

## REGIONAL BRIEFS

### Judge bars signature-collecting group



PORTLAND (AP) — A Multnomah County Circuit judge has barred the conservative Oregon Citizens Alliance from collecting initiative signatures outside of Fred Meyer stores this weekend.

Circuit Judge Donald Londer on Friday issued a temporary restraining order prohibiting the collection of the signatures after a federal judge dismissed Fred Meyer Inc.'s appeal of state court rulings on similar restraining orders.

The Portland-based retail chain had contended in the federal action that it was protected by U.S. constitutional provisions that prohibit a government from taking private property without compensation. It said those rights were violated by state court rulings requiring the company to allow signatures to be gathered on its property.

But U.S. District Judge Helen Frye ruled that the contention is invalid because the Oregon Citizens Alliance and its political arm, the No Special Rights Committee, are not government officials or employees.

"Although the acts of the defendants in participating in the legislative process serve a public function, such service does not transform their conduct into state action," she wrote.

The Oregon Citizens Alliance is circulating petitions on proposed statewide and city measures. The statewide measure would identify homosexuality as abnormal behavior. The city measure would overturn an ordinance that prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation.

"It's an absolute major victory, not only for the OCA directly and the initiatives we're gathering signatures for in the city of Portland, but it's a major victory for the initiative process," alliance director Lon Mabon said.

However, the victory was short-lived. Later Friday, Londer barred the OCA from collecting signatures over the weekend and ordered additional arguments in the case Monday.

Fred Meyer attorney Charles Hinckle said he was disappointed by the ruling in U.S. District Court and would appeal it to the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals.

Fred Meyer had obtained a previous temporary restraining order in Multnomah County Circuit Court barring the alliance from collecting signatures over the Christmas and New Year's holidays.

The injunction expired Jan. 3. As a result, the alliance called off its boycott of the company and began collecting signatures at some Portland Fred Meyer stores last weekend.

Fred Meyer has argued that it has private property rights that allow it to bar petition signature gatherers. The issue is now before the Oregon Supreme Court.

### High school editors hand out condoms

SPOKANE (AP) — High school editors who handed out copies of their alternative student newspaper also distributed 500 foil-wrapped condoms.

The editors at Mead High School on Friday said they were trying to prevent the spread of AIDS, encourage distribution of condoms at school and attract publicity. The second issue of The Underground Voice also included an article warning students of the fatal disease.

"Lots of people came outside and got them," said Gabriel Scott, an editor. "Everyone wants the paper."

Scott said a parent provided the condoms, which were handed out across the street from the school. Editors initially approached the Spokane County Health District and Spokane AIDS Network about getting the condoms but were turned down, he said.

Mead principal Steve Hogue said the student editors did not violate school board policy because they distributed the condoms off campus property.

"We do allow and encourage differences of opinion," Hogue said. "As for the condoms, kids know what they are. If they're trying to shock people, they're only trying to shock the adults."

### Ukrainian visit ends with hasty medical tests

PORTLAND (AP) — A trip to Oregon by 111 Ukrainian youngsters is ending with disagreements among sponsors, a lack of money and hastily arranged medical tests after a costly visit to Disneyland.

The youngsters from the Kiev area arrived over the past 1 1/2 months for tests to determine the effects of their exposure to radioactivity in the Chernobyl nuclear accident.

But one of the children's chaperones complained that the trip served no medical purpose because they had not received the kind of detailed medical examinations they had expected. Instead, they received the kind of routine exams readily available in Kiev.

Dr. Tatiana Pochinok of the Institute of Pediatrics, Obstetrics and Gynecology in Kiev, said she expected the children to receive exams similar to those given another group of Ukrainian children in Germany in August.

"In Germany there was good organization," she said.

Late Friday, officials at Oregon's only nuclear power plant said they would conduct the sophisticated examinations to determine the presence of radioactive particles in the children's bodies.

Portland General Electric, the operators of the Trojan nuclear plant in Rainier, will use testing equipment used to monitor Trojan employees for radiation contamination, PGE spokesman Steve Sautter said.

He said 40 of the youngsters would undergo the test Monday.

Sergey Solovyov, a volunteer with Union Chernobyl, an organization that serves as an advocate for survivors of the nuclear accident, blames the confusion on the sponsor of the visit, Pastor Leonard Mielnik of the Russian Foursquare Church in Portland.

But Mielnik said no one told him that the children should be tested for radioactivity.

The children ended up undergoing exams at the Oregon Health Sciences University, which is not equipped to measure radioactivity throughout the children's bodies.

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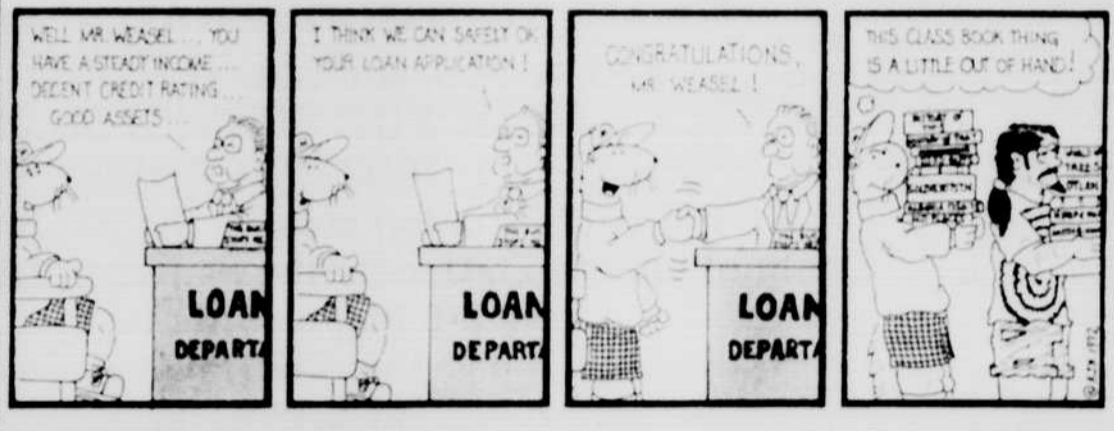
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