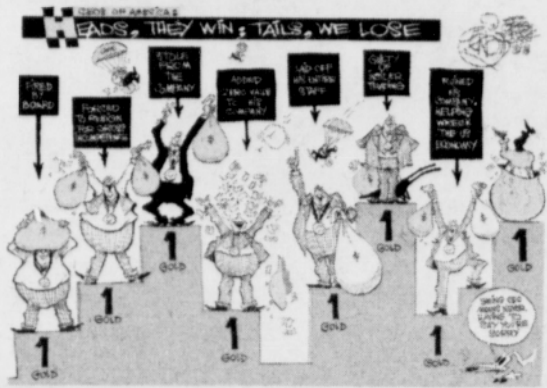


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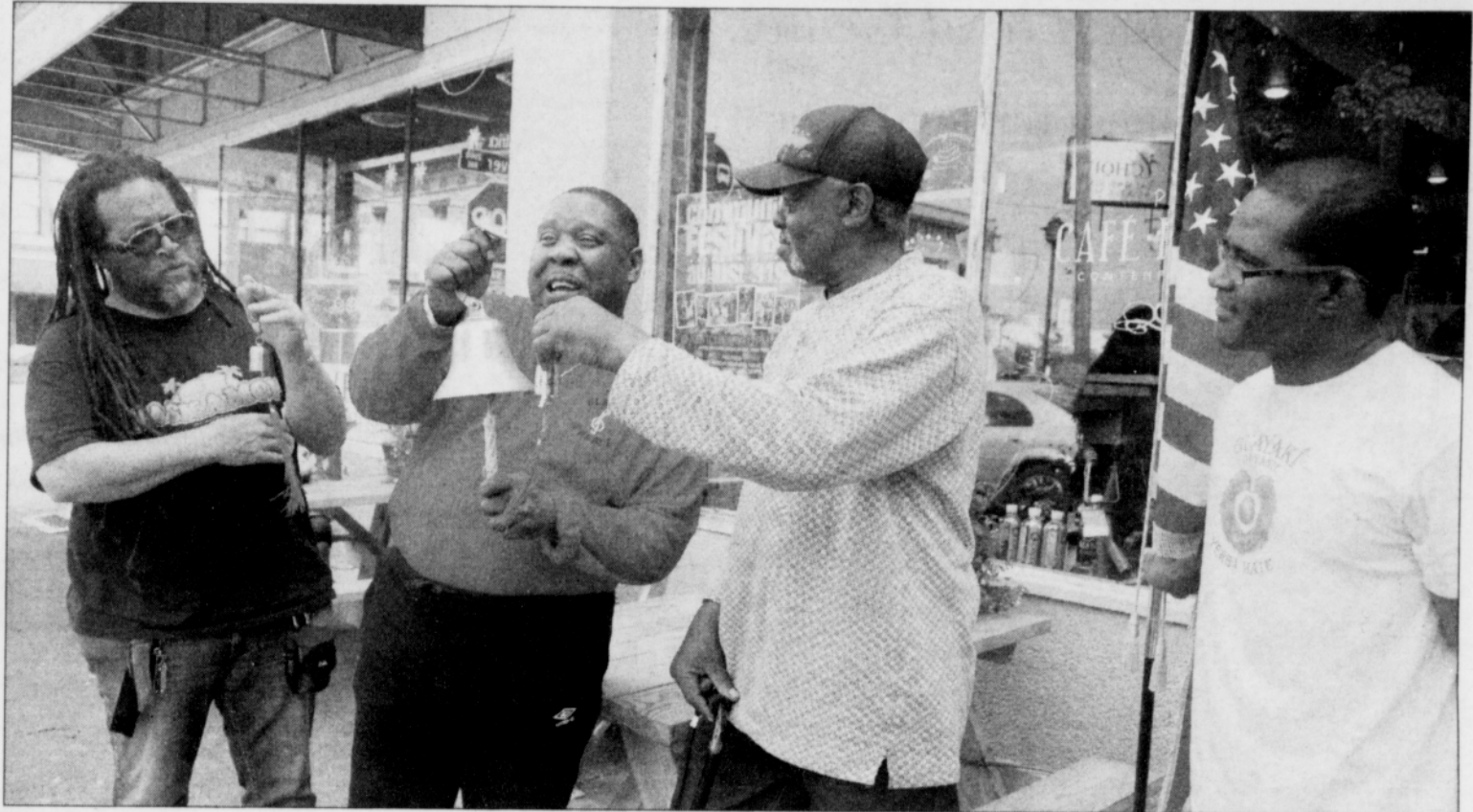


PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Pastor E.D. Mondainé (second from left) joins a patron outside his soul food eatery Po' Shines in north Portland to symbolically ring the bells of freedom on the 50th anniversary of Martin Luther King's infamous "I Have A Dream" speech and the March on Washington for Jobs and Justice.

Let Portland Ring!

Bells toll for justice and freedom

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Bells literally rang across the country last Wednesday as people symbolically rang bells in commemoration of the 50 years to the exact time when slain civil rights leader Martin Luther King's delivered his infamous "I Have A Dream" during the March on Washington for Jobs and Justice

on Aug. 28, 1963.

In Portland, the owner of the soul food eatery 'Po' Shines' and the founder of Celebration Tabernacle, pastor E.D. Mondainé, took it upon himself to memorialize the moment with his staff and patrons. On the corner of North Kilpatrick and Denver in the Kenton Neighborhood, Mondainé proclaimed "We're ringing the bell for justice, we're ringing the bell for freedom"

"They were ringing the bells across the nation and I said you know what, we need to be a part of that," he said.

In the half-century old address,

King famously demanded that "freedom ring" throughout America.

Mondainé recalls seeing King's speech on TV as a boy, and being "mesmerized by the figure on the screen.

Moving forward he hopes that African-Americans in Oregon will increase their concern for one another.

"We are as distant as night and day," he said, referring to issues that impact the two percent of Oregon's population who are African American.

"We have forgotten that injustice anywhere is injustice everywhere," he said, quoting King.

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Hefty Fine for 'P Club' Discrimination

Enforcement a first under 2007 civil rights law

Last year, investigators with the Bureau of Labor and Industries found substantial evidence of unlawful discrimination, including phone messages from P Club bar owner Chris Penner asking a group of transgender patrons to stop visiting his establishment because he didn't want the venue to become known as a "tranny bar" or "gay bar."

Under the Oregon Equity Act of 2007, Oregonians legally cannot be denied full and equal service based

on sexual orientation. The law provides an exemption for religious organizations and schools, but does not allow private business owners to discriminate based on sexual orientation, just as they cannot legally deny service based on race, sex, age, disability or religion.

The Bureau issued a final order last week that directs Penner to compensate the patrons, 11 members of a group called the 'T Girls,' \$20,000 to \$50,000 per aggrieved person for emotional, mental and physical anguish as a result of their treatment. The bar on North Lombard Street is now known as the Twilight Room Annex

"Oregonians deserve to be treated

fairly under the law," said Oregon Labor Commissioner Brad Avakian. "For businesses seeking to understand the law, we can help them navigate the Oregon Equality Act and other existing state and federal protections. Our technical assistance for business program can field their questions and help them avoid potential violations in the first place."

Since 2007, 11 complaints of unlawful discrimination in public places have been filed under the 2007 law. After investigations, BOLI found no substantial evidence in five of the complaints; parties negotiated settlements in three cases, with one case at northeast Portland bakery 'Sweet Cakes' still being reviewed.