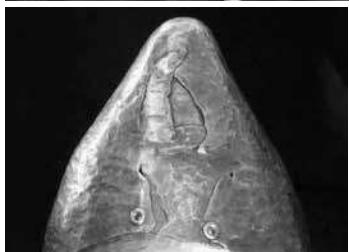


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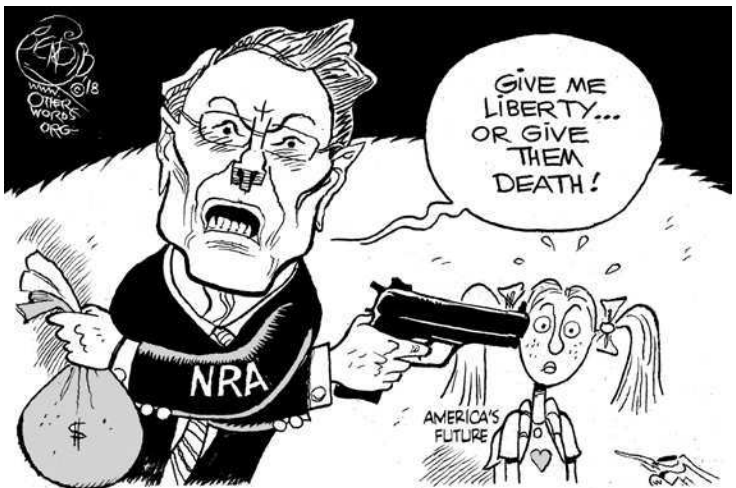
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What's on your list today?®



PHOTO BY DANNY PETERSON/THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Sarah Adams, executive director of non-profit CASH Oregon, welcomes low income families and individuals to offices on the third floor of the Lloyd Center where they can get free help to prepare their taxes and claim an Earned Income Tax Credit.

Tax help non-profit helps filers claim sizable tax credit

BY DANNY PETERSON THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Tax season is upon us and if you're a low income worker, you may be eligible for a tax credit that averages \$2,400 for recipients—that may be lower or higher depending on the situation.

A non-profit called CASH Oregon offers free tax preparation services at the Lloyd Center and numerous other locations, aimed at helping eligible recipients claim the credit, called an Earned Income Tax Credit. It can be especially helpful to families.

The tax credit, which can be worth up to \$6,300, tends to be higher for qualifying individuals with children.

"For example, for a family of

Cash in Hand

Adams said the biggest barrier people probably have to making the claim is simply filing their taxes.

"Sometimes if you make a low enough amount of money you don't actually have to file a tax return. So it may be just a very easy thing to say 'well, why bother with that hassle?' But if you don't file it, you won't claim it, you won't be able to get it," Adams said.

Of course, refunds won't occur the same day, but once received, there are no restrictions on how to spend the money.

According to CASH Oregon data, it's estimated that 55 percent of the tax refunds they helped prepare last year went to pay debt or bills, while 34 percent went into savings accounts, and another 11 percent was used to offset other expenses.

Audrey Techur and Elfinia Syoziatro both sought tax assistance

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Honoring King 50 Years Later

Church bells set to toll for each of the 39 years of his life and special ceremonies in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. were planned across the city of Portland Wednesday on the anniversary of his death 50 years ago when he was gunned down by an assassin in Memphis, Tenn. on April 4, 1968.

Reflecting on civil rights prog-

ress since his death, residents were asked to rededicate themselves to King's vision of equality and justice by meeting at 5 p.m. at the Japanese-American Historical Plaza, downtown, and marching to the MLK statue outside the Oregon Convention Center for a 6:30 p.m. rally sponsored by the Albina Ministerial Alliance Coalition for Justice and Police Reform and Ec-

umenical Ministries of Oregon.

Metro regional government also planned to host community leaders early Wednesday to speak about the civil rights movement and civil rights work that's still needed. The NAACP Portland Branch was marking the anniversary with a noon ribbon-cutting ceremony for their new branch office at the Lloyd Center.