

FRIENDS OF



CLARK COUNTY

# SMART GROWTH

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

[www.clarkfriends.org](http://www.clarkfriends.org)

(360) 695-5570

February 2008

## LEAPING FORWARD, TOGETHER WITH FRIENDS ANNUAL FUND RAISER

Celebrate leap day !  
Friday, February 29, 2008  
at five thirty in the evening

Michael Servetus Universal Unitarian Fellowship  
4505 East 18th Street

Have a great time socializing, bid on silent auction items, and enjoy a delicious dinner influenced by the flavors of Spain.

Revel in the wonder of Flamenco with a performance by El Cuadro Solo Flamenco.



\$25 per person, pay at the door  
RSVP to Bridget @ 573.5873

## FRIENDS of CLARK COUNTY

### CONTACT US:

P.O. Box 61711  
Vancouver, WA 98666  
V/F 360.695.5570  
[info@clarkfriends.org](mailto:info@clarkfriends.org)  
[www.clarkfriends.org](http://www.clarkfriends.org)

## MISSION STATEMENT

Friends of Clark County is a nonprofit, membership-based organization creating, educating and empowering advocates for Smart Growth.

Our mission is to conserve and protect Southwest Washington's quality of life.

## FoCC MEMBERSHIP

Please join/renew your membership using the order form in this newsletter. We need your support to help cover the costs of our meetings, newsletters, public forums, research and to continue our vital work protecting your quality of life in Clark County.

**2007—2008  
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**President's Message**

By Val Alexander

I read an interesting article in the March, 2008 Atlantic titled "The Next Slum" by Christopher B. Leinberger.

The author is a visiting fellow at the Brookings Institution, a professor of urban planning at the University of Michigan, and a real estate developer.

He talks about the high rate of foreclosures in some suburban developments.

Empty houses have attracted drug dealers and other dishonest occupants. Some houses have been stripped of copper wiring and other materials of high value.

The yards have gone unkempt. Some neighbors have even started to share yard maintenance in order to make the houses look lived in.

This scenario can be traced to the home loan disasters we're experiencing.

But, also, to the rising price of fuel and the increasing demand for urban housing with mass transit nearby and shopping within walking distance.

There's some discussion that large houses on large lots may eventually become apartments for several families if they are unable to be sold as single family residences:

"The fate of many homes on the metropolitan fringes will be resale, at rock-bottom prices, to lower-income families, and eventual conversion to apartments."

Friends of Clark County has spent many years advocating for smart growth that would avoid, as much as possible, the suburban sprawl favored by developers.

The higher profit margins earned with large, expensive homes on 1-5 acres has been too tempting for sellers.

Now the tide seems to be turning with more demand for urban, well planned housing increasing in value, (sometimes by as much as 50 percent).

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## President's Message

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Much more information is offered in the entire article, well worth reading by anyone interested in growth management.

Our March meeting will be my last as president, when we will elect a new leader.

After 11 years on the board, I plan to spend more time on the farm raising organic vegetables.

I hope some members of the younger generation will step in and keep "Friends" moving forward to protect the future of Clark County for our descendents.

Please consider becoming more involved with our organization.

On another note, Friends of Clark County has delayed our annual fundraiser, usually held in November, for some other worthy events.

Now we are ready to give you a break from the rainy and cold weather. Make a fantasy visit to sunny Spain on Friday February 29th, Leap Day.

We will feast on tapas, sangria and paella. You will be enchanted by a performance of flamenco dance and music by "El Quadro Solo Flamenco."

A silent auction will feature some wonderful bargains. Bring your friends and neighbors. We'll see you there!

## Rigid Plastics Recycling

The West Van Materials Recovery Center now has a container set up to receive rigid plastic.

This means yogurt containers, margarine, sour cream & cottage cheese tubs, flower pots, toys, grocery/party food trays etc no longer belong in your garbage!

The address is 6601 NW Old Lower River Road.

Phone is 737-1727.

Hours are 6 am – 6 pm Mon-Fri and 8 am -4pm on Sat.

## 2007—2008 ADVISORY BOARD

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## FRIENDS ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

After much discussion on our board, we included an insert in our last quarterly newsletter.

It asked whether our readers would prefer receiving an electronic or hard copy version of our newsletter.

The feedback was consistent. So with this edition we have begun sending our newsletter via e-mail.

The savings on printing and mailing costs are considerable. Although the conversion process to e-mail has been time consuming, once completed we'll save time too.

If you are reading a hard copy version of this newsletter, that's because we don't have an e-mail address for you. (We hope you will provide us with an e-mail address if you have one.)

FYI: Our newsletter is created using Microsoft Publisher. It is converted to an Adobe reader format for our e-mail distribution and posted on our web site.

Adobe Reader is a format that most of us can open. It also reduces the file size considerably. *(A benefit that is not lost on those of us still stuck with dial-up internet access. Like me! Bridget)*

Tell us what you think about our foray into electronic publishing. Are you interested in a Friends of Clark County blog?

## DEAR JOHN: THE SEQUEL

By Bridget Schwarz  
FoCC Executive Director

On Saturday January 19, environmental attorney John Karpinski was stunned. Do you know how hard it is to do that?

John was expecting dinner out with his family. When he entered the room where dinner was to be served, John was greeted by a loud, enthusiastic and prolonged round of applause.

*Surprise!* 88 members of the Clark county environmental community had gathered for a dinner to honor him. John's wife, Diane, was our Event Enabler – she helped with the invite list and kept it a secret.

After dinner, attorney David McDonald led a hilarious and touching tribute from those that came to toast and roast John. Included were conspiracy organizer Bridget Schwarz, attorney Karl Anuta, Senator Craig Pridemore, Vancouver Audubon leader Arden Hagen, Vancouver City Council member Pat Jollota, Greater Brush Prairie Neighborhood Association leader Sam Kim, and Columbian Editor Emeritus Tom Koenninger.

This long overdue event was prompted by The Columbian's October 12 front page profile of the man. The reporter thoroughly covered the viewpoint of John's critics.

But the article failed to include the environmental groups and neighborhood associations that consider John a hero. We believe our surprise dinner to honor John Karpinski leaves no doubt!

Val Alexander was our caterer. Her kitchen help included FoCC members Bianca and Michael Benson, Kerri Altom, Karin DeDona and Andrew Ness. Thanks to Bev Doty for securing our favorite gathering place.

These are the groups that filled our tables for this event:

- Clark Conservation Voters
- Fairgrounds Neighborhood Association
- Friends of Clark County
- Greater Brush Prairie Neighborhood Association
- Loo Wit Group, Sierra Club
- Sustainable Clark County
- Vancouver Audubon



## COUNTY GROWTH PLAN APPEAL

Futurewise and John Karpinski of the Clark County Natural Resources Council combined forces to appeal Clark County's 2007 comprehensive growth management plan.

The groups argue that the county brought too much agricultural land into the urban growth boundary. Resource land such as farms (and forests) are protected under of state law.

In addition, the SEPA does not include a true "no action" alternative because the population growth rate was increased over the adopted 2004 plan.

The citizen involvement plan is also under attack because it did not provide for adequate public input.

The appeal will be heard by the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board.

## KOOB DOOG A \* Regional Equity Atlas

The Coalition for a Livable Future unites over 90 organizations to promote healthy and sustainable communities.

They recognize that equity is a core component of sustainability. The Atlas presents the landscape of equity conditions in the Portland region. To order a copy go to [clfuture.org](http://clfuture.org).

*\* That's a good book spelled backwards*

## RESOURCE LAND DETERIORATION

BY Sydney Reisbick  
FoCC Board

Several groups have recently reported data on the deterioration of our streams, wetlands and wildlife habitat.

*The Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE)* reports that Clark County has 70 new sites on its streams which do not meet State standards. Of these, 29% are violations of water temperature. Others failing standards involve pollution, exotic species and water quantity.

Assaults on our wetlands and seasonal streams affect areas downstream.

Mill Creek (which meanders between 50<sup>th</sup> and 72<sup>nd</sup> Avenues in the north part of the County) is the low area and natural drainage for most of north Clark County.

Even though it is a seasonal creek, the State Department of Transportation (DOT) has recognized its importance. Instead of 'creating' the current winter ponds just west of Dollar's Corner, they will build a bridge across it, at an angle, for the new Battleground Highway.

The Clark County Growth Management plan fails to protect this seasonal stream and its associated wetlands. Mill Creek is important for water quality downstream at the East Fork of the Lewis River.

*Washington Audubon* reports that many bird populations are down 50%. A few more are down to a dangerous level, vulnerable because of declining numbers and/or declining habitat. Many of these birds are international migrants covered by the International Migratory Bird Treaty (IMBT).

Consider the irony. The Audubon began when humans drove several species almost to extinction by killing them for feathers for hats. It is therefore illegal to kill individuals or to have their feathers.

But it seems to be legal to kill multitudes by destruction of their habitat.

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## RESOURCE LAND DETERIORATION

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Migrants include wetland-dependent birds. These include migrant waterfowl and many smaller IMBT species, such as marsh wrens, yellow-legs, willow warblers, dowitchers, black terns and many more.

Some of these smaller birds migrate all the way from South America. Black terns, listed as vulnerable birds by Washington Audubon, fly from Argentina.

The Growth Management process has failed to protect their wetland habitats. For example:

- It has allowed destruction of Curtin Creek with the Padden Parkway.
- The Hinton project north of Costco has filled in willow trees usually associated with actual streambeds, not just wetlands.
- Finally a productive wetland will be seriously degraded by the approved Rivendell Development. This project includes human encroachment that will drive off migratory waterfowl mentioned by Washington State Fish and Game in comments too late to be considered by the development review process, and smaller IMBT species as well.

A current exhibit at the Clark County Historical Museum on farms includes an examination of the loss of valuable farmland to houses.

In Clark County, a swath of quality, fertile farmland, with a wildlife habitat overlay (waterfowl, upland birds, mammals), runs along the rim of the Columbia river from Felida to LaCenter.

This land is crucial now to grow our own healthy food. It will be even more crucial in the future when we need to decentralize.

Decentralization will be needed in case of a disruption of transportation from an earthquake, a dirty bomb or the coming plague. The Growth Management process does not currently have a way to preserve this valuable swath or any other farmland.

## CLICK HERE \*

### Running the Numbers

This is a devastating American self-portrait. Each image depicts a specific quantity of something with the hope that these quantities might have a more dramatic effect than the raw numbers alone.

- Every 30 seconds we use 106,000 aluminum cans;
  - Every 5 minutes we use 2 million plastic bottles;
  - Every 15 minutes we use 410,000 hot beverage cups;
- This web site will show you what a dozen similar examples look like.

[www.chrisjordan.com/current\\_](http://www.chrisjordan.com/current_)

*\* a web-site we recommend*

## CLICK HERE \*

### The Story of Stuff

From its extraction through sale, use and disposal, all the stuff in our lives affects our community at home and abroad. Yet most of this is hidden from view. The Story of Stuff is a 20-minute fast paced fact-filled look at the underside of our production and consumption patterns.

The Story of Stuff exposes the connection between a huge number of environmental and social issues and calls us together to create a more sustainable and just world.

It just might change the way you look at all the stuff in your life.

<http://www.storyofstuff.com/>

*\* a web-site we recommend*

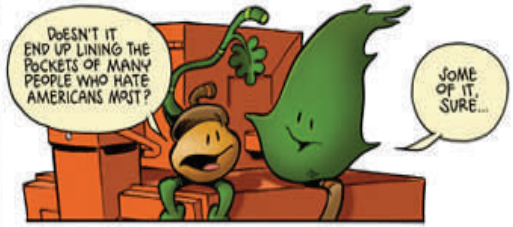
FRIENDS of CLARK COUNTY  
P.O. Box 61711  
Vancouver, WA 98666  
www.clarkfriends.org

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