

FRIENDS OF



CLARK COUNTY

SMART GROWTH

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www.clarkfriends.org

(360) 695-5570

March 2005

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

by Bridget Schwarz
FoCC Board

Change is good! Well, usually. Umm, sometimes? OK, change is inevitable!

First, the bad news: Last issue, our secretary Linda Wolfe wrote a newsletter article on volunteer burn-out from taking on too much. She saw herself! So, after years of service, Linda resigned from our board. We are very grateful for all her efforts to support our organization and we welcome Linda to our Advisory Board.

Second, our loss is Clark County's gain. Steve Stuart is our former Executive Director and board member. He was recently appointed to fill out Craig Pridemore's term on the Board of County Commissioners. According to our bylaws he had to resign from the FoCC board.

Now for the good news! We are pleased to welcome these new members to the FoCC board.

Debbie Abraham
Milada Allen
Russ Freeland

Kelly Puntaney
Sydney Reisbick

In this newsletter you'll find a brief bio on three of our new board members (pages 2 - 3). Our next newsletter will introduce you to the others.

We look forward to an infusion of their energy and a fresh viewpoint as we work to make FoCC "come alive in 2005"!

FRIENDS of CLARK COUNTY

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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 & protect southwest Washington's quality of life.

FoCC MEMBERSHIP

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

2005
BOARD of DIRECTORS

President
Kerri Altom,
Vancouver

Vice President
vacant

Secretary
Val Alexander,
La Center

Treasurer
Erin Guerra,
Washougal

Board Members

Debbie Abraham,
Brush Prairie

Milada Allen,
Felida

Ron Barca,
Battle Ground

Lora Caine,
Ridgefield

Russ Freeland,
Vancouver

Kelly Puntaney,
Vancouver

Sydney Reisbick,
Ridgefield

Bridget Schwarz,
Ridgefield

MEET OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS

BY Bridget Schwarz
FoCC Board

DR. MILADA ALLEN

Milada has extensive personal and professional land use and strategic planning and analysis experience and training. This lengthy list includes:

- policy, rules/regulations analysis; programs, grants, and goals development;
- strategic and land use planning and implementation;
- accountability and performance monitoring for programs and projects;
- feasibility and impacts assessment;
- natural resource preservation and
- smart growth at neighborhood, community, city, county, state, and federal levels.

"The more I worked with land use laws and plans, environmental impacts, and key stakeholders, the more I realized how much I did not know and had to learn."

To effectively pursue these subjects Milada has earned diplomas that include a bachelor's degree in Political Science, master's in Land Use Planning and Public Administration, and a doctorate in Public Administration/Strategic Planning.

Milada joined our board because long before she was asked to participate, she was "impressed with the caliber of people serving on the board and their effective input on significant county issues, regional/community goals, smart growth, and county-wide policies". Milada, we are equally impressed!

RUSS FREELAND

Russ grew up in the Ohio and Pennsylvania area but has called Clark County home for 32 years. He and wife Nancy have 2 children. Breanne is 23 and is putting her degree in environmental planning to work. Matt is a 20 year old student at Clark College preparing to make the switch to a 4 year university.

A member of the State Psychological Association, Russ wears 2 professional hats. He is a both psychologist and a divorce mediation counselor.

NEW FoCC BOARD MEMBERS

(continued)

RUSS FREELAND

(CONTINUED):

Many will sing his praises over his favorite hobby. For 30 years Russ has been a choral singer with the Vancouver USA Singers. He especially loves vocal jazz.

Russ is very interested in alternative healing and enjoys reading, camping, downhill skiing and hiking.

The Freeland family is in the process of building a home. Their goal is to build a dwelling that is as energy efficient and environmentally friendly as practical.

This fits perfectly with his long standing environmental consciousness and strong advocacy for balanced growth. Russ joined Friends because we are an "effective organizations actually having an impact on the Clark County political and planning process." Thanks for coming on board with Friends.

SYDNEY REISBICK

Sydney is a retired professor and research scientist in the area of physiological psychology.

As a member of our board, she will pursue her interest in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. What's good for Sydney is good for all of us - clean air, water, and a healthy habitat for wildlife. As baby boomers age, more of us will also confront her mobility concern—when we are too old to drive, how will we get around?

Sydney is also "terrified by the proposed new casino design. It is a multi-story, sky reflective glass structure that birds will fly into at full speed" because they see what appears to be a natural landscape.

Sydney is a community service enthusiast. She volunteers for lots of different organizations:

- Audubon
- CERT (Civilian Emergency Response Team);
- Friends of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Preserve;
- Friends of the Ridgefield Library;
- Portland Area Used Book Association.

We are delighted that Sydney has added Friends of Clark County to her activities!

MAKE AN ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY FASHION STATEMENT

We have custom embroidered FoCC baseball caps, 1/4 zip sweatshirts, denim shirts, polo shirts and fleece vests.

Save 10% if you order when you join / renew your FoCC membership.

Or, you can bring us a favorite clothing article and we'll have it custom embroidered for you.

FoCC WEBSITE

Our new webmaster is busy updating our website. While it is still "under construction" you will soon find a lot more current, relevant material available online. You'll find:

- the latest updates to our calendar;
- background and action items for issues that impact you;
- out what projects we are working on;
- links to other organizations that share our quality of life goals;
- opportunities to get involved with Friends.

FoCC THANKS OUR SUPPORTERS

Annual FoCC membership dues are \$25. We are so grateful to these members that have recently joined / renewed at one of our higher levels:

S U P P O R T E R

Bev Doty
Richard Dryland
Evelyn Dusenbery
Susan & Greg Gilbert
Jean Kent
Judith & Thomas Kovaric
Fran & Sharri LaPierre
Sydney Reisbick
Vancouver Audubon Society
Kenneth & Holly Williams
Diane Wills

D O N O R

Ron Barca
Jean Fery & Bob Ploss
William Nelson & Rosemary Sherrill
Robert & Susan Tenold

S U S T A I N I N G

Your name here?

M A J O R D O N O R

Your name here?

Friends of Clark County is a non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation.

Membership dues and donations are tax deductible.

FoCC IS GOING NORTH AND SOUTH

By Val Alexander
FoCC Board

As part of our "Come Alive in 2005" goals, Friends of Clark County plans to work more closely with our partners in Portland and Seattle.

Some of our board met with the Coalition for a Livable Future (CLF) in Portland in January to share information and make plans to assist each other in our efforts to preserve the quality of life in our areas.

Many issues are regional, rather than county or statewide, such as traffic, air and water quality, habitat, etc. The Portland metro area has been planning growth for much longer than Clark County so we can learn from their experiences.

Some of us also attended a forum in March titled: "Creating Livable Communities: Connecting People, Policy and Practice". It was hosted by CLF and featured speakers from some national organizations. Very informative discussions occurred, including one on Oregon's Measure 37, the state's new private property rights law.

Measure 37 will jeopardize much of the planning that has made Oregon one of the most livable states in the country. Friends of Clark County hopes to avoid a similar situation in Washington.

At our February board meeting, we met with Kate Jackson from Futurewise, formerly known as 1000 Friends of Washington. We have worked with her organization in the past but plan to coordinate more closely in the future.

Futurewise is active in statewide issues, legislation, and has a list of attorneys who will volunteer for growth management litigation. Kate provided us with updates on many of the challenges that we will be facing in the coming year.

Kate will meet with us regularly in the future. She provided us with some new ideas for fund raising.

Friends of Clark County had a busy and successful year in '04. With our new board members bringing in their talents, creativity, and energy, we look forward to another year of helping Clark County retain the quality of life characteristics that we all cherish.

COUNTY COMP PLAN UNDER REVIEW

By Keith Hirokawa
FoCC Advisory Board

Last November, the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB) received 14 appeals of Clark County's Comprehensive Plan Amendments. The GMHB immediately consolidated the majority of the cases.

A simple way to distinguish among the various advocates may be the attention given to the balance between the costs and benefits of growth.

Clark County Natural Resources Council (CCNRC), as the smart growth advocate, argues that the disparity between capital facilities funding and the proposed urban growth areas will result in inadequate facilities, such as sewer, water, roads, parks and schools.

The development advocates, on the other hand, have challenged that the Comprehensive Plan amendments are based on unreasonably low assumptions concerning the amount of growth Clark County can -- and will -- see over the next planning period. The development advocates seek a more expansive urban growth area and designation of more developable lands.

The Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) vowed to reopen the plan legislatively. Subsequently, at a negotiation meeting attended by all of the parties, Clark County struck a settlement posture with 13 of the 14 appellants.

Under the resulting stipulated agreement, the appeals would be dismissed, and the Comprehensive Plan amendments would be remanded to the newly-elected Board of County Commissioners for reconsideration of the growth assumptions employed by the prior BOCC.

CCNRC opposed the dismissal on the theory that a remand would have allowed a different, pro-growth Board of County Commissioners to relieve growth advocates of the urban growth area limitations approved by the prior BOCC.

CCNRC pointed out to the GMHB that the regulations only allow such a dismissal upon stipulation of all the parties. The GMHB agreed and refused to dismiss the consolidated cases. However, the GMHB indicated that it would consider petitions to dismiss individual petitioners from the consolidated case.

SALMON CREEK DEVELOPMENT MORATORIUM

When the Salmon Creek corridor failed the travel speed standard several years ago, further development was denied. A formal moratorium, which requires corrective measures (additional traffic capacity) was imposed.

First, the Hwy 99 realignment and Legacy's construction of NE 23rd Avenue were part of the solution.

Second, to lift the moratorium, in April 2003 Clark County commissioners also lowered travel speed standards from 22 to 13 mph.

The additional traffic capacity created has already been depleted by approved developments.

Computer modeling shows that the Salmon Creek corridor will again fail the traffic speed standard (13 mph). By the time you read this, a de facto moratorium could be in effect.

This time, state and county fixes include the 139th Street I-5 / I-205 freeway intersection and overpass.

The county projects are not funded but less than 6 years out. The state projects are funded but more than 6 years out.

By county code, to count the additional traffic capacity these projects will allow, the projects must be "reasonably funded" and no more than 3 years out.

Expect changes that will make that period 6 years, and that the additional traffic will be on the road long before traffic improvements.

EJ CONFERENCE

On February 26, 2005, Washington State University – Vancouver hosted the *Environmental Justice: Action, Communities, Topics* (EJ-ACT) conference for stakeholders from communities, government, and academia.

Presenters discussed several environmental justice issues, governmental perspectives, and roles of educators/researchers, community leadership, and coordination for meaningful participation and achievement of common goals in the interconnected system.

Some of the discussion stressed that permitting agencies tend to look at and assess impacts of one project at a time. This does not address cumulative adverse impacts on communities, surrounding properties, infrastructure, environment and air quality.

NOTE: Starting in 2003, each major program and regional office in EPA was required to submit an "Environmental Justice Action Plan" detailing the efforts to integrate environmental justice into their policies, programs, and activities.

Each office must provide a "progress report" on the accomplishments toward meeting the goals established in the prior year's action plan.

WHAT IS ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE ?

By Milada Allen
FoCC Board

Environmental justice facilitates and encourages fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people in the community with respect to cumulative land uses, development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Fair treatment means that selected neighborhoods or areas should not be subjected to a disproportionate share of adverse environmental impacts from industrial and commercial development, land uses, and operations, or implementation of government policies.

Environmental justice issues can impact any neighborhood or community, in a variety of settings involving one or more environmental threats. Some community members may be exposed to cumulative environmental pollutants where they work, live, learn, or play.

However, areas with low income and property values tend to be disproportionately exposed to environmental harms and health risks.

One of the greatest challenges for community members and leaders is to focus the government's attention on the disproportionate adverse health impacts of having multiple sources of pollution in a community. A meaningful community involvement must be organized, proactive, and informed.

Policy- and decision-makers must be held accountable and provide opportunities for communities to:

- proactively participate in analysis and decisions related to proposed projects and land uses that may impact communities, environment, health, and quality of life;
- provide meaningful input -- based on full disclosure of impacts -- that can influence the regulatory agency's decision;
- voice concerns and propose alternatives that will be considered and incorporated in the decision making process; and
- encourage decision makers to seek out and facilitate involvement of leaders and members of impacted communities.

In summary, environmental justice attempts to balance and provide equal opportunity for participation in decision-making and protection from environmental and health hazards for all socio-economic groups.

Effective participation, leadership, and representation are influenced by full disclosure, equal access to the policy-/decision-making process, and equal opportunity to achieve common goals that include a healthy environment in which to work, live, learn, or play.

COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING PROJECT

By Lora Caine
FoCC board

Commuters will recognize that traffic and safety are a problem on I-5 between Oregon and Washington.

Two years ago, a bi-state Governors Task Force concluded their task. They determined the level of investment needed in the corridor for highway, transit, and heavy rail improvements and how to manage the transportation and land-use systems to protect those investments. Their recommendations went to local jurisdictions who approved the need to proceed.

Recently a new task force was formed and met for the first time on February 3, 2005. The Columbia River Crossing Task Force consists of 38 members from Washington and Oregon and are represented by those in the environmental community, neighborhoods, Environmental Justice, Chambers of Commerce, freight and other businesses, and government leaders.

The 3-4 year task will include providing input and policy advice for the Columbia River Crossing Project (CRCP). The Project is for improving overall capacity along I-5 between SR500 and Columbia Street in Oregon.

The Task Force will report to the Transportation Commissions from both states through their Joint Commission Subcommittee which is providing oversight to the Project. The final decision will be sent to the Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations.

The Task Force meetings are open to the public and will be alternately held in each state. Upcoming meeting dates and locations are being decided. As they become available, the dates and locations will be posted on the FoCC website.

Lora Caine represents FoCC on the CRCP task force.

COLUMBIA RIVER CROSSING PROJECT

Visit the Columbia River Crossing Project website at:
www.columbiarivercrossing.org

FRIENDS FEEDBACK

Tell us what you think!

As part of their Leadership Clark County (LCC) civics training program, six participants studied tolls and concluded that "tolling is a viable option for a new I-5 bridge. In fact, it might be the only option that can realistically raise the money needed to match the federal funding that would form the basis for a new crossing".

The LCC report estimated that a \$3 toll could pay off the estimated \$1 billion cost for a new I-5 bridge in 30 years. Is this a viable option?

E-mail us at info@clarkfriends.org

F O C C S U R V E Y

How are we doing? Do we address the issues that concern you? Do you find our newsletter valuable? Do you have any ideas about fund raisers? Do you want to get more involved?

There is a quick one page survey in this newsletter. Please return it to us along with your current contact information. Thanks!

PLANT AN ECO LAWN

By Bridget Schwarz
FoCC Board

Grass is, by nature, lazy! Your lawn *wants* to be dormant (brown). If you don't want to be a slave to your yard this summer, consider some alternatives.

- Plant an eco lawn. Dwarf perennial ryegrass is slow growing - so you don't have to mow as frequently. It reaches a mature height of 11" - perfect for fields and meadows.
- Let your lawn go dormant.
- Plant clover (it stays green).

If you must have the perfect lawn, remember:

- Never mow more than 1/3 of the height;
- Leave your clippings on the lawn so you will only need to fertilize once a year (fall);
- Water infrequently at the rate of 1" per week (watering more often discourages healthy, deep root formation).
- If your lawn goes dormant, you will have to over water, for a long time, to get it green again;
- Understand that chemical companies are trying to sell you their products by making you think clover and common "weeds" are undesirable.
- If you must use chemicals, read the label and follow the directions carefully. The most common problem is using too much chemical.

COUNTY CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

BY Don Strick
Clark County Public Information & Outreach

The county's Clean Water Program went into effect in 2000. It was created to comply with the federal Clean Water Act and state water quality standards. An annual clean water fee from residents funds the program.

With five major areas of effort, fees help prevent pollutants from cars, households, and businesses from entering the stormwater system during rainfall or irrigation, and remove pollutants from stormwater before they enter lakes, rivers, streams, or groundwater.

Stormwater capital improvement projects – Clark County plans, designs and constructs ponds, swales, and other stormwater facilities to control and treat runoff from roads and other hard surfaces. The county spent more than \$1 million on capital improvement projects in 2003-04 and anticipates spending over \$2 million in 2005-06 on projects. The county also requires new subdivisions and businesses to build stormwater facilities.

Regulation and enforcement – Staff work with businesses and residents to address erosion and water quality violations. They also educate citizens about the need to minimize water pollution sources at hundreds of sites each year.

Maintenance and operations – Crews clear storm drains, pipes, and ditches; maintain detention ponds, drywells, bioswales, and other water quality facilities; and remove contaminants and debris from streets and ditches before they enter the stormwater system or local waterways.

Stormwater monitoring – Monitoring provides information about the health of Clark County's streams, rivers, and lakes, and helps staff to evaluate changes in stream conditions. A volunteer monitoring program complements the work of staff.

Public education and outreach – Staff provide water quality education to businesses, private citizens, students, and rural landowners. Partnerships with WSU Extension and Vancouver extend the Clean Water Program's educational efforts. Watershed Stewards train adult volunteers to educate students and adults about how they can help protect our water resources.

HELP PROTECT OUR CLEAN WATER

This year's dry winter probably doesn't have many people thinking about stormwater. But you can be sure that when the rains come, stormwater will wash off roads, driveways, fields, and lawns, picking up oils, pesticides, silt, sediment, & other substances that can pollute our rivers and streams.

Preventing this polluted runoff from reaching our waterways is the job of the Clark County Clean Water Program and you. Everyone can do things to help keep our water clean.

Don't:

- Dump anything into storm drains or ditches.
- Hose off sidewalks and driveways. Sweep instead.
- Let pressure-washed paint, grease, or other pollutants run off your property.
- Let your vehicle leak oil or other chemicals.
- Use pesticides or "weed & feed" products on lawns and gardens.

Do:

- Use a commercial car wash, or wash your car over grass with phosphorus-free, nontoxic soap.
- Avoid hazardous products and chemicals. If you do use them, follow directions for use, storage, and disposal. Dispose of them properly.
- Recycle motor oil, antifreeze, and household hazardous wastes at collection centers and special events.
- Cover garbage cans and dumpsters. Rain can leach contaminants from trash.
- Compost or recycle yard debris. It can clog storm drains. Compost can help you reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides and decay in streams.
- Regularly inspect and pump your septic tank and keep animals and vehicles off septic drainfields.
- Pull weeds by hand instead of using chemicals.
- Use native plants. They're pest-resistant and suited to our climate.
- Use natural groundcover, gravel, or bark instead of asphalt or concrete.
- Disconnect your roof drain to let runoff soak into the ground.
- Pick up pet waste and dispose of it properly.
- Prevent erosion if you disturb a large area of soil.

If you live by a stream:

- Plant native plants along stream banks or as a buffer area between your landscaping and the stream.
- Remove invasive plants such as blackberries and English ivy, which can force out or kill native plants and trees.
- Leave logs, boulders, and branches in the stream to form pools that provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife.
- Fence livestock away from stream banks and cover manure piles.

For more tips on what you can do to protect water quality, visit www.clark.wa.gov/water-resources.

ORGANIC GARDENING PERMACULTURE LIVING

Sustainability involves both organic gardening and permaculture living concepts. "Bev's Place" is a suburban Vancouver 90' X 100' lot treated like a farm.

Year round, Bev Doty produces fresh vegetables from raised beds, tree fruit, berries, and kiwis. There is a native plant corner and a bamboo grove, habitat for mason bees and other pollinating creatures. There is a carpet of recycled milk jugs, and tile of recycled auto glass. Real linoleum and solar tubes are used on the property.

We must live interdependently with nature. Seize this opportunity to learn how. Meet Bev and see all the wonderful things she does on her farm.

Saturday, May 21

1:30 — 3:00

Reservations required

360.574.1343 or

bevesalt@pacifier.com

PLANT A ROW FOR THE HUNGRY

It's easy and very rewarding.

When you plant your vegetable garden, buy some extra seed and/or starter plants.

Then take the extra harvest to your local food bank!

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IN THIS NEWSLETTER

Meet our new FoCC board members;
Clark County Comprehensive Plan appeals;
Environmental Justice;
Columbia River Crossing project;
Clark County Clean Water Program.

Please renew your membership with FRIENDS of CLARK COUNTY using the order form inside this newsletter.

We need your support to help cover expenses as we continue the vital work of protecting our quality of life in Clark County.

If you join at the Donor level (\$100) we'll give you a Friends of Clark County baseball cap FREE.

Thank you!