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Vancouver's PT 659 gives up ghost, breathes life into PT 305 and PT 658

Vancouver's World War II torpedo patrol boat PT 659, once expected to become a WW II treasure in Vancouver, is nothing but sawdust, pieces of wood and remnants of 40,000 brass fasteners today.

It was an ultimate sacrifice. Parts and motors from PT 659 went to a sister Higgins wooden torpedo boat, PT 658, now nearly complete and on display at Swan Island in Portland. PT 658 will also be on display on a barge on the downtown Willamette River during the Portland Festival of Roses.

PT 659 is also breathing life into PT 305, another sister ship that saw combat service in the Mediterranean during World War II, and is now part of the U.S. Congressional World War II Museum in New Orleans.

Two years ago PT 659 was to be shipped in its entirety to New Orleans for rehabilitation in the Louisiana museum which historian **Stephen Ambrose** helped create. But Hurricane Katrina wrecked those plans.

Vancouver came by the PT Boat 659 in 1982, when **Sam Jones, Harry Wiedmaier, Larry Smith, Russ Hamachek**, a World War II PT boat squadron commander, and several others acquired the boat from the Oregon Navy Museum. They were hoping to restore the 78-foot boat. Ultimately the boat resided on property near the Vancouver National Historic Reserve owned by **Oliver Hidden**, who had become another of the boat's aficionados.

Through the years some money was donated, but never enough to go through with a full-scale rebuild.

Then this month came the call from New Orleans. Their PT boat needed the stern from PT 659. They needed engines and fixtures. It turns out that four semi-truck loads of fixtures from PT 659 went to New Orleans last week.

"While we are sorry that PT 659 didn't make it back," **Judith Davis**, president of the Vancouver PT organization, said, "We are proud of her contribution to her sister ships."

Of 1,500 World War II PT boats only six survive, two of those thanks to Vancouver's PT 659.

County ports to meet in joint session to discuss Columbia River Crossing

The Ports of Vancouver, Ridgefield and Camas-Washougal meet in a joint session at 6 p.m. Wednesday, May 21, in the Red Lon Hotel at the Quay.

Commissioners will hear presentations regarding the Columbia River Crossing Task Force.

Making presentations will be the following: **Hal Dengerink**, Columbia River Crossing Task Force co-chair; Larry Paulson, Port of Vancouver executive director, and **Scott Walstra**, Port of Camas-Washougal; **Scott Patterson**, C-TRAN; **Dean Lookingbill**, executive director, Southwest Washington Regional Transportation Council; and **Kris Strickler**, Columbia River Crossing staff.

The meeting is preceded by a 4 p.m. tour of the Port of Vancouver and dinner from 5 to 6 p.m.

Heritage High School students ensconced at University of Portland

Eleventh grade students from the Advancement Via Individual Determination program at Heritage High School are spending most of the week at the University of Portland campus, attending classes, practicing drills with the ROTC and living in the dorms.

"The purpose of this visit is to help demystify the college experience for these students," according to



Unidentified World War II PT boat

Heritage High School associate principal **Alex Otoupal**. “All of these students have plans to attend a four-year college or university after graduation and as part of the AVID program.

Three years ago, Evergreen Public Schools began the AVID program at Covington and Frontier Middle Schools and Heritage High School. The program takes students in the academic middle who are not achieving their educational potential and enrolls them in an intensive schedule of advanced placement courses and academic mentoring.

Vancouver Lake Sailing Club offers youngsters sailing school

The Vancouver Lake Sailing Club has scheduled a June summer sailing school program for two younger age groups, 8 to 12 years old and 13 to 18 years old.

The program will offer a series of level 1 classes which will teach pupils how to rig and safely launch boats, sail upwind and downwind, dock, and basic boat care and maintenance. All classes, which will include 20 hours of instruction, will be taught by U.S. Sailing-certified instructors.

Classes will be offered June 16-20 and June 23-27. Four-hour morning and afternoon sessions are available. Students must know how to swim. The fee is \$180 per student. Registration is limited, and pre-registration is required. For a complete schedule and registration form, visit www.vlsc.org. For more information, call **David Collins, (503) 313-5356**.

News brief

McMenamins on the Columbia, 1801 SE Columbia River Drive, is donating 50 percent of its beverage and food sales to the Hough Foundation from 5 p.m. to midnight, Tuesday, May 20. For further information, call **992-7060**.

Calendar

The Vancouver City Council meets in workshop session at 4 p.m. today. <> The Port of Camas-Washougal meets in regular session at 4 p.m. today. <> The Clark County High Capacity Study Committee meets at 6:30 p.m. this evening in the 6th floor training room in the Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin Street. <> The Vancouver City Council meets in regular session at 7 p.m. today. <> Clark County commissioners meet in regular session at 10 a.m. Tuesday, May 20.

Monday on the air

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

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

Tucson at Portland Beavers (live)—7 p.m. FSN, KKAD

County Democratic Convention (4/19)—11 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and the Weather

Maria Manzo making ivories sing. <> **Marie Day** previewing Eagle Scout ceremony. <> **Raif Zacca** getting in prescribed rounds. <> **Linda Martin** first to schmooze. <> **Al Hicks** demonstrating svelte. <> **Kristina Aitchison** reporting that Patten Park is underway. <> **John Lindberg's** log sales reports very much in demand. <> **Monday**, mostly hazy, 58-80. **Tuesday**, cooling, some rain expected, 51-59. **Wednesday**, light showers, 49-60.