

Bureau Of Indian Affairs begins Cowlitz Casino scoping tonight

The Bureau of Indian Affairs begins its study of the proposed Cowlitz Indian Tribe's casino, convention center, hotel, restaurant and retail project west of La Center with a scoping session beginning at 6 p.m. this evening in Hudson's Bay High School, 1206 E Reserve Street.

The tribe proposes, vastly larger than initially announced, first, construction and operation of a 160,000-square-foot casino, to be followed by a restaurant and retail stores encompassing 21,000 square feet, a convention center and entertainment center of 150,000 square feet, a 250-room hotel, tribal government offices and a tribal cultural center and a parking garage for 8,500 vehicles, plus 200 recreational vehicles.

The Cowlitz have entered into an agreement with the Mohegan Indians, a Connecticut tribe that owns and operates a 300,000-square-foot casino with 6,300 slot machines to help with financing and operations of the casino.

But, first, the Bureau of Indian Affairs has to grant the tribe reservation trust status for the 152 acres it owns near the La Center exit on Interstate 5.

The scoping session this evening is the first step toward developing and completing an environmental impact study of the project.

BIA officials say they expect to identify issues and concerns about the project during the three-hour session.

C-TRAN to make final decision on service cuts December 14

The C-TRAN board of directors has scheduled what they expect to be a final vote on service cuts for the transit agency at a 5:15 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 14, meeting in the Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin Street.

The agency, which had hoped to maintain current service with a .03 percent sales tax increase, is now working on cuts in service of nearly 50 percent. The sales tax proposal was defeated by countywide vote November 4.

The C-TRAN board was expected to make its decision on cuts at a November 16 meeting, but deferred after hearing oral testimony from 100 persons and receiving written testimony from over 400.

No further oral testimony will be taken. However, written comments may be sent to C-TRAN, 2525 NE 65th Avenue, Vancouver, 98661. For further information, go to www.c-tran.com.

Over 400 scenes on display at Festival of the Nativities

The largest display of nativity scenes in southern Washington can be seen Thursday, Dec. 2, through Saturday, Dec. 4, in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Vancouver Stake Center, 10509 SE 5th Street.

There is no charge for the annual Festival of the Nativities, according to spokesperson **Fran Rutherford**. Viewing hours are 3 to 9 p.m. each day. In addition, there are live musical performances and hands-on activities in the children's room.

Reading Lolita in Tehran subject of Discovery Book Club today

The Clark College Discovery Book Club selection for discussion from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. today is **Azar Nafisi's** *Reading Lolita in Tehran*, according to **Harriet Levi**, discussion leader and former director of Women's Studies at Clark. Book club sessions, which are free and open to the public are held the first Wednesday of each month in the sunroom in the Clark College Cannell Library.

The Discovery Book Club was organized by **Marti Earhart** three years ago. Books are chosen by volunteers who have a special interest in a particular diverse culture, according to Earhart, who works in the Text and Reference Department of the college bookstore.

For further information, call **Barbara Kerr**, 992-2921.

Vacancy open on county Solid Waste Advisory Committee

Applications are being sought to fill a vacancy on the Clark County Solid Waste Advisory Commission. The board advises the county commissioners on matters related to solid waste, recycling and waste reduction. In addition the panel makes recommendations on locations of landfills and transfer facilities.

Deadline for completed applications is Thursday, Dec. 30. For further information, call **Anita Largent**, 397-6118, extension 4484.

News briefs

An open house explaining proposed increases for environmental health service fees is being held by the Clark County Health Department at 5:30 p.m. today in the county Health Department auditorium, 2000 Fort Vancouver Way. Clark County commissioners will review the proposed changes at a regular board meeting at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 7. 🎷 The Clark College Orchestra presents "The Continental Touch" at 7:30 p.m. tonight in the Royal Durst Theatre in the Vancouver School of Arts and Academics. **Peter Vizard**, director of the Conservatoire Frederic Chopin, Paris, is the guest conductor. The concert is free, but donations to the college music scholarship fund will be accepted.

Wednesday headlines at home and from around the world:

[Rossi-Gregoire governor's race not closest in history--Crystal Ball, University of Virginia Center for Politics, **Larry J. Sabato**](#)
[Nautilus moves headquarters to Freightways site in Columbia Tech Center--Columbian, **Jonathan Nelson**](#)
[Craig Pridemore's Senate committees include vice chair of the Senate Education Committee--Columbian](#)
[County says developer can't cut white oak trees elsewhere--Columbian, **Erin Middlewood**](#)
[Bands read to rock Skyview during jazz festival Saturday--Columbian, **Brett Oppegaard**](#)
[Turkey farmer's right to free speech helps us all--Columbian, **Tom Koenninger**](#)
[County's new policy expected to help indigent veterans--Oregonian, **Bill Stewart**](#)
[Dow soars 162.2 as oil plummets to under \\$46--USA TODAY, MarketWatch.com, **Mark Cotton**](#)

Wednesday on the air

County Code Enforcement Appeal Hearings (10/28)—3:30 p.m. CVTV
Washington at Gonzaga (live)—5 p.m. FSN
 2004 Marshall Leadership Award Ceremony—5:30 p.m. CVTV
Telecommunications Commission (live)—7 p.m. CVTV
University of Portland at Oregon State (live)—7 p.m. KPDX, KEX
Kelowna at Portland Winter Hawks (live)—7 p.m. KUPL
 C-TRAN Service Reduction Hearing (11/16)—9:30 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and the weather

James Barber controlling costs. ☞ **Jody Lerma** pushing coffee with mush. ☞ **Aaron Guerra** putting zest in the vittles. ☞ **Jim Fowler** visiting the meeting room of the same name. ☞ **Kurt Creager** providing news link. ☞ **Wednesday**, gray, occasional rain, 51. **Thursday**, dry, sunbreaks, 48. **Friday**, mostly cloudy, 50.