



Concrete was poured this afternoon for Vancouver hotel-convention center, beating construction deadline by 13 days. Building at the left is old Greyhound Bus Station being demolished. Webber Machine building is in background, Interstate Bridge Tower, right.

Convention Center construction underway

Footings were poured today, the beginning of construction of Vancouver's \$72 million downtown hotel and convention center.

FaulknerUSA, the contractor on the project beat the Dec. 31 deadline by 13 days. Otherwise the city would have lost nearly \$2 million annual support from a rebate of state sales tax, which would have stopped the project dead.

Although construction is now underway, agreements between the city and Hilton Hotels to operate the dual facility have not been completed.

Hilton confirmed in September it would operate the 226-room, four-star hotel, by far Vancouver's largest, and the onsite convention center, but operating and financial details have not yet been agreed on.

The grand ballroom will seat 933 people for banquets and provide space for nearly 1,200 people at receptions.

The junior ballroom, for which footings were being poured today, will seat nearly 500 people for banquets.

The seven-story building, which includes over 30,000 square feet of conference center space, is being built on the Columbia Street between 6th and 4th streets, south of the southeast corner of Esther Short Park.

Library accepting pre-registration for free computer classes

Pre-registration for free computer classes being offered by the Vancouver Community Library in January is currently being accepted.

Classes include using the library's on-line catalog, Internet basics, and personal computer basics. Space is limited. Call **695-1566** for further information.

People

Vancouver Fire Department firefighters **Geoff Robbins** and **Ben Burtle** have been designated certified paramedics following their completion of 720 hours of classroom schooling, 400 hours in clinical rotations in local hospitals and 400 hours of field internship. Robbins, during his clinical rotation, helped deliver two babies, one of whom was his own daughter, **Riley**.

News briefs

Clark County Public Facilities District meets at 5 p.m. today in the Public Service Center and likely will ratify an agreement between the county and Vancouver Conference Project to provide most of the county's share of state refunded sales tax to support the city's hotel-convention center. ~~ZZZ~~ The NE Hazel Dell Neighborhood Association's Best Kids Christmas Party, hosted by the association and the Boys and Girls Club of Southwest Washington, is at 6 p.m. today in the Hazel Dell Elementary School gymnasium.

Thursday on the Air

Clark County Planning Commission (live)—6:30 p.m. CVTV
Phoenix at Portland Blazers (live)—7 p.m. TNT, KXL, KRMZ

Stocks of local interest at 4 p.m. EST Thursday, Dec. 18, 2003

Alaska Air Group	27.20	+0.71	Linear Technology	40.95	+1.55
Alcoa	36.38	+0.77	Microsoft	27.40	+0.36
Amazon.com	48.75	+1.17	Nautilus	13.66	+0.41
Bank of America	78.90	+1.02	Nike	66.80	+0.79
Bank of Clark County	15.00	unch	Nordstrom	32.77	+0.58
Bemis	40.82	+0.30	PepsiCo	47.14	-0.01
Boeing	41.35	+0.49	Precision Cast	45.26	+0.64
Boise Cascade	30.70	+0.52	RLRN	22.98	+0.37
CenturyTel	31.54	+0.51	Starbucks	32.33	+0.56
Costco	36.52	+0.53	TSM	9.78	+0.33
Expeditors Intl.	37.66	+0.20	Tektronix	27.67	+0.60
Georgia Pacific	29.63	+0.20	US Bancorp	28.91	+0.55
HPQ	22.23	+0.27	Wash. Mutual	39.74	-0.08
Intel	30.90	+0.73	W. Coast Bancorp	21.45	+0.31
Kyocera	64.95	+1.05	Weyerhaeuser	61.80	+0.90
DOW: 10,248.08		+102.82	NASDAQ: 1956.18		+34.85
			S&P: 1098.18		+12.7

Town Tabloids and The Weather

Gail Spolar recounting European escapades. ZZZ	Acapulco	90/70
Ken Haydock outgirling medical machinery. ZZZ	Athens	40/32
Zaina Hart dancing through the holidays. ZZZ	Chicago	34/23
Terry Lenhart taking care of business. ZZZ	Dallas	62/32
Terri Dusek setting 2 p.m. date. ZZZ	Hong Kong	72/56
Norm Willinger touting stocking stuffers. ZZZ	Los Angeles	78/52
Thursday , mostly sunny, 54. Friday , sunbreaks and showers, 50. Saturday , mostly cloudy, rain likely to return,	London	50/41
	New Orleans	63/42
	New York	40/28
	Orlando	62/42
	Paris	45/36
	Phoenix	77/52
	Rome	47/36
	Seattle	52/40
	Sydney	86/68
	Tokyo	49/34
	Washington	42/28