

WSU Vancouver receives \$800,000 in grant

Christine Portfors, associate professor of biology at Washington State University Vancouver, has received a \$700,000 grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF) for her Research in Undergraduate Institutions (RUI) project, "Neural Encoding of Behaviorally Relevant Sounds." Many animals communicate with members of their own species using specific sounds called vocalizations. When it hears one of these sounds, an animal must make an appropriate response based on the information in the sound. "It is not understood how complex sounds are processed and represented in the auditory system," said Portfors. "My goal is to understand how sounds are processed in the brain. The importance of this research is in understanding how the brain has evolved to optimally encode behaviorally relevant sounds."

Funded under the American Recovery and Investment Act of 2009, the project will provide a variety of training opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students through May 2013. For more information on Portfors' research, visit <http://www.vancouver.wsu.edu/fac/portfors/Research.html>.

The Board of Northwest Health Foundation awarded WSU Vancouver \$100,000 for the diversity nursing faculty project. This project helps train RNs from other countries to qualify to practice in the U.S. after they have graduated from the Workforce Improvement with International Nurses (WIIN) program. This community-based, population-focused nurse educator certificate program is designed to meet the growing challenges of a shortage of qualified nurse educators. The ultimate goal is to improve culture competence in the nursing field to provide better healthcare outcomes locally and globally.

"There is a lack of diversity in the health care profession," said WSU Vancouver Intercollegiate of Nursing professor **Dawn Doutrich**, RN CNS. An increase of diversity will mean a stronger workforce and ultimately better patient care.

The project aims to develop a pool of nurse educators from a variety of backgrounds and bring their unique global perspectives and understandings to nursing education. The program has graduated four cohorts of 10-15 students, most of whom have passed the National Council Licensure Examination for Registered Nurses (NCLEX-RN) and are now working as registered nurses in the U.S. Students have come from countries such as Cuba, Japan, Romania, the Philippines and the Czech Republic.

Clark County Food Bank nears 3 million pounds of distributed food

Demand for emergency food continues to grow, as the amount of pounds distributed by the Clark County Stop Hunger warehouse to the local food pantries totaled 2,966,031 pounds for fiscal year 2008/2009. The cash value of this food amounted to \$3,491,593.

Three major sources of this total came from two food drives, the Walk and Knock in December and Letter Carriers Drive in May, along with the Fresh Alliance Program, where local grocery stores donate product to the Food Bank that is near pull date and can be frozen and sent to the mini-food pantries for inclusion in the emergency food boxes. This program totaled 345,834 pounds last year that otherwise would have been discarded.

The Stop Hunger Warehouse, which is currently managed by the Salvation Army, made it possible for over 90,000 emergency food boxes to be provided to needy families, seniors and individuals throughout Clark County. This was made possible by over 110,000 volunteer hours contributed by community members who work at the food pantries, drive trucks to pick up perishables at the grocery stores, and help out with company, civic and church group food drives during the year.

As the demand continues to rise, the Clark County Food Bank is underway with plans to construct a new food distribution center that will expand the size of the facility from its current 8,000 square feet to 22,000 square feet. Cost of this new facility is estimated to be \$3.5 million dollars. For more information on how you can help alleviate hunger and its root causes in southwest Washington, or to schedule a tour of the Clark County

Stop Hunger warehouse, call **360-693-0939**.

WSDOT takes contractor bidding system online

WSDOT will begin taking construction contractor bids online in September in an effort expected to reduce administrative paperwork and staff time, as well as reduce costs for contractors. WSDOT is in the middle of one of its largest construction programs, with more than 300 contracts going to bid between now and 2011.

Contractors currently submit bids on paper through a hand-delivered sealed bid process. Online bidding allows contractors to submit sealed, secure bids over the Internet. Contractors have a choice of submitting bids over the Internet or delivering them to WSDOT on disk with a paper backup.

By accepting and managing contractor bids online, WSDOT can take advantage of the latest electronic bidding technology to increase efficiency and save money and processing time. Online bidding also eliminates bidding errors with a built-in system that verifies calculations and finds missing data. "Disqualifying a low bid because of an error results in taxpayers not getting the most competitive price for construction projects," said WSDOT's State Construction Engineer **Jeff Carpenter**. "On large contracts, the difference between the two lowest bids can be hundreds of thousands of dollars."

Thirty states already use online bidding, with five more in the process of testing bidding systems. Several training sessions are scheduled for contractors interested in submitting bids electronically for WSDOT projects. For more information about WSDOT's online bidding, visit www.wsdot.wa.gov/biz/contaa/.

Battle Ground girls' Meriwether Lewis project wins acclaim

Two Battle Ground School District students are receiving national recognition for their research and multimedia documentary about the impact of famed explorer Meriwether Lewis on this country's westward expansion and on the lives and status of Native Americans.

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, based in Great Falls, Montana, is honoring outgoing Pleasant Valley Middle School students **Kelsey Roldness** and **Jennifer Turkington** with its Youth Achievement Award. The young historians and their history teacher at Pleasant Valley, **Rene Soohoo**, have been notified by the foundation that the girls will be acknowledged in October at the foundation's annual meeting in Olive Branch, Miss., near Lewis's final home in Tennessee.

Turkington and Roldness, who will be freshmen at Prairie High School in September, did massive research in producing a 10-minute multi-media DVD titled "The Actions and Impact of Meriwether Lewis: Implementing the Doctrine of Discovery." Their bibliography cites several books, Lewis and Clark journals, interviews, letters, documents, articles, videos, Websites and other sources.

The students were determined from the outset to dig deeper into Lewis's impact on this country than is usually described in accounts of the epic 1804-1806 expedition, during which the explorers camped in present-day Clark County in both directions of their trip to the mouth of the Columbia River. The students focused on Lewis, who was President Thomas Jefferson's choice to organize the expedition.

Soohoo, their teacher at Pleasant Valley, said she is "thrilled" at the news of the award to her former students. "I was pleasantly surprised that the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation would acknowledge this kind of darker side to the Lewis and Clark story," Soohoo said Tuesday.

Local historian **Barb Kubik**, who encouraged and advised the young students on the project, said: “They did a very good job on a very difficult topic. This Youth Achievement Award comes with very high standards and is not given every year. These girls made a personal commitment to the topic they chose.”

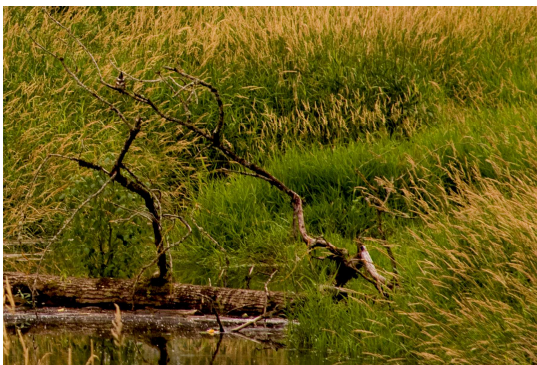
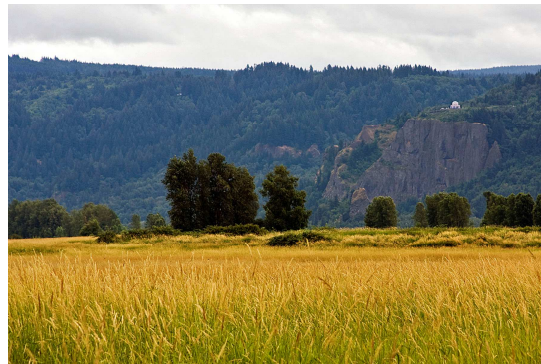
For more information about the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Great Falls, visit [Mont. www.lewisandclark.org](http://Mont.www.lewisandclark.org).

Flag lowering honors fallen soldier from Aberdeen

Gov. **Chris Gregoire** has directed that flags at all Washington state agency facilities be lowered to half-staff today, July 9, in memory of U.S. Army Private **Aaron Fairbairn**, 21, of Aberdeen who was killed in action in Afghanistan July 4.

Flags will remain at half-staff until sunset Thursday or first thing Friday morning, July 10. Other government entities, citizens and businesses are encouraged to join this recognition.

Walking the trail at Steigerwald Lake National Wildlife Refuge



Photos taken by **Larry Easter**

Events

Port of Ridgefield adopts new schedule for public meetings

Port of Ridgefield Commissioner **Joe Melroy**, announced today that Port public meetings

previously held from 6:00 – 8:00 PM on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month will now be held from 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM on the same bi-monthly schedule. This change will be effective Wednesday July 22nd, the next scheduled Port public meeting. “We hope this change will encourage more public involvement, which is something we are very adamant about here at the Port. We very much want Port District residents to take an active role in the development of their community”, Melroy said. Contact the Port offices at **360-887-3873**, or visit their web site at www.portridgefield.org for more information.

The Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce

The Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce and Magenta Theater present *The Wind in the Willows*, a lively adaptation of Kenneth Grahame’s classic tale, tonight at 7 p.m., and tickets can be purchased either online or via the box office, **360-635-4358**. The Magenta Theater is for all ages and is located at 606 Main Street, Vancouver.

Thursday on the air

Washington State Jail Industries Board: Working inside-out—5:30 p.m. CVTV 21
Community health impacts of the economy crisis in SW Washington (6-27)—5:30 p.m. CVTV 23
KIRO Eyewitness News—6 p.m. CVTV 21
Forum: The future of newspapers in our metro area (6-18)—7 p.m. CVTV 21
Seattle Mariners (at home) v.s. Texas (Live)—7:10 p.m., 710 ESPN, FSN-SAP
City minutes– Columbia River Crossing update (6-28)—8:30 p.m. CVTV 21
Vancouver Fire Department awards ceremony (6-18)—9 p.m. CVTV 21
Vancouver land use hearings (7-2)—9:30 p.m. CVTV 23

Town Tabloids and the Weather

Bill Turley kicking off fundraiser. <> **Anita Elliot** taming waves. <> **Saeed Anwar** making inquiries. <> **Madison Lee** learning new recipes <> **Thursday**, sun escapes clouds, 58-78. **Friday**, clouds make a comeback, 60-84. **Saturday**, sunshine prevails, 60-88.