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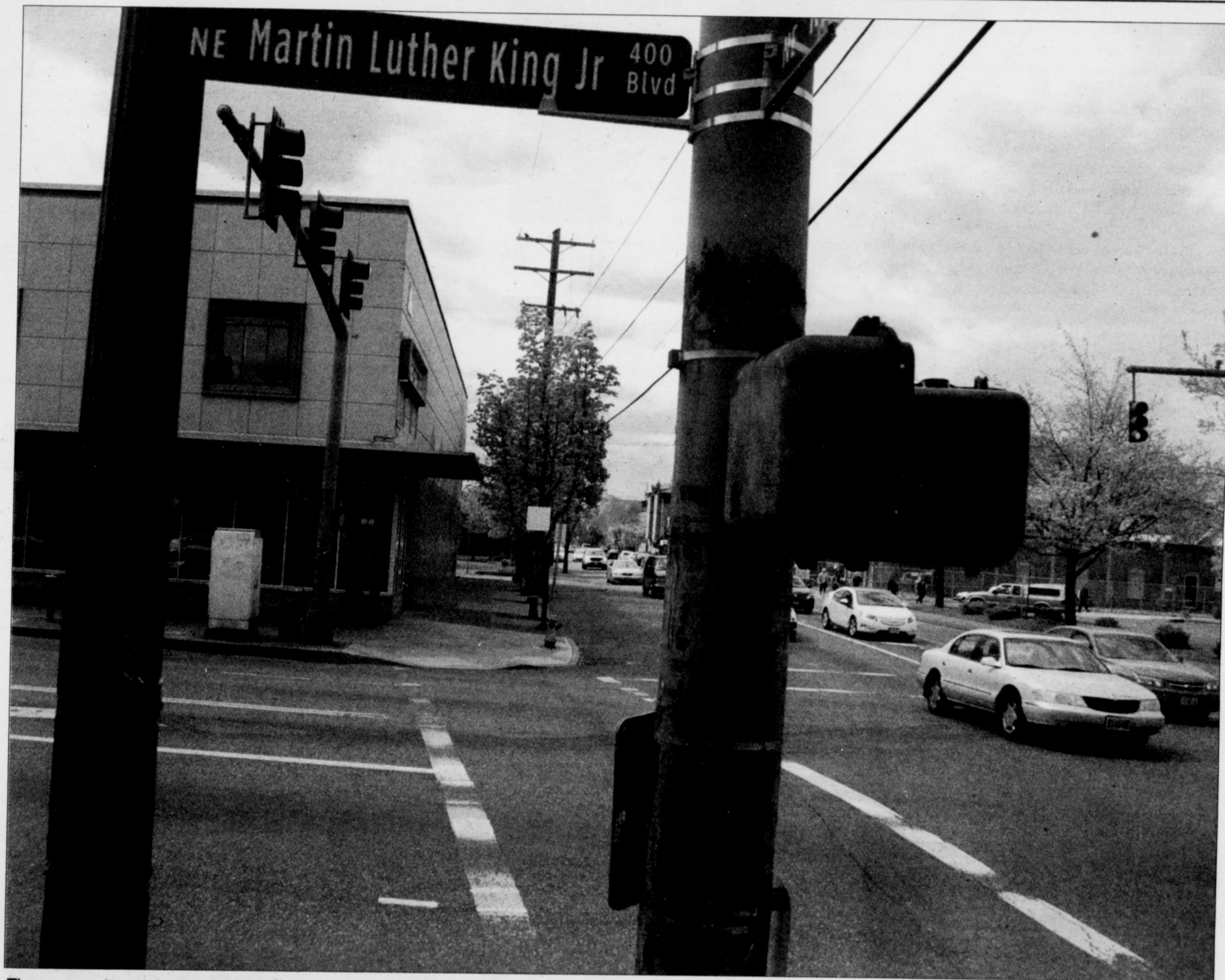
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The community celebrates the 25th anniversary of the naming of Northeast Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard.

PHOTO BY DONOVAN M. SMITH/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

25 Years a Name Anniversary is a reminder of challenges that remain

BY DONOVAN M. SMITH
THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

A revolutionary reverend, revered in both the country that spawned his dream for human equality and across the globe where the sobering truth of injustice still rings true for many, Martin Luther King Jr. holds a name of great weight even in his passing 46 years ago.

25 years past, over 2,000 citizens signed a petition, and various civic organizations successfully appealed to bring his name to the heart of Portland's black community. April 20, 1989 was the date.

In commemoration of this successful appeal to rename Union Avenue to Martin Luther King Boulevard, the King Neighborhood Association, World Arts Foundation,

and the Northeast Coalition of Neighborhoods held a celebration at the Blazers Boys and Girls Club, fittingly located at 5250 N.E. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. on Saturday.

A highlight of commemoration was the raising of a new United States flag in front of the club to replace a flag that has flown tattered for years.

The neighborhoods around the boule-

vard have experienced great change over the years, but painfully the displacement of African Americans from the area has dashed some of the optimism that came with the name change.

US Census data shows that tracks of housing that were once majority black have

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