

VRC ousts Nestle's boycotter

A Eugene woman, who was arrested Saturday for refusing to dismantle a display urging a boycott of Nestle products, says that she was singled out from other political groups at an International Year of the Child exhibit at Valley River Center.

"It isn't that you can't be political at Valley River Center," says Cynthia Kokis, "it is that you can't be a certain type of political."

Kokis, the only person arrested in the incident, says she feels that the word "boycott," present on signs and literature at her booth, could be the reason she was asked to leave.

Kokis is a member of a Eugene organization that has joined groups in a number of countries in boycotting Nestle products as a protest against the corporation's baby formula marketing techniques in developing nations.

Kokis says she was aware that Valley River Center has a history of not allowing groups who support boycotts of a particular product to distribute information at the mall.

She says however, that the IYC exhibit included "all sorts of political things."

In particular she pointed to anti-abortion groups who were also present at the exhibit.

Dick Hansen, manager of Valley River Center, was unavailable for comment on Sunday.

"I really did not intend this to happen," Kokis says. "We offered to take down all the signs with the word boycott," she says, "but they wouldn't let us stay."

She will be arraigned in Eugene Municipal Court today at 1 p.m. on a charge of trespassing.

Kokis, who works with the Eugene Clergy and Laity Concerned information center on hunger and the politics of food, says she has been contacted by many people who have pledged support.

Execs visit classrooms

How do the men and women behind those corporate office doors and in the board rooms of American business make decisions day-to-day and in crisis situations?

Again this winter undergraduates and graduate students will mingle in the classrooms and campus lounges with business professionals in a special "Executive-In-Residence" program operated by the University of Oregon College of Business Administration.

The program, initiated last spring, is intended to give students a chance to "learn face-to-face" how businesses really operate, says Kenneth Ramsing, the University of Oregon management professor who directs the program.

Ramsing says business executives invited to the campus typically remain two or three days, speaking to the students in several business courses and meeting informally with interested students.

Leading off the winter term program, Ramsing says, will be Leslie Stevens, group vice president for finance and administration of Tektronics Inc. of Beaverton. Stevens will visit the campus Friday.

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