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Profession asserts worth to business

By BRIDGIT PARNELL
Daily Journal of Commerce staff

At the very first downturn of profits, the first thing a company parts with is its public relations, followed by its advertising. Or rather, that used to be the case.

"Convincing corporate management that public relations should be the last, not the first, to go has been somewhat of an obstacle," says Rolf Glerum, new president of the Columbia River Chapter of the Public Relations Society of America, "but public relations is becoming more recognized by top management, and the importance of the service is reaching a breakthrough."

Rolf Glerum

Glerum is vice president and general manager of Rockey/Marsh public relations in Portland.

The public relations society's new officer looks to the coming year as an opportunity for further development of the profession on a regional basis, in keeping with a similar emphasis in the society's national organization.

A series of professional development seminars are in the planning stages, to be conducted locally in the North Pacific district.

In addition, Glerum reports the chapter is on the verge of publishing a book of "case-studies, case-histories, and how-to's of public relations."

The publication, over a year in the making so far, features chapters, submitted by members, dealing with such things as emergency public relations, financial public relations, how to set up a press conference, and other aspects of the FR business.

Glerum succeeds Jean Bradley as president. Other 1981 officers include vice president Dan O. Barnhart, of the Oregon Association of Nurserymen; treasurer Frank King, freelance; and secretary Joseph N. Moffatt, public relations manager of Reynolds Metals Co.

MORTGAGE ACTIVITY

Vet loan forms idly await cash

By MARILYN E. FORBES
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Life at the state Department of Veterans' Affairs offices in Salem is a lot like a roller coaster ride. There are unexpected sharp turns, eye-bulging heights and the inevitable slow spots when the excitement wanes and there's not much to do except wait for the next thrill.

Despite the present slump in the number of loans being let, the Vets Department was the largest single mortgage lender in the four-county area including Multnomah, Washington, Clackamas and Marion counties during January.

Mortgage numbers are compiled and published by Pioneer National Title Insurance Co. in the monthly Mortgage Barometer.

But the 406 loans valued at $16.4 million is a mere tidbit compared to the activity logged by the agency last year. Veterans bombarded the department during 1980 with mortgage applications in an attempt to nab what was probably the last 5.9 percent mortgage money they would ever see. Realtors and anxious homebuyers using the bond-supported program actually walked their paperwork through the department until the last moment before the 5.9 percent money deadline expired.

"It's much quieter around

support the program. Now, Jobb states, the curtailment of the 5.9 percent mortgage money program, which created the big rush, combined with high interest rates in the private market, have left the popular vets program dry.

"We don't have enough money to fund the applications on hand so we have to schedule commitments from future bond sales," Jobb says.

Long wait

Applications submitted before Dec. 5 are expected to be funded by a bond sale planned in April. Mortgage loan applications received by the department after the first of the year are supposed to be funded by a July bond sale, Jobb says. That's quite a wait—especially for anxious first-time homebuyers using the program.

A proposed administrative rule raising the loan rate from 5.9 percent to 8.9 percent has not been confirmed yet, Jobb adds, but the effective date of Jan. 1, 1981, was responsible for the tremendous influx of applications at the end of the year.

Ends refinancing

In another twist to the vets loan program scenario, the department has been advised by the attorney general to curtail the refinancing of loans, contracts and trust deeds.

"We're not fully aware of the complete impact of the de-