

Children from YWCA Clark County get a Christmas lunch with Santa and more

Children from the Y's children's program were treated earlier this afternoon to a visit with Santa and a lunch provided by **Mark Mathias** and his staff at Beaches Restaurant.

Santa and his elves greeted the children and took pictures on a fire truck with each child who were then served lunch consisting of pizza, mini-corn dogs and other finger food, along with chocolate chip cookies and ice cream sundaes. There was also a gift for each child at each setting, a stocking filled with toys and candy with their name written on it, and a gigantic coloring book.

"This luncheon for the children is an example of corporate philanthropy's being alive and well in Clark County," says **Jennifer Werdel**, director of development and communications. "Businesses like Beaches, and Mark Mathias is what makes Clark County unique and a wonderful community. We feel very fortunate to have this opportunity."

The Y's Care program at YWCA helps homeless and low-income children between 2 ½ to 5 years old with early childhood education, such as by preparing them for kindergarten, such activities as field trips, games, art and more, and also with nutrition, providing them with two-thirds of their daily nutrition. For more information about this program and other programs available at YWCA Clark County, visit www.ywcaclarkcounty.org.

Washington tribes awarded \$1.2 million in Recovery Act funding to expand transit

Gov. **Chris Gregoire** has announced that five American Indian tribes in Washington state will receive funding for transit programs from the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The five projects totaling approximately \$1.2 million were among the 39 highest-rated projects selected for Recovery Act Tribal Transit grants by the Federal Transit Administration. The majority of the funds will purchase new buses and improve tribal transit service in urban and rural areas by expanding service to underserved areas and making new connections to existing routes.

"Transit empowers communities," Gregoire said. "People in underserved areas will now have better access to regional businesses and job centers. This is so important in helping our families get through these tough times."

Funds were awarded to the following tribes: The Confederated Tribes of the Yakama Nation, \$112,000 to purchase 12 bus shelters and two support vehicles; Kalispel Tribe of Indians, \$335,600 to purchase a bus, two other vehicles and dispatch equipment; The Quinault Tribe of the Quinault Reservation, \$398,000 to purchase two buses; Spokane Tribe of Indians, \$255,000 to purchase six vehicles; and the Tulalip Tribe, \$126,748 to purchase three buses.

For a complete list of projects, visit the FTA website at www.fta.dot.gov/news/news_events_10912.html.

County to consider buying Leichner Landfill to plan new uses

Clark County could purchase the closed Leichner Landfill and adjacent properties north of Orchards to prepare for the site's future reuse, following additional study.

The Board of Clark County Commissioners today authorized the board chair to sign a nonbinding letter of intent to purchase about 120 acres, including the 74-acre landfill and adjacent properties.

Most of the purchase money would come from a reserve fund managed by Clark County and the city of Vancouver for the landfill's post-closure maintenance and monitoring. This reserve fund can be used only for landfill-related activities. The county road fund could pay for about 11 acres for the planned extension of Northeast 99th Street north of the landfill. Together, the two dedicated funds could provide \$1.5 million to complete the purchase.

The landfill, which for more than five decades received most of Clark County's solid waste, was closed at the end of 1991. The county's garbage is now transported by barge up the Columbia River to the Finley Buttes Landfill near Boardman, OR.

The county will have 120 days to study the purchase-a "due diligence" period that can be extended, if necessary. If the county decides to buy the site, it likely would start a master planning process for the area, with public participation and comment in drafting a blueprint for future reuse.

Closed landfills often are used for passive recreation, such as trails. A 35-acre portion of the proposed 120-acre purchase is flat, has no buried waste and is zoned for light-industrial uses. Any reuses cannot interfere with post-closure maintenance and monitoring of the closed landfill. One potential reuse is a waste-to-energy facility

where the landfill's contents could be cleanly burned to generate electricity, create jobs and produce a clean site. "Waste to energy is an emerging field, a way to turn a negative into a positive," Clark County Commissioner **Steve Stuart** said. "Although I am intrigued by the potential, I also know we are a long ways off from deciding what should be done and that community participation will be critical in crafting a path forward."

For more information on the Leichner Landfill, including a map and a list of frequently asked questions, go to: www.clark.wa.gov/recycle/leichner.html.

News Briefs

Spend New Year's Eve with Vancouver's next mayor, **Tim Leavitt**, from 8 p.m. to 1 a.m. Thursday, Dec. 31, Heathman Lodge, 7801 NE Greenwood Drive. Cost is \$50 per individual, \$90 per couple, and \$750 per reserved patron table. Proceeds will benefit Parks Foundation of Clark County and Community Choices. For more information or to purchase tickets, call **619-1170**.

Calendar

Ridgefield City Council meets at 6:30 tonight in the Ridgefield Community Center, 210 North Main Avenue.

Thursday on the air

- Cascade Park Community Library Grand Opening Celebration (12-15)--4 p.m. CVTV
- Vancouver Land Use Hearings (12-15)--4:59 p.m. CVTV
- Bravo! Vancouver: Messiah - An Oratorio (12-6) 5:19 p.m. CVTV
- Vancouver Rotary Foundation Festival of Trees' Community Tree Lighting (11-27)--7:35 p.m. CVTV
- Vancouver Housing Authority: Housing Matters (12-6)--8 p.m. CVTV
- Clark College Orchestra Fall Concert (12-2)--8:29 p.m. CVTV
- VPD All Access: Neighborhood Police Officers--9:59 p.m. CVTV
- Clark County World AIDS Day Recognition (12-1)--10:29 p.m. CVTV
- Vancouver Rotary Foundation Festival of Trees' Community Tree Lighting (11-27)--11:39 p.m. CVTV

Town Tabloids and Weather

Mona B. Ail still noticing things, such as the editor misspelling her last name. <> **Leslie Stose** taking photos of those with smiles on their faces. <> **Thursday**, showers, 51-45. **Friday**, showers, 48-41. **Saturday**, cloudy, 48-44.