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Poor farm on way to becoming rich community resource

Situated between NE 78th Street and NE 63rd Street well east of Highway 99 in Hazel Dell are 79 bucolic acres, on two sides of a high ridge, that once functioned as the Clark County's poor farm. Dozens of families and hundreds of people lived and worked the property in the early part of the 20th century.

Numbers of those died there, and many are still buried in a small cemetery at the top of the hill dividing the property between the two major thoroughfares.

After World War II the county property was turned over to Washington State University to be used as an experiment station for the land-grant college situated in Pullman, Wash.

Although that use continues to this day, and WSU activities are to remain as an agreement between the county and the University, most of the space will be given over to a garden park concept designed to make the most of "green" gardening.

Hazel Dell Park, on the southeast corner of the property, likely will come in for some upgrading. The cemetery will remain. So, too, will the experiment station on NE 78th Street, but plans call for renovating the historically appealing building as a restaurant—a restaurant that would take advantage of the fruits and vegetables grown on the land and in a greenhouse.

A perimeter pathway would connect nearly all aspects of the large area, including community gardens, a forested wetland, a viewpoint, and a solar panel array.

Clark County commissioner **Marc Boldt** was in the forefront of negotiations between the county and WSU that returns control of the land to the county. The focus of the project is sustainability and agriculture.

No shopping areas, business parks or residential areas, said Boldt.

The county plans an extensive public process as it takes its planning to the public, according to Boldt.

Genealogical society spring seminar is Saturday

Gary Zimmerman, president of the Fiske Genealogical Foundation and former mayor of Bellevue and former chairman of Seattle Metro, is the featured speaker at the Clark County Genealogical Society's Spring Seminar, opening at 8:30 a.m. Saturday, April 19, in the society's research library, 717 Grand Boulevard.

Topics are New England research, Quaker research, Canadian on-line research, and finding Germans in America.

Admission to the day-long seminar is \$35 for members of the local society, \$40 for nonmembers. For further information, call **750-5688**.

Museum conference won't take beaten path in Clark County

The 2008 annual Washington Museum Association conference being held in Clark County this year opens not in a hotel ballroom but in the Cathlapotle Plank House in Ridgefield.

The first day's events are being held in the replica of an Indian longhouse Wednesday, June 18. The event planners recommend that attendees be mindful of primitive conditions at the plank house in the Ridgefield Wildlife Preserve. No plumbing; porta-potties are available.

The main part of the conference, co-sponsored by the Clark County Historical Society and Museum and the Washington State University Vancouver History Department, will be held at WSU Vancouver.

The Wednesday evening reception is being held in the downtown Vancouver Clark County Historical Museum. The Thursday night banquet will be held in Vancouver's English Estates Winery.

The theme of the statewide conference is to tear down walls and break down barriers.

For further information, call **Susan Tissot, 993-6579**.

News brief

Patrons at Tommy Owen's Tommy O's Restaurant and Tommy O's Lounge should know that a percentage of the profits this weekend will be donated to the Children's Center as Owens celebrates the first anniversary of

the lounge's on Washington Street in downtown Vancouver. During the opening a year ago, Owens contributed \$3,000 of profits to the center. The Children's Center provides mental health therapy for children and families living in Clark County.

Calendar

Republican gubernatorial candidate **Dino Rossi** is the keynote speaker at the Clark County Republican's county convention that begins at 9 a.m. Saturday, April 19, in Prairie High School. <> The Oregon Multiple Sclerosis Society is holding a Walk MS Vancouver event at 10 a.m. Saturday, April 19. The fully accessible, 5K walk starts at the Red Lion Inn at the Quay on Columbia Street. To register, call (800) 344-4867 or go to www.walkMSoregon.com. <> The Southwest Washington Blood Program is holding a blood drive from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 19, in the New Heights Church, 7913 NE 58th Avenue. <> The Nez Perce annual memorial ceremony for members of its tribe who were jailed in Vancouver Barracks in 1877-78, at the tag end of the Indian Wars, is from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, April 19, on the Vancouver Parade Grounds north of E 5th Street near the re-created Hudson's Bay Company Fort Vancouver. There is no charge. U.S. military personnel and veterans are invited to participate in the peace pipe ceremony. <> Ceremonies at noon Saturday, April 19, celebrate the beginning of construction of the \$3.8 million Battle Ground Community Library in Battle Ground Village, 1207 Rasmussen Boulevard. A book sale from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., bracketing the celebration, is expected to help complete the remaining \$70,000 of the fund drive. <> The Vancouver Symphony Orchestra presents its annual Young Artists concert this weekend in the Skyview High School concert hall, 1300 NW 139th Street, at 3 p.m. Saturday, April 19, and 7 p.m. Sunday, April 20. Music director **Salvador Brotons** conducts. Tickets range from \$7 for students to \$36 for reserved seating. For further information, call 735-7278. <> Bravo! Vancouver features Beethoven, Mozart and Strauss in a Sunday, April 20, 3 p.m. concert in St. Joseph Catholic Church, 300 S Andresen Road. **Michael Kissinger** conducts the Washington Chamber Orchestra. Tickets are \$20. For further information, call 906-0441. <> The Fort Vancouver Regional Library Board of Trustees is holding a two-day retreat beginning at 9 a.m. Monday, April 21, in the White Salmon Community Library, White Salmon.

Friday on the air

Portland Beavers at Colorado Springs (live)—5 p.m. KKAD

Neighborhood Light-rail Forum (4/9)—7 p.m. CVTV

Seattle Mariners at Los Angeles (live)—7 p.m. FSN, KFX

U.S. Rep. **Brian Baird** (3/27)—9 p.m. CVTV

Army News Watch—9 p.m. FVTV

Arbor Day 2008 (4/9)—9:30 p.m. CVTV

Short Course on Local Planning (4/1)—10:30 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and the Weather

Gene Cook unlocking the door for business. <> **Bob Koski** boosting poll responses. <> **Marie Sullivan** dialing telephone. <> **Bill Fromhold** relaxing pace. <> **Alison Kowalski** and **Louise Allen** wearing healthy billboards. <> **Nancy Millar** getting enthusiastic RSVPs. <> **Friday**, chilly, light showers, 37-47. **Saturday**, cold rain showers, 36-48. **Sunday**, possible thunder showers, 36-50.