

Sun shines on America's Vancouver: Hilton Vancouver Washington, convention center open



Propstra Square as seen from the Hilton Vancouver Washington, where Wednesday morning hundreds celebrated the opening of the hotel and convention center

The bright sunshine was nearly eclipsed by Mayor **Royce Pollard's** smiling countenance Wednesday morning in America's Vancouver as the Hilton Vancouver Washington was officially opened, completing more than a decade of effort by scores of individuals, officials and organizations.

Identity Clark County, a grass roots, self-congealing organization of some of the strongest business interests in southern Washington, was the lead group in generating, in 1999, renewed interest in a hotel-convention center for downtown Vancouver.

In an audience of hundreds of peo-

ple were **Ed Lynch** the only chairman of the board of Identity Clark County, **John McKibbin**, currently president of the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, who was its first executive director, and **Ginger Metcalf**, one of the first ICC employees and currently executive director.

"I feel as if I have given birth to a \$73 million hotel," Metcalf said as a leadoff speaker in grand opening ceremonies. The speaker's list included former Washington governor **Gary Locke**, **Brad Hutton**, northwest director for the Hilton Hotel Corp., **Liz Luce**, Gov. **Christine Gregoire's** chief aide, Pollard and Metcalf.

Helping the speakers cut the ceremonial ribbon were the following: **Ward Cook**, **Richard Keller**, **Dick Pokornoski**, **Deborah Ewing**, **Jack Onder**, **Christine Wamsley**, **Steve Gregg**, **Byron Hanke**, **Ed Barnes**, **Kathy Sego**, **Val Ogden**, **Al Bauer**, **Don Carlson**, **Joe Zarelli**, **Craig Pridemore** and **Judie Stanton**.

Following opening ceremonies the hotel admitted its first guest and opened the bar and restaurant, Gray's at the Park.

For hotel reservations, call **993-4500**, or go to www.vancouverwashington.hilton.com. For breakfast, lunch and dinner reservations, call **828-4343**.

C-TRAN to ask for 0.2 percent sales tax increase in September

The C-TRAN board of directors yesterday approved a request to present a 0.2 percent sales tax increase before the voters in September to help fund the transit agency's proposed new service area and operations budgets.

A 0.3 percent sales tax request was barely defeated at the polls last November.

Since then, C-TRAN has reduced its service territory and increased fares.

"This plan is responsive to what the public has been telling C-TRAN in recent months," says **Lynne Griffith**, C-TRAN's executive director/CEO. "Thanks to the action taken by the board, the public will now have the final say in whether C-TRAN will be able to sustain and restore current bus service for people throughout the community.

The proposed plan would preserve 2004 service levels and restore service lost in 2000 to the cities located in the new district.

C-TRAN's new service and taxing boundary includes the City of Vancouver and its urban growth boundary and the city limits only of Camas, Washougal, Battle Ground, Ridgefield, La Center and the town of Yacolt.



Hilton Hotel's Brad Hutton and Identity Clark County's Ginger Metcalf wait their turn to help open Hilton Vancouver Washington

People

Don Donaldson yesterday was honored for his 12 years' service as a member of the board of Educational Service District 112. Before retiring from the position, Donaldson championed youth programs, including the ESD 112 Re-Entry Program and the Graduation Alternative Program. He was also instrumental in securing funding for the Northwest Service Academy and the AmeriCorps programs administered by ESD 112.

Calendar

The second in a series of open houses to discuss the Clark County Trail and Bikeway System Plan 2006 is at 6 p.m. this evening in the Public Safety Building, 505 W 179th Street. 📍 The results of an environmental assessment for the proposed Confluence Project land bridge crossing Highway 14 and connecting the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site and Vancouver's Columbia River waterfront will be presented by the National Park Service at 6 p.m. this evening in the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site Visitor Center, 612 E Reserve Street. Public comment will be accepted.

[Wednesday headlines from at home and around the world:](#)

[You're a grand old flag--Columbian, **Dean Baker**](#)

[New Hilton is victory for mayor and the City of Vancouver--Columbian, **Tom Keoninger**](#)

[Legislators recall whiffs and hits of the '05 session--Columbian, **Don Jenkins**](#)

[Erickson Farms slated to become \\$50 million Lake Shore community with housing, offices and retail shops--Columbian, **Gretchen Fehrenbacher**](#)

[Toy guns too realistic police and educators say--Oregonian, **Holley Gilbert**](#)

["Duke Ellington" concert to be another milestone for Bravo! Vancouver--Columbian, **Brett Oppegaard**](#)

[Nonprofits can profit on the Fourth--Columbian](#)

[Jefferson-Jackson Day event to benefit Democratic Party--Columbian](#)

[Portland tops *Reader's Digest* list of 'cleanest' cities--KATU](#)

Wednesday on the air

Leadership Clark County Graduation—4 p.m. CVTV

Flag Day Ceremony—5:30 p.m. CVTV

2005 Legislative Review—7 p.m. CVTV

Philadelphia at Seattle Mariners (live)—7 p.m. FSN, KFXN

Portland Beavers at Tacoma (live)—7 p.m. KKAD

Town Tabloids and the weather

Brad Hutton smiling deservedly from front row. 📍 **Don Russo** getting room with view. 📍 **Denny Heck** getting answer. 📍 **Pete Capell** saying hello. 📍 **Bob Knight** making connections. 📍 **Roy Garrison** getting company. 📍 **Wednesday**, blue sky, 72. **Thursday**, mostly gray and damp, 70. **Friday**, possible light showers, 66.