

# Tempo

Portland Observer

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## TRIPLE A QUALITY MEAT MARKET



Don and Traci Collar, behind the counter of the Triple A Quality Meat Market, offer North Portland residents excellent quality, fresh cut meats. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

### A business of his own

by Kris Caldwell

Dan Collar owns a business that requires a great deal of time, care, worry, and just plain hard work. Although this description fits any one of a thousand businesses, Dan Collar's is unique. He owns the Triple A Quality Meat Market located at 7406 N. Vancouver.

"Everybody thinks that if you own a meat market you've got it made," stated 44-year-old Collar. "It's a hard livin'."

Dan has been cutting meat for 20 years. But it wasn't until February that he did so for his own market. He chose to locate it in North Portland simply because he felt the community needed a good meat market.

That he grew up in the area also may have influenced his decision. He went to Highland Grade School (now Martin Luther King) and graduated from Jefferson High in 1958. He then entered the Navy and served as a cook.

Becoming a meat cutter was not a life-long ambition for Dan. But it was a natural transition for him after the service.

"You can make a livin' at it, but no one's going to get rich," claimed Dan.

In Dan's business there is no time to worry about getting rich. He puts in 12-14 hours a day, six days a week. His day starts at 6 a.m. When most people are still in bed, Dan is checking his equipment to see that it is clean and sterile. On his day off, he must still go to the market to check the refrigeration, the lifeline of any meat market. Dan's concerns include the daily deliveries,

and the condition of his product before and after he receives it. But it's all worthwhile to Dan. "I have a lot of fun with the market," he said. Dan enjoys conversing with his customers to discover who they are, where they're from, and how they will prepare the meat.

Dan feels that the longer he stays in the neighborhood, the better known he will become. In six months of operation, Dan already has drawn regular customers from as far away as Vancouver, and Tigard.

Although his hard work has paid off, choice meat has been the number one factor in the success of the market. "I bric my own beef, do my own cutting, and let it hang and age," said the proud owner. He ages all of his meat for at least a week, and does not add preservatives or tenderizers to it.

The kinds of meat featured in the Triple A Market include: beef, fresh pork; fresh pork sausage; bacon; all steaks (including gourmet steaks cut to customer specifications); smoked meats, and fresh fish that Dan receives weekly from Louisiana.

The store, which is open from 9 a.m.-6 p.m. Monday-Saturday, is run by the Collar family, including his wife, Sandra and three daughters, Traci, Lori and Angela.

Dan would slowly like to expand and add more facilities such as a smoke house. However large his business grows, Dan Collar is certain that he will keep it in the North Portland community. "There's a lot of nice people in the community. I've gotten along with everyone."



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