

# METROPOLITAN

## Asian store serves community

by Bob Lothian

Walking down the aisles of the Vieng Lao Oriental Food Center at 1032 N.E. Killingsworth is like taking a trip to S.E. Asia.

You'll find 50 lb. sacks of rice, pickled banana buds, curry paste, sweet mung bean cakes, betel leaves, whole dried fish, palm hearts, quail eggs, huge dried lotus leaves and a variety of pungent herbs with untranslatable names.

Many of these exotic delicacies came from Thailand, said store worker Chi Hong Bee. Thailand is open to trade with the U.S. and has food similar to that preferred by the store's mainly Lao and Cambodian customers. Communist Cambodia

and Laos do not trade much with the U.S.

Hong, together with his brother, who owns the store, his sister and wife, have operated the small store for three years. "We thought it was a good idea to have a store here because a lot of us live in this area," he said.

Many customers live within walking distance. Low rent, proximity to the freeway, a busline, and the possibility of a community of Asian businesses add to the location's advantages, he said.

A Southeast Asian business district is emerging near the store along Killingsworth between the freeway and Cascade campus, with two restaur-

ants, two markets, a photo studio and a pool hall/cultural center. The district has seen hard times in the past but the Asian emergence appears to be leading a comeback.

Living in a multi-racial community has not been difficult, said Hong. "It's a nice place. We are getting along very well, we don't see any big problems among us."

Hong speaks Cambodian, Chinese, Lao, English, a little French and a little Vietnamese. Knowing so many languages is an asset, he says. "The Lao and Cambodians like to come to our store because we speak the common language. We can help them find the food they want." Vieng Lao

means "City of Laos" in the Lao language, he said.

About 85 percent of the store's customers are S.E. Asians from North Portland, he said, with the rest from Guam, the Fiji Islands and other countries. On a recent Saturday, Basko Kante, a regular customer from Ghana, shopped in the store for potato starch and special items for curry dishes.

Hong said his nine-member family emigrated to the U.S. in stages starting ten years ago. "We were forced to leave because the communists took over the country and if we didn't leave we would have been in great trouble," he said.

Business remains steady, and the family would like to expand into a larger store in the future. "This is a start in this area," he said, though. "We still need the community support."



At the 33rd Annual Debutante and Cavaliers Ball held Saturday, December 29, 1984, at the Red Lion, Jantzen Beach, these young men and women were presented to the community: L-R back - Kevin De-Ron Fuller, Kimberley Davette Mason, Alex Harvey,

Kimberly Ann Martin, Christina M. Travis Shamsud-Din, Velma Maria Spears, Tammy Pruitt, Daryl Le-Shuan Wooding. L - R Front - Angela Maria Watson, Rosalyn Hicks, Stacy Lavette Thompson, Rena Renee Hurley, Andrew M. Stephens.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

## Center offers recycling

by Robert Lothian

In case you've been wondering about that ex-gas station with the dumpsters out in front at the corner of North Portland Blvd. and Denver Ave., it's a recycling center.

You can drop your old newspapers at the center, glass of all colors, tin cans, paper sacks, aluminum and cardboard. Even used motor oil can be poured into the tank that once contained gasoline. Portland Recycling Team, the company that runs the center, then sells the oil for about 20 cents per gallon. With their big trucks they haul the large dumpsters of newspaper, cardboard and glass to processors who buy it.

PRT has been in business for about 10 years. They have four centers in Portland and one in Lake Oswego, handling tons of reusable materials that would otherwise end up in the dump.

According to PRT worker Louise Woodward, who sometimes works at the Portland Blvd. center, recycling helps the environment and creates jobs.

"I believe in recycling," said Woodward, 54, a full-time employee with PRT for five years. "It's a throwaway society and it's got to stop some place. I just don't believe in things going out to the dump."

On Wednesdays during the school year, Woodward does recycling education in Portland schools. "I really get involved," she said. "The other day I went up to Mall 205 and saw

this dumpster full of cardboard going to the dump and I thought, 'What a shame, all that cardboard going to waste.'"

Woodward sometimes gets help from Rick Broadfield, 18, a junior at Roosevelt High. Broadfield, a friend of the family who lives nearby, has been helping about four years, and sometimes gets money for it. "Recycling is a good idea, it's easy and it's quick," he said.

Some customers are so adept at recycling that they are able to avoid a garbage pickup at their house. Also, she said, "We have a lot of people that come from Vancouver with their aluminum cans, seeing as how they don't have a bottle bill."

The center sometimes has a problem with people dropping off junk, she said. PRT does not take magazines, junk mail, plastic, scrap metal or old car parts. "Plastics are a big problem. We were taking plastics for a while but we ended up with a lot of garbage."

Furniture and other usable items that people leave end up at the PRT center on NW Front. Doors, windows, lumber, firewood and other materials can be picked up there for a fraction of what they would cost at other places, she said.

Recycling once received a lot of public support with CETA jobs and subsidies from the city and from Metro. "All of those things have been cut back, and it's really hurt us," said Woodward. About the only public

help PRT gets now, she said, comes from the courts in the form of community service workers. The company is managing to struggle along and keep its 17 employees busy, although "we're lucky to break even," she said.

Woodward herself came to PRT through CETA, after having raised five children alone and finding herself unemployed after getting laid off from her sales job in a sporting goods store.

She describes her present job as ideal. "I love meeting people, I love talking to the school kids," she said. "The work is hard at times, it's depressing at times, but when you get to talking to people and realizing the good you're doing, it makes it all worthwhile."

## Career choice workshop

Make Choices — Get Jobs, is the title of a free Career Cycle workshop at Portland Community College's Cascade Campus, 705 N. Killingsworth.

Scheduled for Thursday, February 7 from 6-8 p.m. in Porta-Building 2, the workshop deals with coping with job loss and job changes.

Anyone wishing to attend the Make Choices — Get Jobs workshop should call the PCC Cascade Department, 283-2541, to reserve a space. The presentation is offered free to everyone.

## Women learn home repair

Carpenter, contractor and engineering aide Patricia Robertson will teach two home repair classes through Portland Community College this winter term.

The classes, entitled Home Repair for Women I and II are designed to provide introductory information on parts of the house that work and what to do when they don't.

The classes are held weekly at Oakley Green Middle School, 6031 N. Montana, from 7-9 p.m. beginning Tuesday, January 15. Part I lasts four weeks, and will introduce students to commonly used hand and power tools, tool safety and the use and selection of fasteners. The home security portion is particularly relevant to crime prevention efforts, according to the instructor.

Part II, also four weeks in duration, deals with the mechanical skills and problem solving techniques associated with common household repairs. Insulation improvement, problems with plumbing, electricity and other areas will be covered in the class which begins February 12.

Registration for either of the classes may be done now through PCC. For further information contact the PCC Community Services Department at 283-2541.

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