

# Avoiding a Blank TV Screen Come February

continued ▲ from Front

they needed to do something. Murray said that U.S. has spent far less on getting the word out compared to other countries, like Great Britain. He said that the NTIA has relied too much on industry to educate the public. He said that the incoming Obama administration should initiate an emergency outreach effort.

don't need, like digital televisions or unnecessary cables.

"It's the basic nature of sales," he said.

You can still get up to two \$40 coupons (courtesy of the federal government) for a digital converter box, which will get your analog up to speed. They can be obtained by calling 1-888-DTV-2009, or by going to [www.dtv2009.gov](http://www.dtv2009.gov). The coupons will arrive in the mail with an insert

those are out, the NTIA will issue another 11.25 million for households that rely exclusively on analog television.

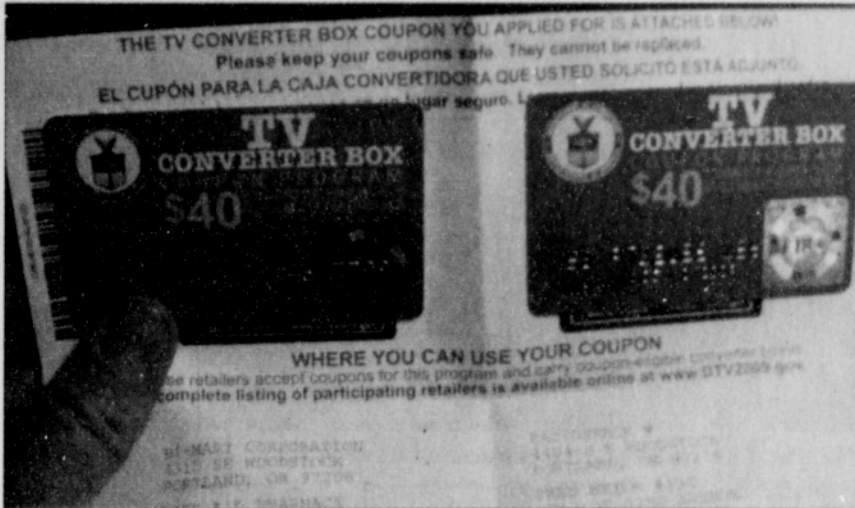
According to Todd Sedmak, spokesman for the NTIA, there are still 15 million coupons available. However, he stresses the importance of people acting sooner rather than later because they take three to four weeks to arrive and people might hit some snags setting it up.

Safety Act of 2005 puts the money made from the auction into a fund and directed the National Telecommunications and Information Administration to give out coupons for a converter box. The NTIA can use \$890 million from the fund, and can get another \$510 million with congressional

approval. The NTIA has no plans to deal with an increase in demand, according to a GAO report.

However, Sedmak said that the NTIA spent \$5 million spreading the word and partnered with a number of private organizations to help. It gave another \$4.35 mil-

lion to the National Association of Area Agencies on Aging and the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights to get through to the elderly and minorities, which disproportionately rely on analog. He added that the television industry has spent \$19 billion on education efforts.



TV converter box coupons provide a \$40 discount to consumers who will need the devices if they plan to keep their old analog TV working with an antenna.

PHOTO BY JAKE THOMAS/ THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

If you already have cable or satellite television, you have nothing to worry about.

But if you are among the 14.3 million Americans that Nielsen estimates still rely on an old analog set and antenna, you need to get a digital converter box, which is sold at most electronics stores. They run between \$40 and \$80.

Murray said that his organization has received reports of retailers giving disinformation to consumers in hopes of selling them more expensive equipment they

showing where you can get the box, and are good until March 31 or until supplies run out. You can only use one coupon per box and they expire 90 days after they're issued.

According to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration website 22 million households have already requested more than 41 million coupons. Initially the government made 22.25 million coupons available upon a first-come-first-serve basis, with no eligibility requirements. Once


"You either get reception or you don't," he said of the potential problems viewers may face. He explained that with analog you may have poor reception resulting in a blurry image, but with digital a bad signal means a blank screen.

Congress initiated the switchover with several pieces of legislation passed in 2005. The laws mandated that broadcasters go digital, and auctioned off the publicly-owned airways used for analog broadcasting. The Digital Television Transition and Public

## LIVING THE LEGACY

Engaging Today's Leaders

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Tribute at PSU



**Andrew Young**  
Lecture by  
Former United Nations Ambassador  
and Congressman

THURSDAY, JANUARY 22, 2009 7 PM

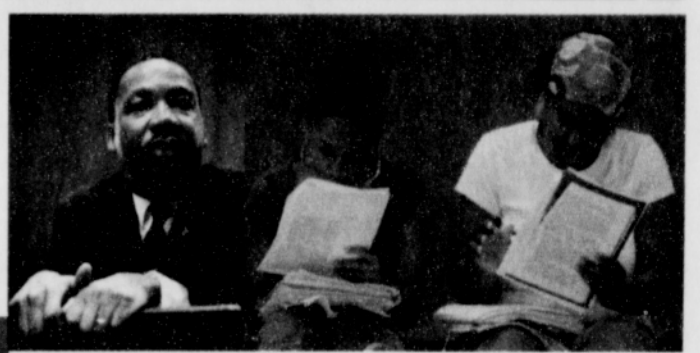
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Ballroom Room 355  
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Special Performance by E. D. Mondané & Belief

\$10 general public, FREE with valid student ID. Service charges will apply.

Please join PSU at other free MLK Day events including:

- January 19: A DAY-ON of community service. Visit [www.pdx.edu/ceae/ssservicesday.html](http://www.pdx.edu/ceae/ssservicesday.html) to register.
- January 22: Interactive student session at 3 pm, Smith Memorial Student Union, room 327-9
- January 23-24: Saul Landau's documentary screening of *Paul Jacobs and the Nuclear Gang* and *From Protest to Resistance* 7 pm, at 5th Avenue Cinema



TICKETS CAN BE PURCHASED AT THE PSU TICKET OFFICE, 1825 SW BROADWAY, BROADWAY ENTRANCE, 503-725-3307, OR AT TICKETMASTER OUTLETS. SEATING IS LIMITED. FOR MORE INFORMATION, CALL 503-725-5342.

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# Sam Adams Era Begins

continued ▲ from Front

Portland area.

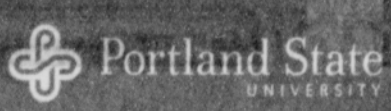
Adams described the new City Council as, "A small team with big plans. A city council willing to take on smart but unconventional ideas that give Portland its standout innovations."

Adams spoke at a North and Northeast Business Association breakfast earlier in the day and toured the St. Johns business district in the afternoon.

He said in the coming weeks, he will announce his plans for the first 100 days in office. City Council also will unveil the city's first local job creation and economic

stimulus package, and a "Better Together" volunteer program.

Adams also announced a proposed Oregon Sustainability Center, to be located in the Portland State University district. Gov. Ted Kulongoski has included \$80 million of state bonding authority in his proposed budget to help pay for it.




## Lottery funds help Oregon become the nation's leading solar manufacturer.

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