

Federal Office of Indian Gaming sets February casino information meetings

Under pressure from U.S. Rep. **Brian Baird** (D-3rd), the U.S. Department of Interior's Office of Indian Gaming has scheduled two public meetings in Clark County in February to solicit public questions regarding the process by which the request by the Cowlitz Indian Tribe for permission to operate a gambling casino on Interstate 5 near La Center will be judged.

The Department of Interior has designated the Indian Gaming Commission's director **George Skibine** as an ombudsman.

Skibine will be conducting the local meetings at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 15, in the Prairie High School auditorium, 11500 NE 117th Avenue, and at 7 p.m. in the Fort Vancouver High School auditorium, 5700 E 18th Street.

Representatives from the Department of Interior, the department's solicitor's office, the regional Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the National Indian Gaming Commission's general counsel's office will participate in the meetings.

Baird said today: "I fought for these meetings and this ombudsman because the residents of Southwest Washington deserve complete and accurate information about this process. The rules governing the approval of gaming applications and the responsibilities of the main federal agencies with a role in the process should be open, transparent and understandable for everyone.

The Indian Gaming Commission has already ruled that if the Cowlitz get federal approval of tribal status for the 152 acres near La Center, they may build and operate a gambling casino.

Skibine can be reached at (202) 219-4066.

Clark students win state honors on way to national competition



Sarah Craciun



Mariah Acton

Two running-start students at Clark College have been named to the 2006 All-Washington Academic Team and are automatically candidates for nomination to the All-USA Academic Team, sponsored by Phi Theta Kappa honor society, *USA TODAY* and the American Association of Community Colleges.

Mariah Acton, Vancouver, and **Sarah Craciun**, Brush Prairie, will receive their awards at noon Thursday, March 2, in South Puget Sound Community College, Olympia. With the awards come \$750 scholarships from KeyBank of Washington and the Northwest Education Loan Association, and separate \$500 scholarships from the Clark College Foundation.

The women are completing both their high school education and are graduating from Clark College this year. Acton is active in the Clark County Youth Commission

and was a 2005 delegate to the University of Pennsylvania Model United Nations. Craciun is the recipient of an American Association of University Women award for achievement in mathematics. She is a volunteer at the VA Medical Center's pharmacy.

YMCA offering massages, facials, and aromatherapy treatments

The fourth annual Clark County Family YMCA is offering 30-minute massages, facials, aromatherapy treatments, and acupuncture if requested, from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 29. The cost is \$40 for members, \$50 for non-members.

The event originated as a way to spotlight domestic violence that is associated with the Super Bowl, according to YMCA spokesperson **Sharon Pesut**. The Super Bowl, however, is being played on Sunday, Feb. 5.

News brief

The contest for free tickets to this weekend's Vancouver Symphony Orchestra concert remains open because the *Insider* printed the wrong email address to which to send answers. To be eligible for pairs of free tickets to the 3 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 21, or 7 p.m. Sunday, Jan. 22, concerts in the Skyview High School concert hall, 1300 NW 139th Street, you must correctly answer the question: *What is the name of the work by Debussy that will be performed?* Answers are to be emailed to thevso@vancouverSymphony.org. **Joel Bluestone**, percussionist, is the featured soloist for the concerts. The orchestra is conducted by **Salvador Brotons**.

Calendar

The Telecommunications Commission meets in regular session at 7 p.m. this evening in City Hall. ✍ **R. Wayne Branch**, president of Clark College, will deliver his annual state-of-the-college address in Gaiser Hall at 7:30 a.m. Thursday, Jan. 19.

Wednesday headlines from at home and around the world

[Bill calling for majority vote in annexations resurfaces in Olympia--Columbian, **Jeffrey Mize**](#)

[For a cat with no eyes, Chester has a lot going on--Columbian, **Tom Vogt**](#)

[Fort Vancouver National Historic Site drew 800,000 visitors last year, up 20 percent from 2004--Columbian, **Dean Baker**](#)

[Westfield will buy Mervyn's building in mall for redevelopment--Columbian, **Jonathan Nelson**](#)

[Gunmen, car bombs kill nearly 50 in Iraq--Washington Post, **Nelson Hernandez** and **Bassam Sebti**](#)

Wednesday on the air

Casino Forum (1/12)—4:30 p.m. CVTV

Telecommunications Commission (live)—7 p.m. CVTV

Toronto at Portland Blazers (live)—7 p.m. KXL, KXMG

Insider's View: Sen. Patty Murray (1/12)—10 p.m. CVTV

City Minutes (12/25)—11:30 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and the weather

Bill Aldridge sells car. ✍ **Raif Zacca** at ease. ✍ **Arlene Johnson** proclaims sunshine. ✍ **Margaret Broselle** setting beautiful table. ✍ **Angela Meinig** doing number on numbers. ✍ **Steve Kuyatt** giving new venue new exposure. ✍ **Wednesday**, showers, possible thunder showers, 47. **Thursday**, diminishing rain, 46. **Friday**, showers, 47.