

HOUSING

The
Portland
Observer

Jobs Move To Portland From California As Housewares Importer Comes To Town

With the help of the Portland Development Commission, Portland will welcome to town a new company and new jobs on March 10.

Richards Homewares, Inc. is a 55-year old manufacturer and importer of housewares, with offices in both the Los Angeles and New York City areas, Richards deals in closet storage and home organization products, as well as protective covers for outdoor furniture and barbecues imported from Hong Kong and Taiwan.

The company employs 15 people at its Long Beach, California office. Annual sales are in the \$4-5 million range.

Needing a much larger facility for his growing company and no longer satisfied with the quality of life in Los Angeles, Robert Frelander, owner and president of Richards Homewares, Inc., began in 1991 to look for another West Coast location.

Reports Frelander, "It is important for an import company to be near the Pacific Rim. We started to look at our options.

Frelander contacted the Portland Development Commission to learn more about Portland. As for any

business, the skills of the workforce were important, and Richards was especially interested in the quality of marine, truck and air transportation in the region.

PDC worked closely with the company over a lengthy period of time, answering questions and addressing concerns. PDC forwarded information of the North/Northeast Portland Enterprise Zone and on the loan programs PDC and the Oregon Economic Development Department make available to businesses coming to town.

But Mr. Frelander was also interested in the quality of life in Portland. "The more I learned about Portland, it seemed like a great place for my employees to settle down and raise their families," Frelander raves. "My whole staff talked it over and over, and we decided Portland was the place for our company."

Richards Homewares needed two things to move, and Frelander again turned to PDC.

First, the company had to have a home. PDC provided industrial property inventories giving Frelander a feel for the Portland market.

Frelander worked with commercial broker Norris Beggs & Simpson to find a building, Richards purchased a 35,000 square-foot building located at 3810 North Mississippi in the Lower Albina Industrial Area.

Second, Richards needed high-skilled employees. Five members of his current staff are joining Frelander on the move north. So along with Frelander and his company comes jobs for Portlanders, five or six at first, with more soon to follow.

To recruit top notch local people for his business, Frelander turned to PDC's JobNet program. JobNet links new and expanding companies to qualified workers from the Portland area. Frelander reports that he is very pleased with the skills and character of the people JobNet has sent his way.

Mayor Katz is eager to greet the new firm: "This is what it's all about. The best thing Portland has to offer are our people and our quality of life. When a firm like Richards Homewares comes to town, bringing jobs to North Portland, it makes the quality of life better for all of our citizens".

How Landscaping Makes Space Feel Alive and Cozy

(NU) - This is an interior decor treasure hunt you must not miss.

The goods can be found in shopping malls, office towers and even hotels. They increase property values and occupancy rates.

No, it's not furniture nor art. The big secret, it turns out, is plants.

Check out a successful local mall or office lobby. Not only is the use of plants an inexpensive way to decorate surroundings, but it's proving tremendously popular to occupants, clients and customers.

For example, Woodfield Green Executive Centre near Chicago credits its 86 percent occupancy rate, compared to a national average of 65 percent, to the interior landscaping.

"It's a major selling point," says Centre Manager Karen Ptasnik, as she stands in the middle of the plant-filled, oak-paneled, glass-roofed atrium. "The plants make us unique."

Interior Landscape magazine reports that "interior landscaping is key" to the Embassy Suites hotel chain's excellent occupancy rates, which run far higher than the industry average.

The unique Opryland Hotel in Nashville, Tenn., charges an average \$30 extra for rooms overlooking its 12 acres of interior landscaping, with walkways, gazebos, waterfalls and 18,000 plants of 600 species.

Soothing the Savage

The ultimate interior plantscape, however, can be found — where else? — in the ultimate mall: the gargantuan Mall of America in Bloomington, Minn.

And the plantscape makes Knott's Camp Snoopy, an entertainment park located inside the mall, look like it is outdoors.

That's because Terry Van Gorder, president and chief executive officer of the park's parent company, Knott's Berry Farm, insists that mall entertainment parks can't look like they're indoors.

At Cincinnati's plant-filled Tri County Mall, the construction coordinator for the management firm, Bill Lively, said, "When you're in a pleasant environment, you want to stay there and shop there."

Doctors have apparently considered this advice. Since they know that people definitely prefer not hanging around their offices, they've begun using plants as mind-soothers for worried patients.

If you want landscaping tips for home or business — ranging from simple to exceptionally lavish — request information by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Associated Landscape Contractors of America, Dept. Interior, 12200 Sunrise Valley Drive, Reston, VA 22091.

More Young People Are Starting To Smoke Each Day

In the United States, 3,000 young people start to smoke every day. Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders will discuss findings on Smoking and Health, Preventing Tobacco Use Among Young People at a satellite broadcast town meeting. The meeting, called Youth and Elders Against Tobacco Use, will air at nine sites in Oregon from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm on March 24.

A panel of experts and local tobacco control advocates will interact with participants nationwide in discussions related to tobacco addiction, addition in adolescence, the link between smoking and other drug use, the impact of tobacco advertising on young people and the issues surrounding youth access to tobacco. The town meeting will bring together policymakers and youth, health, education, and substance abuse prevention advocates on the federal, state and local levels to discuss the problems of and solutions to tobacco use by young people.

The Oregon sites selected to air this free program are:

- Crook County High School, Prineville
- Douglas County Health Department, Roseburg
- Hood River Memorial Hospital, Hood River
- Southern Oregon State College, Medford
- Lane Community College, Eugene
- Portland State University, Portland
- Blue Mountain Community College, Pendleton
- Eastern Oregon State College, La Grande
- Willamina High School, Willamina

Call 288-0033 For Ad Information

"Retirement Housing: What's Right For You?"

A class which explores the many housing options available during retirement years will be held at Alameda Community School, 2732 NE Fremont, Portland. The class will meet for 2 sessions, on Monday, April 4 and April 11 from 6:30 pm to 9 pm. Cost of the course is \$13 plus a \$1.50 materials fee. Pre-registration is advised.

The course is designed for seniors and families who are helping older relatives make housing decisions. It will explore the many options which are available including condominiums, apartments, manufactured housing, and other kinds of typical senior housing.

The class will focus on when is the

best time to investigate a house change and when is the best time to move. Cost of housing and the amenities which are available will also be discussed. Other factors such as location, style and other important factors to consider will be covered. The class will help participants decide on the type of housing which is best for them.

The instructor is Bonnie L. Vorenberg, who served as the National Enrichment Director of the Hillhaven Corporation and has been the Executive Director of a retirement community. She has worked in the field of aging for 14 years in the areas of arts, activities, marketing and management.

For information contact Susan Potter at 284-1686 or Bonnie L. Vorenberg at 335-3343.

YOUR TAXES

Relocating? Here's What You Can Deduct

News USA

(NU) - Congratulations! You have been promoted to that new position. Now you must relocate yourself and your family. Well, it's 1994, and the American Payroll Association warns that the rules of the relocation game have changed drastically.

your new home, you cannot deduct the cost of any meals eaten on the way. It is a good idea to "bring your own," because a reimbursement for the meals from your employer could mean indigestion when tax time rolls around in 1995.

What's Deductible

The following are considered "Qualified Moving Expenses" under the President's Budget Bill passed last year. Only these costs can be deducted from your 1994 income, and reimbursements for them from your employer need not be included in your wages.

- The reasonable (the IRS has not yet defined "reasonable") cost of moving household goods and personal effects from your former home to your new home.

- The reasonable costs of travel and lodging in moving from the old location to the new one.

Bring your picnic basket! Even though you can deduct your costs in moving yourself and your family to

What's Not Deductible

That is all you are allowed to classify as deductible. Any additional reimbursements made to you by your employer will be reported as taxable income and taxes will be withheld at the time of payment. If your employer gives you a lump sum payment for all expenses, the payment will be handled in the same manner. Payments or reimbursements will either be shown as taxable income on your Form W-2, "Wage and Tax Statement," or shown in Box 13 with the Code "P" to show the amount of "Qualified Moving Expense" payments.

Good luck on your move and in your new position. Just be sure to check your tax liability closely before year's end.

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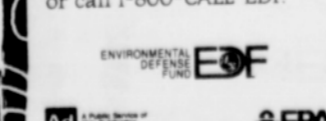
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