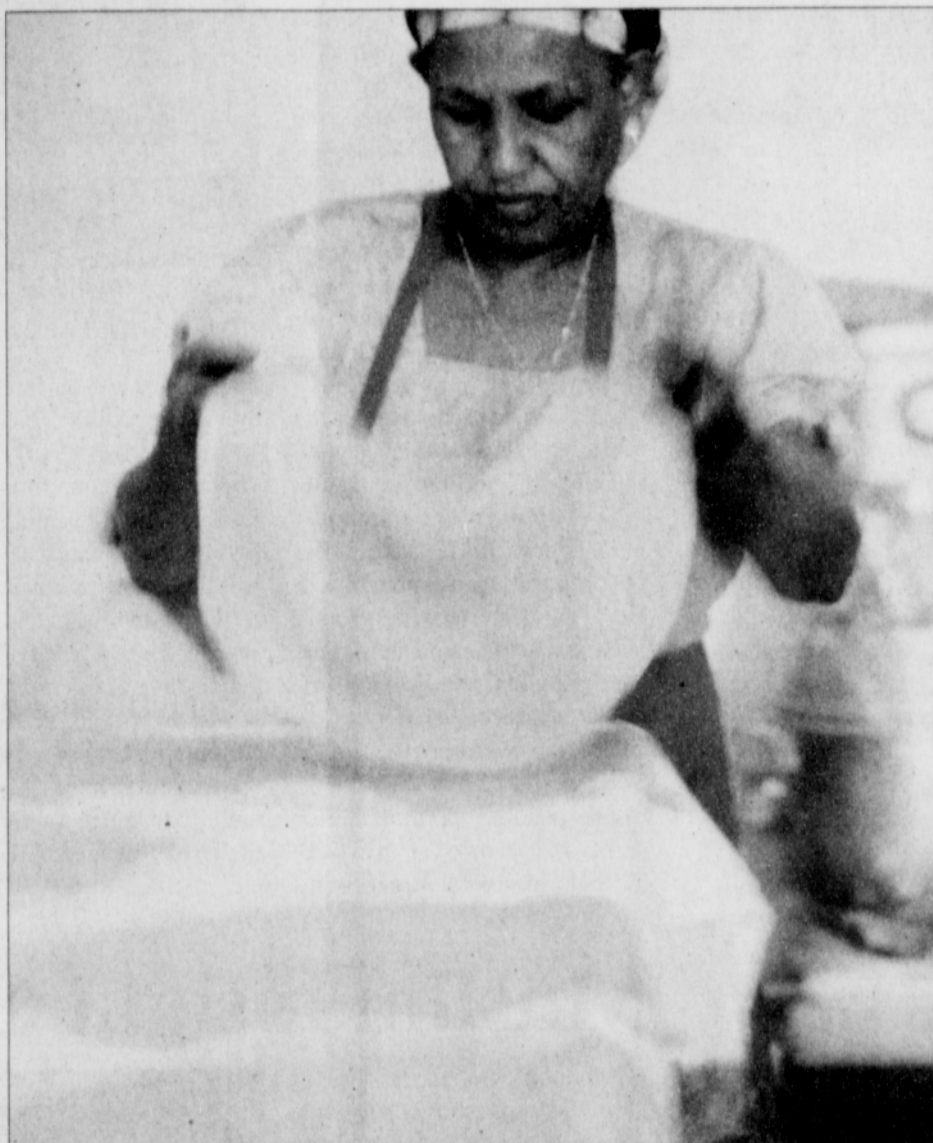
"Our name is getting popular," Getachew said. "Our business is getting better. We are very pleased."

The building of an empire had to start somewhere. Queen of Sheba began as a small grocery store at 2413 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in 1992. Alem provided the growing Egyptian community of north Portland with authentic ingredients for home cooking. He graduated from Oregon State University in 1993 with a Bachelor of Science in Food Engineering and began to manufacture a line of traditional Ethiopian spices.

Getachew came to America to study at Western Business College in downtown Portland, and instead became the manager of Queen of Sheba. After two years in the grocery business, the brothers began serving food flavored with their spices. Their mother Tafesech joined them to help cook and produce spices. The restaurant started with only two tables and a lunch menu. Two tables turned into six in 1995. Today, Queen of Sheba boasts a full bar and a serving capacity of 70.

"Our customers are the reason for our success," Alem said. "They are very loyal. We love our customers and never have any problems."

In fact, they have had anything but problems. Back when the restaurant staff was smaller, Alem said customers would come in to help out. Neighborhood regulars would walk by and see a crowd and



Preparing Ethiopian crepe-like bread called injera to go with the meals is a long process involving three days of fermentation.



Queen of Sheba foods are flavored with spices that are packaged and prepared by the restaurant's owners.

PHOTOS BY WYNDE R. DYER/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

help wash dishes. The variety of beers on the beverage list were chosen by customers, and most new business comes by recommendation rather than advertising. When Queen of Sheba opened the bar three months ago, they hired a regular customer to tend it for them.

The only problem Alem can see in the future is parking.

"We lose business because there is nowhere to park for blocks around," he said.

Alem hopes the City of Portland will put in on-street parking like they did for Nike just up the street. He fears for his customers' safety because of the high speed traffic on Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. Crosswalks are a few blocks down. The parking concern most impacts business during lunch hours because customers need to eat fast and get back to work. Lunch breaks don't provide time to park and walk.

Fortunately, a steady stream of evening diners makes up for slow lunches.

Sometimes 20 to 30 customers at the same time. Alem said the dinner rush can be somewhat taxing on his small staff.

"But we are patient and always friendly," he said.

Queen of Sheba is happy to be both a pioneer and a continuing part of economic growth in north and northeast Portland. Alem said when they established the grocery store, they were the only business on the block. The neighborhood was a dead zone. He is optimistic about the change in the business climate and the new diversity it will bring.

"Things are much, much better," he said. "Everyone has put in a lot of effort."

To taste the effort put into the authentic Ethiopian cuisine, stop by Queen of Sheba Monday through Friday for lunch from noon to 3 p.m. or for dinner, Tuesday through Saturday, from 5 to 10 p.m. The restaurant closes early at 9 p.m. on Sundays and Mondays.

All entrees are healthy. Meat, vegetarian and salad dishes are served on injera, a form of Ethiopian crepe-like bread. Injera is made with teff, a form of Egyptian flower, mixed with rice and barley flour. It is high in iron and gluten-free. The injera mixture ferments for two to three days before it is blended and steamed into large pancakes. Expect to eat it with your fingers.

Natural Gas Rates Lowered

Starting this month, residents in the local area will see a 10 percent decrease in the price for natural gas.

The Oregon Public Utility Commission on ordered Northwest Natural and other Oregon natural gas utilities to charge less because the companies have enjoyed cheaper wholesale costs over the past year.

"These lower rates will leave Oregonians who use natural gas with a little more money in their pockets than they had last year," Commissioner Lee Beyer said. "After the increases we experienced the last couple of years, customers will be glad to see this reversal."

The monthly bill for a typical residential customer of Northwest Natural will drop by 10.5 percent. A typical customer's bill will be reduced to \$57.80 from \$64.59. Commercial customers will see a 14.9 percent rate decrease.

Cash Back for Energy-Saving Measures

SHOW program gives oil heat customers rebates for upgrades

October is Energy Awareness Month and oil prices are up, so for home owners who have never had an energy audit, now is a good time to get one.

A free audit from the Oregon Office of Energy's State Home Oil Weatherization Program, called SHOW, will tell homeowners which energy-saving measures will save the most money. Those who register for an audit will be entered into a drawing to win \$100 to be used towards the purchase of home installation, energy efficient windows or towards installation of heating system improvements.

While special funds last, the SHOW Program will be giving away as much as \$1,200 cash back to program participants for taking energy-saving measures. \$200 cash back will be offered for energy-efficient replacement windows or a high-

efficiency replacement oil furnace or burner. Up to \$600 cash back can be received for a high-efficiency replacement oil furnace if an underground oil tank is replaced with an above ground one, up to \$400 for blower door-assisted air sealing and duct by a certified contractor and up to \$400 for insulation and programmable thermostats.

Homeowners may also qualify for a 6.5-percent interest SHOW loan through participation lenders for any measure recommended in the SHOW audit.

Some 38,000 Oregon homeowners and renters have had a SHOW audit since the program began in 1982. SHOW analysts check insulation in the attic, walls and floors, inspect the windows and perform a free furnace efficiency test. For more information, call 1-800-452-8660.



David Hall, an energy auditor for the Oregon Office of Energy's State Home Oil Weatherization Program (SHOW), measures windows on a house on Northeast 13th Avenue to find the right size of energy-efficient windows needed to weather-proof the home. PHOTO BY MARK WASHINGTON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER