

Local entrepreneur expands its news wire service to Texas and Alaska



Craig Walker

Craig Walker's Vancouver-based FlashNews is expanding its news wire service into Texas and the Alaskan panhandle.

The company currently distributes emergency information, such as snow closures and news releases for 800 organizations in the Pacific Northwest, Colorado and now Texas and Alaska, Walker announced today.

Craig Walker Communications has handled school snow closures in the Portland area for 28 years, the last nine years via Internet.

Distribution of news releases has expanded to police and fire agencies, the military, cities, counties, businesses, utilities and others.

In the Vancouver-Portland area alone, FlashNews distributes more than 500 news releases monthly as well as thousands of weather-related messages to the news media.

The system is used by every school, college and most private schools from Olympia to Roseburg. Texas schools in Dallas, Austin and Waco have adopted the system.

Clients post their news releases with FlashNews and it is instantly sent to newsrooms throughout the FlashNews distribution areas.

Two years ago FlashNews enabled schools to allow staff and parents to self-register to receive emails and cell text messages. This service is being used by 30,000 people in five states.

This year, a partnership with Portland television stations has added a new tier of service that allows small organizations to register to have their emergency information pushed into the TV station websites at no cost.

Identity Clark County supports light rail to Vancouver

The board of directors of Identity Clark County, the organization that successfully campaigned for the rebirth of downtown core area of Vancouver, has announced the organization's support of light rail across I-5.

"Preliminary cost estimates, data and modeling provided by the Columbia Crossing consulting team indicates that the overall long-term investment of a new structure [replacing the I-5 Columbia River bridges] is the most cost-effective alternative," says ICC executive director **Ginger Metcalf**.

The Columbia River Crossing Task Force is holding a public meeting at 7:05 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27, in the Washington State Department of Transportation southwest Washington office, 11018 NE 51st Circle, to discuss the preferred alternative crossing, which calls for replacing the twin Interstate Bridges and adding a light-rail bridge west of the new bridge.

The task force, formed in 2005, includes 39 representatives from Washington and Oregon. It is charged with making a recommendation for improving I-5 traffic capacity between Highway 500 in Washington and Columbia Boulevard in Oregon. Further information can be obtained by going to

www.columbiarivercrossing.org.

Port of Woodland opposes casino

The Port of Woodland has joined Woodland and the Woodland School District in opposing the proposed Cowlitz Casino Resort planned for a 152-acre site just of La Center and south of Woodland.

Other official organizations that have also expressed opposition to the proposed casino include the following: City of Vancouver, City of La Center, Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, La Center North County Chamber of Commerce, Battle Ground Chamber of Commerce, Woodland Chamber of Commerce, Identity Clark County, Enterprise/Paradise Point Neighborhood Association, Chinook Indian Tribe, American Land Rights Association, Fish First, and Stand Up for Clark County Citizens (now disbanded).

News briefs

The Forum at the Library will discuss "2008 Washington Primaries and Caucuses: What They Are and How They Work," at a meeting at 7 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 29, in the community room in Clark Public Utilities, 1200 Fort Vancouver Way. There is no admission charge. <> The Junior Symphony of Vancouver, along with the Fort

Vancouver Regional Library District, celebrates the synthesis of music and books with a special fund-raising concert at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 1, in the Faith Center Church, 2533 NE Andresen Road. Tickets are \$20 each. For further information, call **696-4084**. <> Clark County Communicators meets for a no-host luncheon at 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, Dec. 4, in the Asteca Mexican Restaurant, 4708-B NE Thurston Way.

Calendar

The Vancouver City Council will review the proposed sale of the Monterey Hotel property during its 4 p.m. workshop session today. The council will consider a consent agenda at a regular meeting set to begin at 6 p.m. today. <> Clark Public Utilities' commissioners meet in regular session at 9 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27, and will consider 2008 budgets. <> Port of Vancouver commissioners, meeting in regular session at 9:30 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27, will discuss a "pay-as-you-go" 2008 budget. <> Clark County commissioners meet in regular session at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Nov. 27, and will consider an interlocal governmental agreement with the City of Vancouver covering planning and annexations.

Monday on the air

Vancouver City Council Workshop (live)—4 p.m. CVTV

Vancouver City Council (live)—7 p.m. CVTV

Orlando at Portland Blazers (live)—7 p.m. CSN, KXL

Clark County Land Use Hearings (11/20—9:20 p.m. CVTV

George C. Marshall Leadership Award (11/7)—10:10 p.m. CVTV

Veterans Day Parade (11/10)—11 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and the Weather

Bob Schaefer's cross is first to be lighted. <> **Stephanie Anderson** pulling all the strings. <> **Wayne Clemetson** does Santa Claus imitation, but Ducks lose anyway. <> **Ben Gassaway** mending well. <> **Ron Brown** wrapping up 25 years. **Monday**, afternoon showers (could be sleet, snow or frozen rain) likely, 47, **Tuesday**, (sleet, snow, frozen rain possible) showers, 47. **Wednesday**, cloudy, 44.