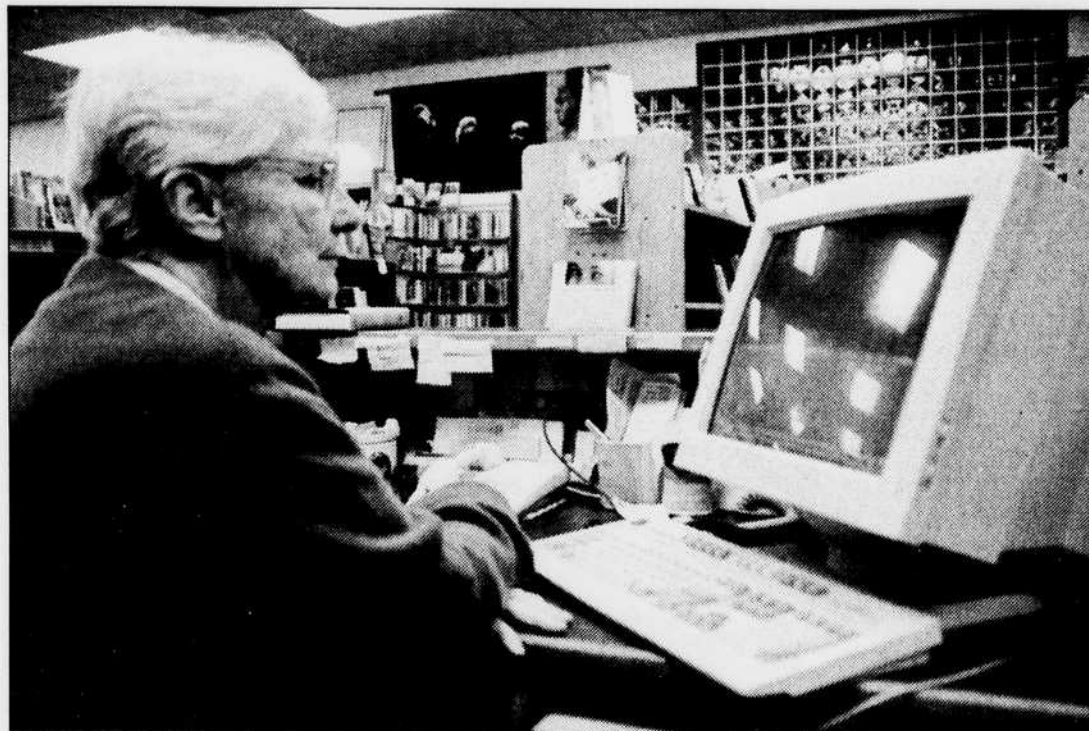


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Izzie Harbaugh, manager of Mother Kali's for eight years, works on her computer to keep all the store's business in order.

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Store: 'It's always been a struggle'

Continued from Page 1

baugh said. During the 1970s, when the bookstore was establishing itself, a gay rights campaign was held in the city. A brick was thrown through the window of the store and nasty messages were received. Soon after, Greenlaw, Picariello and Hunt found out the building was condemned.

"I don't know if they knew that when they moved in, but they got evicted," Harbaugh said.

The women quickly moved the store to Fifth Avenue and Blair Street. They spent only a short amount of time at that location.

"A number of women in the community came in to keep the store afloat," Harbaugh said.

At the time, Harbaugh also was heavily involved in the gay rights campaign.

She was laid off from her job as a computer programmer at the University when her position was eliminated, which enabled her to focus most of her energy on the bookstore. She has done so ever since.

"I hate [computers] anyhow," she said. "It was the best thing that

ever happened to me."

Over time, the 70-year-old woman has witnessed the closing of many Eugene bookstores. She said a women's bookstore on 18th Avenue went out of business, along with a bookstore that used to occupy the corner of 13th Avenue and Alder Street, where the Greenwood Restaurant is now located.

"It's not the easiest business," she said. "The whole books industry, I always say, is a hard way to make 10 cents."

Harbaugh said bookstore chains have made it quite difficult for independent bookstores to stay alive.

"We're always on the edge of disaster, it seems," she said. "For awhile, it seemed like things were getting better and I was getting more money. But right about that time, the super stores came on the scene."

Competition from stores like Barnes and Noble led Harbaugh to cut her own salary once she started collecting social security. She said anti-feminist backlash has also caused problems for the store.

"It's always been a struggle," she said. "But I think the backlash

is a sign that some people feel threatened, so we're making some progress."

But Harbaugh stressed that relations between Mother Kali's and nearby bookstores, such as Smith Family and the University of Oregon Bookstore, are quite good.

"They're very cooperative," she said. "They don't see us as a threat because we're such a specialty store."

At a recent Mother Kali's board meeting, the three directors, of which Harbaugh is one, discussed renewing the lease on the store, a pending lawsuit by independent bookstore owners against a publisher that illegally provided special perks to bookstore chains, and how to get by.

"The independent stores we have in town that are left are more or less specialty stores that stock the kinds of books Barnes and Noble never would," she said. "If they succeed and we get pushed out of business, a lot of information will be lost. The independent bookstores are much more a part of the community. And if we're gone, the community will miss us."

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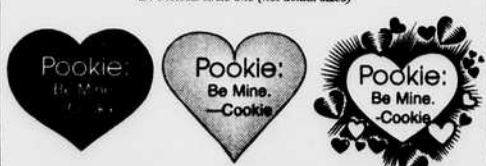
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