



Vancouver City Council recognizes manager Pat McDonnell's successes

The Vancouver City Council yesterday unanimously approved a cost of living increase and annual salary adjustment for city manager **Pat McDonnell** by ringing his annual salary to \$171,650, which, according to council member **Larry Smith**, will bring the manager's compensation more in line with comparable cities in Washington and other public leadership positions in Clark County.

In making the motion for the salary increase, Smith said that McDonnell deserved to be "recognized and rewarded for success."

Mayor **Royce Pollard** added that **McDonnell** is "not an average city manager." McDonnell did not accept a salary increase in 2002.

Newest council member **Pat Campbell**, who was elected last November, said that he appreciated the "grace" that McDonnell has shown in welcoming him to city government. Councilmember **Jeanne Stewart** said that McDonnell universally received "substantially high marks" for his performance from staff, the community and city council.

Other council members acknowledged that, under McDonnell's leadership, Vancouver has become a model for other cities in the areas of business planning, diversity and strategic planning.

McDonnell responded, "Thank you for your support. It is an honor and a privilege to be the city manager of Vancouver."

McDonnell has been with the city of Vancouver for 10 years and was appointed city manager in September 2000.

Clark Public Utilities axes appliance repair program

After the Easter bunny, tooth fairy and Santa Claus read this they understandably will be a little nervous over their future roles in society.

By a 2-to-1 vote today Clark Public Utilities commissioners terminated the appliance repair program that had been a mainstay of the public electric utility's persona since it was formed in the 1940s.

Utility commission chairman **Byron Hanke** cast the opposing vote, saying that he felt the public should get more of a chance to weigh in on the decision.

But the majority killed the program, which has struggled to break even as required by a special state law that allowed it to operate far beyond its time. And quickly, too.

The program will not accept any new repair activities beyond this Friday.

Dead also is the utility's guaranteed hot water program, which for \$2.95 guaranteed utility customers they would never be out of hot water for more than 24 hours.

Commissioner **Carol Curtis**, the senior member of the board, said today, "I'll bite the bullet," as she made the motion supporting the recommendation of utility staff. She noted that there was little choice.

For years private heating and cooling companies and electrical contractors fought against the utility service, claiming unfair advantage from what they claimed was a "subsidized" service. And it was.

But the outcry from ratepayers was overpowering and the legislature came up with a solution that if the appliance repair program could pay its way it could continue.

Over the past four years, despite efforts to save the program, it did not pay its way. From 2005 until the end of 2007, the program contracted 10,231 jobs for a collective loss of \$78,736

Utility District executive director **Wayne Nelson** noted that the utility's pay scale was much higher than in private industry, effectively making the utility noncompetitive.



Pat McDonnell

Hanke concluded that he didn't think that rate payers were being given enough notice for the end of the popular program.

State employment holding steady

The seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for the state of Washington for February was 4.5 per cent, a near record low, reports the state Employment Security Department.

The unadjusted state unemployment rate was pegged at 5.4 percent for February this year, compared to 5.2 percent in January and 5.3 in February 2007.

Clark County's unadjusted unemployment record for February is 6.9 percent. King County's unadjusted unemployment rate, the lowest in the state for February, is 3.7 percent.

Heart attack victims get top treatment in Clark County

Clark County is one of the best places in the nation to have a heart attack, according to **Michael Ontkean**, Cascade Heart PS.

Ontkean says the response and treat times in Clark County are among the lowest in the country. He says that Southwest Washington Medical Center is among the top 7 percent of hospitals in the national ranking.

According to Ontkean, when heart attack victims are taken to the hospital by ambulance, the life-saving treatment time is even higher.

Average intervention time for heart attack sufferers is 60 minutes when a patient is brought to the hospital by ambulance. Emergency medical services personnel remotely transmit critical diagnostic information from the ambulance to Southwest's emergency department.

Camas-Washougal Chamber to hear from local educators

State-of-the-school addresses will be delivered by **Mike Nerland**, Camas School District superintendent, and **Teresa Baldwin**, superintendent of the Washougal School District, at the noon Thursday, March 20, meeting of the Camas-Washougal Chamber of Commerce in the Camas Meadows Golf Club house.

The lunch meeting, which begins at 11:30 a.m., is \$15 for chamber members, \$17 for nonmembers. For further information and reservations, call **834-2472**.

Calendar

The C-TRAN board of directors meet in regular session at 5:30 p.m. today in C-TRAN offices at 2425 NE 65th Avenue. <> The NE Hazel Dell Neighborhood Association meets at 7 p.m. this evening in the community room in Clark County Public Works, 4700 NE 78th Street. <> Clark County commissioners meet in an informal session at 1:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 19, in conference room B in the Public Service Center. <> The Vancouver Lake Watershed Partnership will meet from 4 to 6 p.m., Wednesday, March 19, in the Port of Vancouver Administrative offices, 3103 NW Lower River Road.

Tuesday on the air

Animal Control Hearings (2/13)—3:45 p.m. CVTV
 SW Washington Alternative Energy (2/18)—5 p.m. CVTV
 Clark County Board of Health (2/27)—5:30 p.m. CVTV
Vancouver Land Use Hearings (live)—7 p.m. CVTV
Phoenix at Portland Blazers (live)—7:30 p.m. CSN, KXL

Town Tabloids and the Weather

David Beecher outfoxing security door. <> **Mike Worthy** making personal calls. <> **Rudyard Coltman** planning expansion. <> **Kristin Reef** displaying alpha and omega trick. <> **Patrick McGary's** celebration saintly. <> **Walt Evans** coming up with a really good idea. <> **Tuesday**, a few more showers, sunbreaks, 39-57. **Wednesday**, showers turn into rain, 39-51. **Thursday**, showers, 37-50.