

METROPOLITAN

Shopkeeper caters to Indian immigrants

by Robert Lothian

John J. Devi Dass has done a lot in his 36 years.

He was born and grew up in the Fiji Islands in the South Pacific. His parents had moved there from India, drawn by programs of the British colonial government to develop the islands.

As a boy he developed an interest in movies. He has made one movie already in India and plans to make two more soon.

At a young age, he left the islands as a merchant seaman. He traveled to New Zealand, Australia, Pakistan, India and Canada before settling in Portland 16 years ago.

He speaks Hindi, the language of India; English; Fiji; and Urdu, which is spoken in Pakistan.

Somewhere along the way, he became a journeyman boilermaker. Night finds him repairing ships at the Swan Island shipyards.

During the day he can be found at his small store, Fiji Isle Groceries—House of India, which he has operated since 1978 at 3964 N. Interstate.

It's the only store in Portland catering to immigrants from India. About 2,000 people of Indian extraction live in Portland, according to Dass.

He knows most of them. "My customers, if they don't see me for a couple of days, they start looking for me," he said.

About 50 percent of his business is



John J. Devi Dass behind the counter of his Fiji Isle Grocery. (Photo: Richard J. Brown)

with Southeast Asian refugees, he said.

Dass enjoys the cross-cultural experiences afforded by his store, his travels to India and his work in the shipyards. "I like to meet people from all around the world," he said.

The small store, a former gas station, is filled with the aroma of imported teas and spices, especially

curry. He sells canned vegetables from India, canned mutton (sheep meat) from Australia and "papa dam" — deep-fried rice cakes popular with Indians and Orientals.

Illustrations of Indian gods and goddesses line the walls of his tiny office. One is the "god of money," he said, smiling.

A color photograph shows Dass

with India's top movie star, Amitabh Bacchan. A copy of *Screen* magazine lies on his desk.

Dass said movies have been his hobby since boyhood. The movie he made in India, "A Story of Midnight," is a family drama about a cataclysmic monsoon flood and how it affects an Indian family.

He plans to return to India this summer to make two more "sad movies," as he calls them. "Indians like tearjerkers," he said.

It is unlikely, however, that India's top movie star will be in Dass's movies because he has gone into politics. Dass predicts he will be prime minister within ten years.

On the store's back wall is a unique collection of Hindi and Urdu language video tapes. His is the only store in Oregon which carries the tapes, said Dass.

Some of the videos have English subtitles. One, "Girl From India," is good for Americans who want to learn about Indian culture, he said.

Dass also operates a travel agency and a small ship supply company out of his store.

He is a member of the local Indian Association, which each year puts on a fall festival called "Dipa Walli," with music, dancing and food.

Dass looks forward to the success of his two movies, and returning to Portland to build a Hindu temple. People from India in Portland don't have a temple now," he said.

Volunteers vital to Bess Kaiser programs

Velma Stowe, a 74-year-old dynamo, and Tracy Wilson, a 14-year-old Roosevelt High School student, have been named Bess Kaiser Hospital's adult and student volunteers of the year.

Stowe, who lives in Northeast Portland, has been volunteering her energies and talents at the hospital following an extended hospitalization there seven years ago. Today, she

heads up the volunteer effort of assembling blank charts, sits on the volunteer's budget committee, and takes photographs of the hospital and staff and special occasions. Last year, she was featured on a KOIN-TV hero segment.

"Velma Stowe is a rare, special individual," says Betty Perkins, director of volunteers. It was Perkins who first got Stowe interested in vol-



Velma Stowe, 74, is Bess Kaiser Medical Center's volunteer of the year.

unteering. "I was desperate to have someone to help with the patient mail, so I asked a patient sitting in a waiting room if she would like to help. She's been here ever since, radiating energy, optimism, and friendliness."

A North Portland resident, Wilson

enjoys swimming, cooking, sewing, and most school classes. While volunteering at the hospital she visits patients, gives shampoos, collates charts, and generally helps where needed. "She's wonderful with patients," comments Perkins. Since the fall, Wilson has donated approximately 157 hours at the hospital.

In 1984, 93 adults volunteered 29,844 hours while 59 students shared 5,123 hours with the hospital. Receiving special recognition for thousands of hours of dedicated service were Cora Lou DiPietro (8,000 hours); Clare Inglesby (7,000 hours); Jean Rider (6,000 hours); Lois Hughes (5,000 hours); and Virginia Schunk, (4,000 hours).

Bess Kaiser Medical Center is one of two nonprofit, community hospitals providing hospital care to approximately 280,000 members of Kaiser Permanente, a group practice prepayment health plan serving people in Portland and Salem in Oregon and Vancouver and Longview-Kelso in Washington.



Tracy Wilson, 14-year-old Roosevelt High School student, and Bess Kaiser Medical Center's student volunteer of the year.

FINALLY A DIET YOU CAN TRUST AND A NAME YOU CAN TRUST...

When Dick Gregory puts his name to a product, you know it has to be something special. Dick Gregory's Slim Safe Bahamian Diet is the first product ever to carry his name. Years of intensive research by top medical and nutritional experts make this diet so safe it meets even the standards of Dick Gregory. It contains Dick Gregory's famed 4X Formula in a powdered concentrate that mixes easily in juice and tastes great. Now it can be yours with Cernitin America.

To join Dick Gregory in a business opportunity as a distributor of this product with Cernitin America, contact:

Charles G. or Ione V. Davis
19670 S.W. Blanton St.
Aloha, Oregon 97007

For fast service in ordering Dick Gregory's SLIM-Safe Bahamian Diet, send check or money order made payable to Charles G. Davis for \$19.75.



Dick Gregory



SAM BROOKS

Brooks becomes PCC director

Sam Brooks, S. Brooks and Associates, Inc., has been selected as acting consulting director for the Portland Community College Cascade Business Center Corporation.

In making the announcement, Executive Dean Burdett Emery commented, "Brooks was selected to step in on an interim basis because of his own skill in the small business area and his familiarity with our program."

Brooks replaces Andy Delaney who resigned from the position for personal reasons.

Brooks was on the original board when the corporation was established two years ago, serves on the state Small Business Advisory Council and is very active in the neighborhood served by the Corporation.

The Corporation utilizes space available at the Cascade Campus to help give small businesses a start. Not

only do they rent at rates below market value, but the business ventures receive counseling, instruction and support services.

"I was pleased to be asked to do the job," Brooks said, "although it won't be easy to take over in this manner. I consider myself a small business generalist, especially good at organizational work."

In that capacity Brooks plans to put together a system so anyone can operate the program. "We will have files for each applicant and occupant that includes the application, acceptance form, needs assessment and management development plan," Brooks explained.

Brooks also serves on the Portland Private Industry Council, the OMSI council, and is present of the North-Northeast Business Boosters.

NOTARY BONDDED
J & M TAYLOR & ASSOCIATES
BOOKKEEPING & INCOME TAX SERVICE
LICENSED TAX CONSULTANT

- TAX PLANNING
- PROFESSIONAL TYPING

JOE TAYLOR
Tax Consultant

(503) 249-0023
by appointment
5621 N.E. 39th Ave.
Portland, OR 97211

ANNETTE'S SOUTHERN KITCHEN

SOUL FOOD

BAR-B-QUE RIBS • CHICKEN • HAMBURGERS • GUMBO
Breakfast at Any Time
Open 7 Days A Week, 7:00 A.M. - 7 P.M.

5144 N.E. Union Ave.
Portland, Oregon
284-6106

Announcing wide area paging coverage without the wide area price.

The paging people who have always brought you selection and service now bring you one of the widest coverage areas in Portland.

Plus one big advantage: Our competitors charge you for "extended coverage." RAM includes it as standard bill of fare.

Premium coverage without a premium price. Because at RAM, we believe your pager is only as good as the area it reaches.

226-1507 **RAM**
The Beeper People!

RAM Broadcasting of Oregon, Inc., 713 S.W. 12th Avenue

Bottom Round Roast

USDA Choice Beef, Boneless lb. **1.69**

Lean Ground Beef Fresh lb. **1.29**
Young Ducks Rocky River Brand 3 to 5 lbs. Avg. lb. **.99**

PRAIRIE MARKET

FRESH MEAT IS AVAILABLE AT:

LOMBARD - 7611 N. Exeter
PORTLAND - 14410 S.E. Division
PORTLAND - 3955 S.E. Powell Blvd.
SAN RAFAEL - 1910 N.E. 122nd

OREGON CITY - 878 Molalla Ave.
HILLSBORO - 960 S.E. Oak
FOREST GROVE - 1531 Pacific Ave.
PORTLAND - 74th and 6th