

# Changing the Face of Biking

continued ▲ from page 15

"Working or volunteering at the Bike Station allows people to have stability," said Sims. "And it's a job everybody can do."

One man, Matt Hilton, 60, says if it weren't for Sims offering him a job as a church handyman and donating a mobile trailer for him to stay in, he may still have been broke, homeless and abusing drugs and alcohol.

"Bishop is the one and only person I've seen reach into his own pocket to help someone else," said Hilton, who has now been clean and sober for the past seven years. He calls Sims his best friend.

When Hilton found out that Sims planned to remodel the space where the bike station came into existence, he was the first on the scene to offer a hand.

"This place was a dump," said Hilton. "We redid the whole thing." Though the church paid for the project and Naito supplied the building, the entire place needed to be gutted and restored.



PHOTO BY CARI HACHMANN/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Bishop K. Sims (left) helps many of his employees and volunteers through rough times in their life. At the Portland Bike Station, he gives them the opportunity to get job experience and have stable work while they get back on their feet.

Two years, 900 tiles, lots of carpet, and one new sprinkler system later, the Portland Bike Sta-

tion was born.

Open Monday through Friday from 7 in the morning to 7 at night,

customers can choose from one of 50 or so donated and purchased bikes for rent at an hourly or daily

charge. Bike parking is offered at a monthly rate of \$65, weekly \$20, and daily \$10, with discounts for Dekum Building tenants.

While the daily commuters park their bike for the day at the shop, they can also get their bike serviced by two in-house technicians, from minor to full-maintenance repairs.

Drew Wright, a technician who road his bike from New York to Portland said, "Safety is the most important thing, I make sure everything is completely safe before I return it."

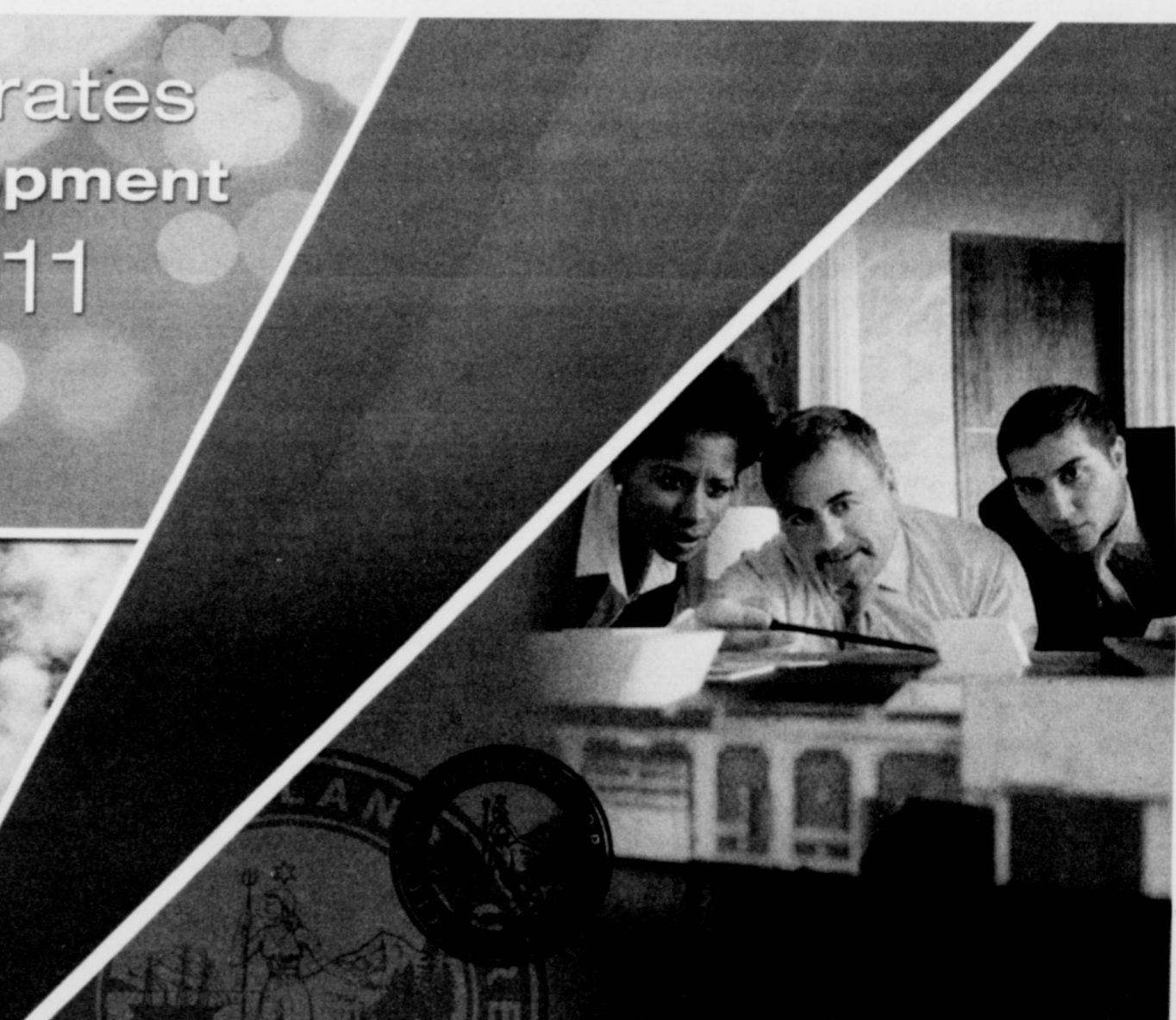
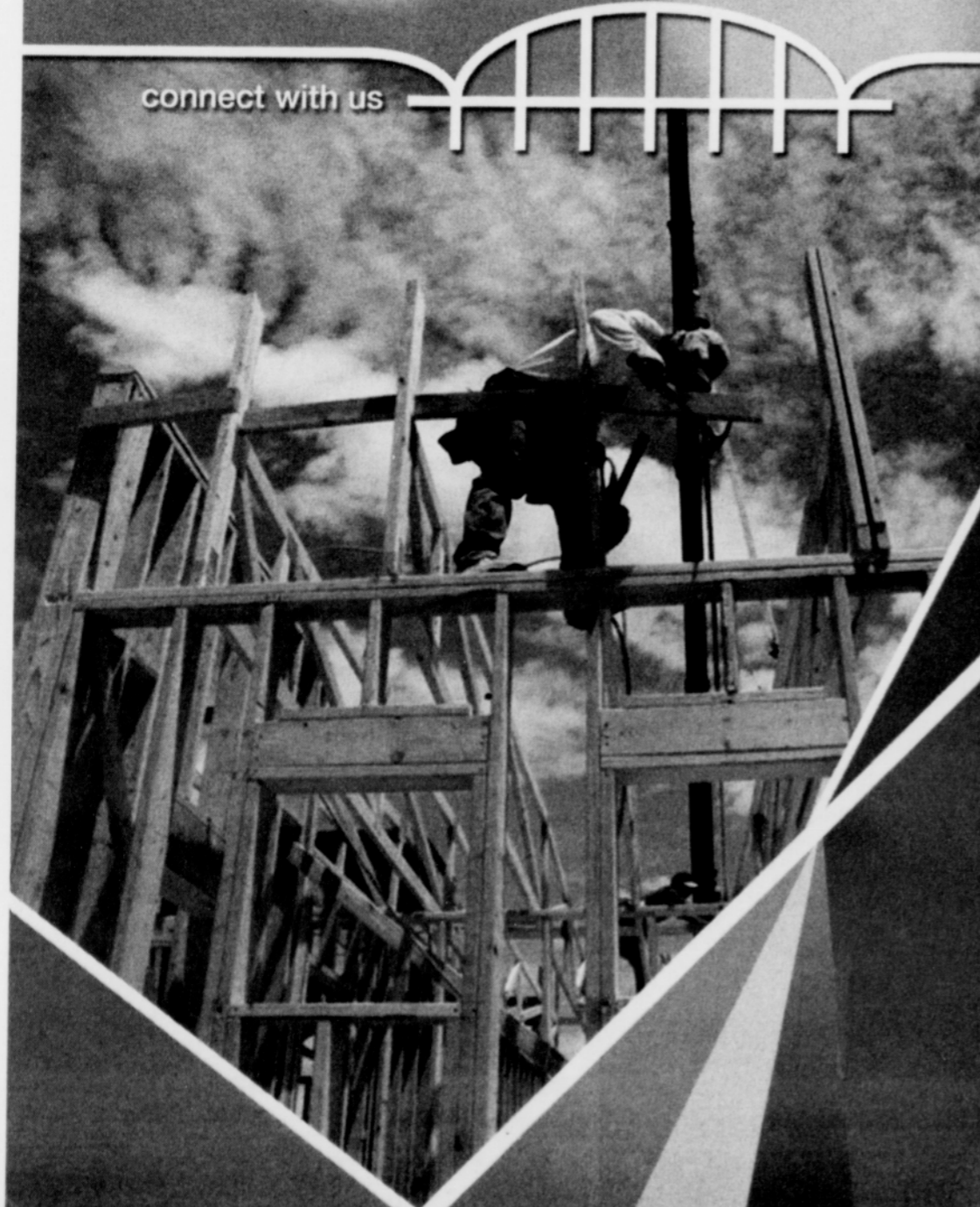
Though the Portland Bike Station has transformed dramatically into a fully-functional bike shop, it's not quite up to par yet. Bike parts are in short supply and need to be ordered for many of the repairs.

Luckily, Sims' team of five paid employees and numerous volunteers are dedicated to and making sure the shop is a success and are writing several grants to find money to buy more parts.

"What do you give someone that gave you everything?" said Hilton, speaking of Sims, his business partner for the past four years. Though recovery comes first for Hilton, his heart is in the Bike Station. "My dream is to see my buddy get his dream- and that's my dream also."

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