

# Loyalty to small business helps create independent neighborhoods

By Barbara Quinn

Small storefront businesses contribute not only to convenience but character and an attractive destination for residents. Many neighborhoods in north Portland as well as the Linnton community were once their own small towns and have maintained an aura of independence due to the presence of small businesses along a main street. Local businesses such as a community bank, a grocer, drug store, coffee shops, and a full array of small unique endeavors contribute greatly to

the livability of neighborhoods. While many outlying suburban communities are made up of vast tracts of housing that require automobiles to get to stores, communities such as Kenton, St. Johns, Linnton, University Park and others along Lombard St. are fortunate to offer easily accessible small business districts within walking distance where it's fun to shop and where stores are usually run by friendly locals who become more than just an anonymous face. Instead of

only franchises and mini-malls, we are lucky to have small, quality conscious, unique enterprises who can offer a personal touch to their customers. Many neighborhood entrepreneurs have taken a greater chance on success by opening businesses in smaller communities and do so because they want a connection with their customers and like the small town quality. This is especially true of those that came to our neighborhoods before they were cool.

Small businesses require customer loyalty to survive. During the holiday season and especially during construction activities it is good to remember how much small storefronts contribute to the character and sustainability of our neighborhoods. Without them we have to travel much farther to find what we want. By making a point to shop locally, we not only find unique items, but also help maintain the independent communities we value.

## Local art gallery announces Grand Opening

At their December 5 Grand Opening, Ryan Ao showcased seven street photographers' work at Marvel 29's live/work studio space, 7227 N. Philadelphia Ave. in Unit 102. Ryan Ao Gallery is also housing Ryan Ao Media, focusing on professional photography and videography, as well as Constance Ao Healing, a massage studio and intuitive readings space. Constance Ao's space will be hosting regularly rotating fine art. Ryan Ao Gallery will be primarily focused on rotating fine art photography in the gallery on a monthly basis. There will be digital art displayed occasionally as well as other fine arts on rare occasions and group shows every other month, with solo shows during the months between. Ryan Ao Gallery aims to bring photographers together to collaborate, do workshops, sell their art, and in general bring more fine art photography exposure to Portland and St. Johns.

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6) March 25	deadline Mar. 16
7) April 8	deadline Mar. 30
8) April 22	deadline Apr. 13
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10) May 20	deadline May 11
11) June 3	deadline May 25
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17) Aug. 26	deadline Aug. 17
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