

Joint effort to develop poor farm property suspended

What was billed by Clark County and Washington State University Vancouver as a joint effort to plan new uses for the nearly 80-acre poor farm property owned by Washington State University has been suspended.

The largely undeveloped agricultural land—except for a cemetery and some WSU Research and Extension Service facilities—is a piece of prime real estate in Hazel Dell.

The JD White Company was hired earlier this year to prepare alternative uses for the property for the county and WSU Vancouver, but the alternatives came under fire from neighborhood organizations for having been developed with too little citizen input.

The property originally owned by Clark County was, until the end of World War II, the site of the county “poor farm.” In 1949 it was deeded to WSU for its agricultural extension services. The deed, however, required that if WSU stopped using the property it would revert to the county.

The White study was initiated to explore the potential for a variety of uses, including some that could help offset the \$5 million cost of relocating the research and extension facilities to the WSU Vancouver Salmon Creek campus.

“Major road improvements would be needed to support more intense uses, and the community has a strong desire to retain much of the 78th Street property for public use,” WSU Vancouver chancellor **Hal Dengerink** said today. “We need to step back and take a closer look at our priorities and options for operations in Clark County.”

Betty Sue Morris, chair of the Board of County Commissioners, said today: “We appreciate the thought and effort that many people have devoted to exploring the possibilities for this public land to produce greater benefits for the community. The board has been very impressed with the importance they have placed on a thorough examination of its future.”

Lisa Szkodyn really surprised with \$25,000 teaching award



Lisa Szkodyn wins ‘Oscar of Teaching,’ \$25,000 National Milken Award

Lisa Szkodyn, Evergreen Public Schools Pioneer Elementary School fourth grade teacher, was the most astonished person in the school auditorium yesterday when **Lowell Milken**, announced that Szkodyn had won a national \$25,000 prize for being an exceptional classroom teacher.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction **Terry Bergeson**, who knew in advance about Szkodyn’s winning this award, said: “Szkodyn’s exceptional skills and love of her students are the main reasons for her selection for this national honor. The award recognizes outstanding and dedicated teachers like Lisa Szkodyn who make a tremendous contribution to the lives of the kids in their classes. Without fail, Lisa and other educators like her put their heart and soul into their profession—often without any recognition other than the smile of accomplishment on their students’ faces.”

Milken is the co-founder and chair of the Milken Family Foundation, created in 1985, to attract, retain and reward outstanding K-12 teachers, principals and education professionals who make important contributions to excellence in education.

Szkodyn and 99 other teachers from 47 states will be given an all-expense-paid trip to Washington, D.C., later this year to receive their 2004 National Educator Award and the unrestricted cash prize.

Kim Ellett, a Battle Ground teacher, won the award in 2003. **Kristin Hundebly-White**, now teaching in the Evergreen School District, won the award in 1996.

Prior to learning of the award, Szkodyn thought the assembly had been called to hear a message from state School Superintendent Bergeson.

People

Jaynie Roberts has been named artistic director for Ghost Stories on Officers Row. Roberts, who is co-founder and artistic director for Vancouver’s Magenta Theater, is a member of the City of Vancouver Cultural Commission and the Slocum House Theatre Company. The 2004 edition of Ghost Stories on Officers Row is from 5 to 9 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 16, on Officers Row in Vancouver Barracks.

Investigation of death on railroad tracks slows commuter traffic on Highway 14

Commuter traffic slowed to near standstill Wednesday afternoon as motorists slowed to gawk at emergency vehicles on the Burlington Northern Railroad tracks east of the Portco entrance to Highway 14. Police said the body of an unidentified male was found by railroad crews doing routine track maintenance. Vancouver police said there was no indication of foul play.

News briefs

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Southwest Washington celebrates its new office with an open house from 4 to 6 p.m. today at 205 E. 11th Street, Suite 102. ☞ The final political debate between Democratic State Rep. **Deb Wallace** and her Republican challenger, **Roy Rhine**, is at 7 p.m. tonight in Clark Public Utilities Orchards Operations Center. ☞ I-205 southbound traffic will be detoured at the NE 134th Street exit ramp to rejoin I-205 southbound from the NE 134th Avenue on ramp between 10 p.m. tonight and 5 a.m. Friday, Oct. 8.

Thursday headlines from at home and around the world:

[St. Helens crater floor has risen 50 to 100 feet since Tuesday, although quakes have slowed--KATU, Gene Johnson](#)

[Explosion rocks Egyptian Hilton Hotel near Israeli border, 23 reported dead--MSNBC](#)

[Ports of Vancouver and Portland thinking joint marketing plans--Columbian, Jonathan Nelson](#)

[Lisa Szkodyn blown away by prize--Columbian, Howard Buck](#)

[Tentative dates selected for razor clam digging--Columbian](#)

[Videoconferencing giving county less costly, safer means of conducting court arraignments--Columbian, Holley Gilbert](#)

[NASCAR speedway in Snohomish County won't come cheap to taxpayers--Seattle Times, Emily Heffter](#)

[Election primary sheds new light on party loyalties--Seattle Times, Susan Gilmore and Justin Mayo](#)

Thursday on the air

Video Voters Guide—3:30 p.m. CVTV

18th District Senatorial Candidates—5:30 p.m. CVTV

Clark County Land Use Hearings (live)—7 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and the weather

Bruce Bosch celebrating 21,900 sunrises, not counting leap days. ☼ **Paula Palmer** overseeing jack-in-the-box purchase. ☼ **Mike Wilson** reconnected. ☼ **Emma Malloy** earning promotion. ☼ **Deric Dalton** to share Marine adventures. ☼ **Tom Hunt** getting good references. ☼ **David Fenton** working centers of influence. ☼ **Thursday**, light showers likely, 66. **Friday**, clouds and precipitation, 64. **Saturday**, cloudy, light rain, 62.