

Lombard St., ready to supply North Portland with stocking stuffers, hostess gifts and specialty items to pile under the tree.

The gay-owned store is loaded with items from Japan and Germany and is the lone local distributor of nostalgic, old-time candy from Berlin. Lots of anime, candles from local company Pacifica and handbags from Queen Bee fly off the shelves as well. From wallets to baby bags, the vinyl must-haves range from \$24 to \$130.

The store is showcasing and selling the artwork of Whitney Superstar. Superstar's paintings had been sold at First and Last Thursday gallery walks but are now found exclusively at Greg's.

Michel Talley of Greg's says response to the new store has been amazing. "St. Johns is growing with the young population and the gay community. This is turning into the new gay area of town. There's nothing like Greg's in St. Johns, but we're hoping it's going to start a trend."



Michel Talley (left) and Greg Klaus of Greg's are bringing fun, eclectic gifts to the Hawthorne and St. Johns districts.

northwest

Wal-Mart Bends to Christian 'Values'

Just Out reported Oct. 20 that retail giant Wal-Mart, as part of its "commitment to diversity," joined the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC).

This decision sparked a great deal of controversy both with the religious right and the sexual minorities community. Some queers felt as though this was a dangerous act of assimilation and a ploy to appeal to the buying power of the community. Others were concerned about other social and political policies of the corporation. Wal-Mart refuses to offer same-sex domestic partner benefits, although it includes sexual orientation in its nondiscrimination policy.

Some of Wal-Mart's fiercest criticism came from the religious right, arguing that the store's Christian values were being betrayed. One activist group, which organizes via the Web site SaveWalMart.com, described its goal to "save Wal-Mart from the radical homosexual agenda," stating, "The NGLCC desires that the world's largest retailer would also become the world's largest promoter of homosexual sodomy!" This group encouraged its

followers to protest outside Wal-Mart stores, while others, such as the American Family Association, called for a boycott on Black Friday and during the holiday season.

The Wal-Mart corporation released a statement Nov. 21 saying it would "not make corporate contributions to support or oppose highly controversial issues unless they directly relate to our ability to serve our customers" before going on to say, "Wal-Mart does not have a position on same-sex marriage, and we do not give preference to gay or lesbian suppliers." Immediately following this announcement, the American Family Association announced its pleasure with the compliance and encouraged Christians to return to the stores.

Wal-Mart's press announcement stated, "Each Wal-Mart store should reflect the values of its customers and support the vision they hold for their community." Those "values" were demonstrated the next day when Wal-Mart announced a "generous" donation to Operation Christmas, a campaign to "spread Christmas cheer to military families." NGLCC could not be reached for comment.

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Retail giant Wal-Mart appeased the right wing with a statement just in time for holiday shopping.

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