

Diverse group of citizens supporting C-TRAN proposal

Neither C-TRAN nor its employees can put the arm on citizens to go out and vote for a three-tenths-of-a-cent increase in sales tax to restore the transit agency's ability to provide first-class bus service in Clark County, but people like **Mike Worthy**, president of the Bank of Clark County, **David Cooper**, executive director of The Arc of Clark County, **Jeanne Harris**, Vancouver City councilmember, **Val Ogden**, former 49th District legislator, and **Trent Kuntz**, Vancouver lawyer, can, and yesterday they began their effort with a rally for public transit in Esther Short Park. Worthy and Cooper are co-chairs of the YES for C-TRAN campaign.

Requiring but a simple majority of votes, Proposition 1 on the November 2 ballot calls for a .3 percent sales tax increase that would go directly to the transit agency's budget, restoring approximately the same amount of taxpayer support taken away in 2000 when Initiative 695 was approved by voters, eliminating the automobile excise tax, a portion of which funded mass transit in the state of Washington.

Since then, C-TRAN, which in past years had put together a healthy amount of reserves designated primarily for new equipment, has managed to provide countywide bus service, although on a decreased schedule. The agency also did considerable cost cutting, decreasing service by 13 percent and laying off 78 employees.

During the past 18 months, the agency has conducted an outreach program with hundreds of citizens and groups, sharing with them three proposals. Selected was the option before voters, restoring and improving the system. The agency and the citizens groups rejected the option of doing nothing, which would mean cutting service, including Vancouver-Portland commuter routes, leaving service only within the Vancouver metropolitan area. Also rejected was an option of seeking a .6 percent sales tax increase, which is permitted by state statute.

C-TRAN already receives a .3 percent sales tax benefit, from the agency was created in 1981.

Backers point out that C-TRAN is an efficient, well-run organization, which over the past five years has come in under budget. During that period, beginning in 1999, the share that bus riders pay in fares per ride has increased by 50 percent. Ridership has increased 12 percent, to 6.91 million passenger miles (as of 2003). Productivity has increased by 12 percent in terms of trips per revenue hour.

While the transit agency can't wage a campaign for passage of Proposition 1, it can inform the electorate and to do so has set a series of seven open houses to provide information on how the transit agency works.

The first open house is at 10 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 25, in the Vancouver Housing Authority offices, 2500 Main Street. For further information, call **Scott Patterson**, C-TRAN director of public affairs at **695-0123**, or go to the agency's website, www.c-tran.com.

Sue Armitage named history center director

Sue Armitage, nationally known scholar and Washington State University history professor for the past 25 years, has been named director of the Center for Columbia River History, a regional partnership supported by WSU Vancouver, Portland State University, and the Washington State Historical Society. Armitage succeeds Portland State University's **Bill Lang**.

Armitage says she plans to bridge the gap between scholars and the public through public programs, research and student training.

The Center for Columbia River History is located in the Vancouver National Reserve. For further information, call **258-3289**, or go to the center's website, www.ccrh.org.

Winter hours mean free admission to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

When the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site switches to winter hours on Sunday, Oct. 31, admission to the reconstructed fort becomes free, reports National Park Service's **Greg Shine**, chief ranger.

Winter hours mean that the Visitor Center and the reconstructed fort will be open 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily. Winter hours coincide with daylight saving time.

In 1948, Fort Vancouver was established as a unit of the National Park system to commemorate and interpret the role of Fort Vancouver as the birthplace of Euro-American civilization in the history of the Pacific Northwest. "Today," according to Shine, "it is the premier historical archaeology site in the region."

The site includes the fort, agricultural fields, village and waterfront of the former Hudson's Bay Company, and also includes sections of Vancouver Barracks, the post parade grounds.

Clark College faculty members to presenting recital in Italian, French and English Sunday

Clark College Music Department faculty members **April Brookins Duvic**, soprano, **Gretchen Tucker**, violin, and **Corey Averill**, cello, accompanied by Portland Opera's pianist, **Douglas Schneider**, are presenting a voice and instrumental recital at 7 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 26, in the Clark College Decker Theatre.

Duvic presents works in Italian, French and English. There is no charge for the recital, although donations for the Clark Music Department scholarship fund will be accepted.

News briefs

Clark County commissioners meet in informal session at 1:45 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 22. 📍 The Puget Sound Blood Center is conducting a blood drive at Glad Tidings Church, 305 NE 192nd Avenue, from 12:30 to 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 22. 📍 The Pearson Air Museum Cruz-In resumes at 4 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 22, at Pearson Field, 1115 E 5th Street. Adult admission is \$5.

Tuesday headlines from at home and around the world:

[Campaign to promote C-TRAN sales tax proposal gets into gear--Columbian, **Erin Middlewood**](#)

[Clark College opens another year; registrar retires--Columbian, **Tom Vogt**](#)

[Tribe makes casino pitch through the mail--Columbian, **Margaret Ellis**](#)

[Oregon developer plans \\$50 million worth of new housing--Columbian, **Gretchen Fehrenbacher**](#)

[County's ten homicide victims to be remembered in ceremony Friday--Oregonian, **Holley Gilbert**](#)

[Bush defends war at the U.N.--USA TODAY, AP](#)

[Second American beheaded by terror group led by Abu Musab al-Zarqawi--USA TODAY, AP](#)

[Fed ups short-term interest rate another quarter of a percent--USA TODAY](#)

[Indians journey to nation's newest national museum on the mail in Washington, D.C.--Washington Post, **David Montgomery**](#)

Tuesday on the air

Clark County Focus—5:30 p.m. CVTV

Clark County Closer Up—6 p.m. CVTV

Mariners at Anaheim (live)—7 p.m. FSN, KFXX

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

Town Tabloids and the weather

Sam Volpentest getting national recognition from **Willard Scott** for passing 100 safely. 🍷 **Dale Olander** making good suggestion. 🍷 **Jim Sanders** having short reign. 🍷 **David Devine** making sense of esoterica. 🍷 **Judy Devine** lending class to occasion. 🍷 **Jim Malinowski** putting on teaching hat. 🍷 **Tuesday**, mostly sunny after morning fog, 70. **Wednesday**, mostly sunny, 73. **Thursday**, mostly sunny, a very slight chance of light precipitation, 76.