

### **County gets \$15.5 million share of state capital budget**

The capital budget approved during the 2006 state legislative session provides over \$15.4 million for Clark County projects.

Clark Public Utilities share is \$5,087,250 for water system improvements. The Battle Ground-Salmon Creek wastewater treatment plant receives \$4 million. The Washington State Patrol Vancouver office was allocated almost \$3 million to complete the Vancouver Crime Lab. \$2.2 million was allocated for Vancouver road improvements on NE 138th Street. The City of Washougal is allocated \$2 for its sewer system.

In addition, the Lewis and Clark Confluence Project was awarded \$500,000, the State School for the Blind, \$200,000, the State School for the Deaf, \$200,000, Clark County, \$200,000, and the Miracle League Baseball Field for People with Disabilities, \$57,000.

### **Clark College women's softball opens at home Saturday**

The new Clark College women's softball team plays in its own home field for the first time for a double-header against Everett Community College at noon Saturday, March 11. The Clark College home field is on the Hudson's Bay High School campus at 1206 E Reserve Street.

Opening day ceremonies begin at 11 a.m.

### **March Gladness basketball contest begins Monday**

Winners of the March Gladness basketball contest will receive a year's worth of sundaes from **Jim West's** All-American Deli & Ice Cream, says West, organizer of Fundraiser USA, a new, local nonprofit organization that benefits the Family YMCA of Clark County's youth sports programs.

Contestants will pit their skills at picking winning NCAA tournament basketball games against local experts.

Here's how the contest works. Entrants pay \$12. They receive premiums from the event's sponsors valued at more than \$75, according to West. Each week participants make their picks and receive points for correct picks. At the end of the tournament the contestant with the most correct answers will be named March Gladness Winner for 2006. Each contestant who beats his or her selected expert wins the sundaes.

West adds that it is not necessary to pay the entry fee to play the game, but those who don't pay do not receive sponsor's premiums. March Madness is sponsored by All American Deli & Ice Cream, Applebees, Qwest, Noslen Communication and the Clark County Youth Sports Foundation.

The Clark County experts are as follows: **Al Aldridge**, girls basketball coach at Prairie High School; **Natalie Conrad**, 2005 March Gladness winner; **Dan Dikau**, Boston Celtics point guard and Prairie High School graduate; and **Brad McCoy**, Clark County sports writer for *The Oregonian*.

For further information and to register for the March Gladness contest, go to <http://www.ymca-clarkcounty.org/page/page/930893.htm>

### **People**

**Jason Schwartz**, formerly airport supervisor of noise affairs at the St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Fla., International Airport, has been appointed noise management manager for Portland International Airport. ⚡ Gov. **Chris Gregoire** is the keynote speaker for the Saturday, March 11, Oregon Education Association conference in the Red Lion Hotel on the River on Hayden Island.

### **News briefs**

The Washington State School for the Blind has been accredited by the Northwest Association of Accredited Schools. The school was first accredited in 1988. The school for the blind is also approved by the state Accreditation Committee. ⚡ A bill sponsored State Rep. **Richard Curtis** (R-15th) to provide volunteer fire fighters with medical benefits if they are injured while performing assigned duties, whether emergency service or community service, has been signed into law by Gov. **Chris Gregoire**.

### **Calendar**

The final Clark College Music Department winter concert is at 7:30 p.m. this evening in the Royal Durst Theatre, in the Vancouver School of Arts and Academics. The concert choir is directed by **Gordon Trousdale**.

The concert band is under the direction of **Charles Ramsey**. Admission is free, but donations to the college music scholarship fund will be accepted. ⚡ An Invitational Scale Model Show, sponsored by the Lt. Alexander Pearson Modeleers Chapter, is 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, March 11 in the Pearson Air Museum, 1115 E 5th Street. Adult admission is \$6. ⚡ Democratic legislators Sen. **Craig Pridemore** and Reps. **Bill Fromhold** and **Jim Moeller** will discuss the just concluded 2006 Washington legislative session in a town hall meeting at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 11, in the 6th floor conference room in the Public Service Center. ⚡ The Junior Symphony of Vancouver, directed by **Timoteus Racz**, performs at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, March 11, in the Columbia Arts Center, 400 W. Evergreen Boulevard. Tickets are available at the door. General admission is \$10. Students and senior admission is \$8. For further information, go to [www.oregonchamberplayers.org](http://www.oregonchamberplayers.org). ⚡ The Clark County Department of Community Services is holding a community youth suicide prevention meeting at 3 p.m. Monday, March 13, in the Center for Community Health, 1601 E Fourth Plain Boulevard.

### Friday headlines from at home and around the world

[WSU Vancouver is offering land and wants to bring a major public arts center to its Salmon Creek campus--Columbian, \*\*Brett Opegaard\*\*](#)

[La Center opts to delay proposed casino agreement--Columbian, \*\*Jeffrey Mize\*\*](#)

[Republicans say legislative moves by Demos dim GOP election hopes--Seattle Times, \*\*Ralph Thomas\*\* and \*\*Andrew Garber\*\*](#)

[Interior Secretary Gale Norton resigns with agency under lobbying cloud over Indian gaming licenses--Seattle Times, \*\*John Helprin\*\*](#)

[Curfew eased and bombs claim lives in Iraq--Washington Post, \*\*Ellen Knickmeyer\*\* and \*\*K.I. Ibrahimi\*\*](#)

[U.S. setting plans to aid Iraq in case of civil war--Washington Post, \*\*Ann Scott Tyson\*\*](#)

[Dubai deal's collapse prompts fears abroad on trade with U.S.--New York Times, \*\*Eduardo Porter\*\*](#)

[Bush says political storm over port deal sends wrong message--New York Times, \*\*David Stout\*\*](#)

### Friday on the air

Planning Perceptions (3/7)—5 p.m. CVTV

**Arizona vs. UCLA (live)—6 p.m. FSN**

**Tri City at Portland Winter Hawks (live)—7 p.m. KCMD**

Cowlitz Casino Forum (3/1)—8 p.m. CVTV

**Cal vs. Oregon (live)—8:30 p.m. FSN**

Telecommunications Commission (3/10)—10 p.m. CVTV

### Town Tabloids and the weather

**Vern Peterson** making refuseable offer. ⚡ **Cliff Engle** making inquiry. ⚡ **Hillary Young** simplifying the process. ⚡ **Ruth Waite's** Starbucks counsel works like a charm. ⚡ **Bridget Schwarz** picks winning table. ⚡ **Rosalund Jenkins** keeping good tabs. ⚡ **Friday**, possible snow or hail, gray and gnarly, 46. **Saturday**, sun samples returning, 51. **Sunday**, mostly cloudy, 47.