

# CHAIN STORE AGE

THE NEWSMAGAZINE FOR RETAIL EXECUTIVES

February 1999



*Chain Store Age*  
salutes the winners  
of its 17th annual  
Retail Store of  
the Year design  
competition.



*Nature's Northwest*



# To Your

# Health



**BEST  
OVERALL  
ENTRY**

## **Nature's Northwest**

Lake Oswego, Ore.

### **Design Firms:**

Jon Greenberg & Associates,

Southfield, Mich.;

Robert Edson Swain & Associates,  
Seattle

**F**or supermarket retailer Nature's Northwest, the sixth time out proved the charm. Its new prototype (and sixth store to date) in Lake Oswego, Ore., pushes the envelope of food retailing, redefining the supermarket as a contemporary lifestyles/wellness store. With a design that skillfully blends the mainstream with the alternative, Nature's Northwest took top honors in *Chain Store Age's* 1998 Retail Store of the Year design competition. In addition to being selected as the best overall entry, the store was a top finisher in the supermarket category.

The 42,000-sq.-ft. Nature's Northwest combines the amenities and products of a conventional, upscale supermarket and natural-foods store with unexpected offerings such as fitness classes and spa/salon services. Shoppers can take a yoga class, soak in a hydrotherapy tub, learn about herb gardening or get their hair colored. An on-site interactive

learning center and lending library is devoted to health and related subjects. The pharmacy offers conventional therapies as well as homeopathic remedies.

"Nature's Northwest is designed to make everyday living healthier and easier," explains Stan Amy, president, Nature's Northwest, a division of General Nutrition Cos. (GNC), Pittsburgh, which purchased the supermarket company in 1996.

With its high ceilings and massive wood beams, the store is spacious and inviting. A varied palette of environmental graphics, ranging from evocative WPA-styled murals to slide projections to detailed item-level signing, creates a layering of messages that support the overall store experience. A strong sense of community permeates the space.

The design is contemporary, with a heavy emphasis on artisan crafts. In deference to the company's credo of

"walking lightly on the earth," simple, environmentally sound materials are featured throughout. The mixture of recycled materials, natural finished metals and hand-crafted artisan fixtures with industrial food service and grocery equipment help create a sense of fun and efficiency.

**Layout:** The layout places food products on the first floor, with natural products and organic food sharing shelf space with more familiar, conventional items. A sweeping circular staircase leads customers to the second level, home to the salon, self-care center, learning center and library.

With its broad array of goods and services, Nature's Northwest is a place not just to shop, but also to learn and be entertained. The design creates an environment that encourages customers to linger and wander. It sets the stage for an innovative shopping experience.