

St. Vincent de Paul store remodeled

The St. Vincent de Paul store at 740 N. Killingsworth may be one of the oldest buildings in the neighborhood, but it's now one of the most attractive. The store has been completely renovated, painted and expanded from about 4,000 square feet to almost 7,000. Completely new fixtures and wall shelves were contributed by Sprouse Reitz; Fred Meyer donated clothing racks.

According to volunteer stores committee chairman Bob DeLong, retired regional supervisor, Sprouse Reitz, "The project was completely financed with private funds, from St. Vincent de Paul and a \$15,000 grant from the Jackson Foundation. The Jackson Foundation grant responded to community need after the Milwaukie St. Vincent de Paul store was destroyed by fire last spring. St. Vincent de Paul stores offer low income families clothing and necessary household items and appliances at affordable prices, generating income to support other St. Vincent de Paul social service programs."



Demonstrators are removed from VA office after refusing to leave.

(Photo: Richard J. Brown)

"Pumpkins for Peace" at VA

by Robert Lothian

Fourteen anti-nuclear demonstrators wearing pumpkin and other Halloween costumes were dragged from the Portland office of the

Veterans Administration (VA) Thursday.

The demonstrators had sat in an aisle at the office, on the 12th floor of the Federal Building downtown, until they were dragged singing and waving into elevators and escorted to the ground floor by Federal Protective Service officers. The officers were assisted by Portland police who said the protesters were not arrested and taken to jail because there was not enough jail space.

Spokeswoman Laura Powell said that about 40 demonstrators from various groups chose to protest at the VA because of what they contended was that agency's lack of assistance to approximately 250,000 "atomic vets"—veterans exposed to radiation during testing while they were in the military. The protesters demanded an end to nuclear testing, and that President Reagan negotiate a test ban treaty at the summit conference on Nov. 18.

Powell read a statement to William Ingram, assistant director of the Portland regional office of the VA. She asked that full compensation and medical assistance be given to the "atomic vets." She also asked why the local VA office was apparently not recognizing a state law which allows veterans legal help with claims relating to poisoning by radiation and herbicide agent orange.

"You're not dealing with the problem of atomic vets...we're ready to stay until you're willing to talk about it," said Powell. "Until you start helping these people, you are literally committing murder."

Ingram at first refused to comment, but then got into a brief argument with the protesters. "I think you have a valid and reasonable complaint, but it is not within the jurisdiction of this office," Ingram said. The VA has no legal mandate to help "atomic vets" until medical tests show a relationship between radiation exposure and disease, he said.

"When medical technology reaches the point where studies show that diseases are caused by radiation, then the VA will help," he said. Ingram was unable to say how many local "atomic vets" had filed disability claims, but he did outline a series of "protocols" open to them. According to Powell, less than 1 percent of "atomic vets" nationwide have received compensation. She said that at least one local vet exposed to radiation during military tests who is now suffering health problems had been denied redress by the local VA office.

Ingram appeared irritated when one of the protesters suggested that he was insensitive to the needs of veterans. He responded that he had spent two hours that morning individually helping one veteran. "We're not an adversary to the vets," he said.

After talking to Ingram, the protesters sat in a circle to sing and discuss what to do. After an hour, a smaller group apparently willing to get arrested sat in the aisle and were dragged away a short time later. Ingram had said that the demonstrators could stay as long as they were peaceful, but that as soon as they disrupted office operations they would be hauled away.

Celery has negative calories—it takes more calories to eat a piece of celery than the celery has in it to begin with.

Powell said the Portland Halloween demonstration was part of a coordinated nationwide protest in 38 states to put pressure on Reagan to negotiate a test ban. She said that 50 Oregonians were at the test site in Nevada protesting on Halloween.

Powell and several other demonstrators wore orange pumpkin costumes and green ties, with their faces painted green. "We decided that looking like pumpkins is no more ridiculous than the U.S. government producing nuclear weapons," Powell said.



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Community Directory and profiles

Ads On This Page Are Of Local Businesses That Are Helping Build A Better Community

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