

Utility sees no retail electric increases in coming year

No retail electric rate increases were predicted for 2006 as Clark Public Utilities commissioners' today reviewed a 2006 budget prepared by the utility's staff.

Commissioners will hold a public hearing on the 2006 budget, based on \$306 million in electric energy sales in the coming year, on December 6, and expect to adopt a final budget for the coming year on December 13.

The budget is also predicated on an estimated 2.3 percent growth during 2006 in the number of new customers—from 176,884 to 180,901.

The growth in Clark's water utility is expected to be about 3 percent in 2006.

The utility's appliance repair program is also expected to grow slightly in the coming year. Staff recommended an increase in the monthly rate of its guaranteed hot water program from \$2.40 a month to \$2.95 a month, reflecting increased costs.

Corps Of Discovery presentations continuing at O. O. Howard House

The Corps of Discovery, the premier Lewis and Clark National Bicentennial exhibit, is presenting the Tent of Many Voices between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. daily in a huge tent south of the O. O. Howard House in Vancouver Barracks.

There is no admission fee. The main tent seats up to 175 persons. In addition to a walk-through tour with an audio and printed script, the exhibit features hourly presentations providing an overview of the original 1803-06 journey from Monticello to the Pacific Ocean and the journey back.

The exhibit is staffed by National Park Service personnel but involves more than two dozen federal agencies, 41 Indian Nations, 18 Lewis and Clark Trail State Commissions and many local people.

At 3 p.m. today, **Jane Van Dyke**, executive director of the Columbia Springs Environmental Education Center, presents a program on the flora and fauna of Lewis and Clark. At 4 p.m. today, Vancouver City councilwoman **Pat Jollota** presents a program on the history of Vancouver.

Presentations Wednesday, Nov. 30, are as follows: 9 a.m. "Gros Ventre History and Culture," by **Clint Brown**; 10 a.m. "The Volcanoes of Lewis and Clark," **Carolyn Driedger**, U.S. Geological Survey; 11 a.m. "Gros Ventre History and Culture," noon School Programs, **Josh Loftis**, "Discovery Expedition of St. Charles," 1 p.m. "Agai Pah: Our Homelands," a Lemhi Shoshone film; 2 p.m. "Palouse Indians History and Culture," **Carrie Shuster**; 3 p.m. "Lewis and Clark Columbia River Disappointments, Real and Imagined," **David Nicandri**, Washington State Historical Society director; and 4 p.m. "Trail Tunes," **Mark and Tanner Johnson**.

Marion Elementary School wins \$25,000 Apple award

Marion Elementary School principal **Joe Frazier** tomorrow will accept a \$25,000 Apple Award Construction Achievement Grant from the Washington State Board of Education. The grant will be presented by state board member **Linda W. Lamb**, in an assembly at 9:30 a.m. in the school at 1019 NE 14th Street.

The award is one of ten being presented this year to public elementary schools in the state and is based on significant increases in Washington Assessment of Student Learning tests.

Students at the school will be asked how to spend the money—money that will be earmarked for a construction project on the school grounds or on other public property in Clark County.

Port of Vancouver adopts \$67.2 million 2006 budget

Port of Vancouver commissioners have approved a \$67.2 million budget for 2006, which provides more than \$13 for capital investments for marine use and industrial expansion.

Port commissioners project port revenues of \$20 million during the coming year. In addition, the port will collect \$8.5 million in property taxes. Other funding for the budget comes from \$20 million in cash to be carried over and \$16 million in designated reserves.

Copies of the port's budget can be found by going to www.portvanusa.com.

Clark County Sheriff's Office earns sixth consecutive national accreditation

The Clark County Sheriff's Office, in 1987 the first in the state of Washington to receive national accreditation, has received its sixth consecutive accreditation from the Commission for Accreditation of Law Enforcement Agencies this month in Nashville.

Clark County Sheriff **Garry Lucas** was presented the CALEA Egon Bittner Award, for having served as chief executive officer of an accredited agency for 15 years.

To be accredited, law enforcement agencies are graded on 400 separate standards every three years.

Calendar

Clark County commissioners meet in informal session at 2:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 30, in conference room B in the Public Service Center.

Tuesday headlines at home and abroad

[County does review, finds dearth of diversity--Columbian, **Erin Middlewood**](#)

[One side of Lieser Road overpass at Highway 14 now open--Columbian, **Thomas Ryll**](#)

[Retiring Vancouver School Board member Sam Gunn gets warm sendoff--Columbian, **Margaret Ellis**](#)

[Clark, Cowlitz and Skamania County commissioners met over watershed protection plan but want more public input before adopting it--Columbian, **Erik Robinson**](#)

[Paul Allen to bring his collection of Monet, Renoir, Picasso, Lichtenstein, et al, to his Experience Music Project in Seattle--Seattle Times, **Sheila Farr**](#)

[New home sales surge unexpectedly--USA TODAY, Reuters](#)

[NBC winning evening news wars--USA TODAY, AP](#)

[Tape appears to show four Westerners kidnapped in Baghdad--Washington Post, **Doug Struck**](#)

Tuesday on the air

Portland Trail Blazers at Philadelphia (live)—4 p.m. FSN, KXL, KXMG

Clark County Focus (10/14)—5 p.m. CVTV

Clark County Close Up (11/6)—5:30 p.m. CVTV

Tobacco Free Parks (11/15)—6 p.m. CVTV

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

Town Tabloids and the weather

Jo Anne McBride sells limo. ☞ **Christy Drake** much relieved by the news. ☞ **Walt Evans** lending helping hand. ☞ **Ann Rivers** says to hang in there. ☞ **Kelly O'Neill** recommending decaf. ☞ **Nan Henriksen** offering condolences. ☞ **Joy Overstreet** suggesting a bright side. ☞ **Tuesday**, mostly light showers, 44. **Wednesday**, possible showers mixed with snow, 44. **Thursday**, more showers, possibility of some snow flakes, 41.