

Columbia County Riders Starts Saturday Service

By April Bamburg

Public transit expanded in Columbia County last weekend, with the start of Columbia County Rider's Saturday service from St. Helens and Scappoose to downtown Portland.

Each Saturday, the service will provide round trip routes from the St. Helens Medical Mall to Scappoose and downtown Portland, at 8:30 a.m., 12:30 p.m., and 4:30 p.m. According to a press release issued by Columbia County, the bus will use the stops on Saturdays as those scheduled during the week.

"We are very excited about offering this new service and we hope that as residents become more familiar with the schedule, they will find the service convenient to the south county area and downtown Portland," said Dan Garrison, Vice Chair of the Columbia County Citizens Transit Advisory Committee. "We have been working a long time to provide weekend service, and it was one of the highest priorities coming out of the update of our Columbia County Community-wide Transit Planning process that was completed last year."

The service expansion, which also includes an extra eight hours each week to the popular demand response service, was made possible through a grant of \$120,857 from the Oregon Department of Transportation, Public Transit Division, through the Special Transportation Operating Program.

Henry Heimuller, Transit Coordinator for Columbia County Rider, said that, in time, they hope to add two hours per route, per day to

the demand response program, but that will take another grant.

"[Until] we finally crack the financing egg and prove that there is a need for service," Heimuller said, "we'll expand as we can, hopefully show a need for Saturday service."

Another change for the program is the new 16-passenger bus for the Nehalem Valley fixed-route service and west county flex-route service in the Vernonia area.

"We purchased this bus with extra heavy duty heating systems, automatic tire chains, and upgraded suspension," Heimuller said. "A first for the Rider, we've installed a security system with four to five cameras [which record both voice and pictures]. The driver can push the panic button at any time and when we download the video, we'll be able to see exactly when incidents occur."

The Vernonia to Washington County fixed route will run three trips a day on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Heimuller hopes, in the future, to add Saturday service for the current flex route in Vernonia as well.

Funding for the new bus comes from American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) stimulus funds.

More information on Columbia County Rider's services, including routes, fees and contact information can be found at their website, www.columbiacountyrider.com. Passengers can also call (503) 366-0159.

This article has been published at April's website <http://www.examiner.com/x-19696-columbia-county-buzz-examiner>.

St. Helens Community School Impacts Youth and Families in the Region

The St. Helens Community School (SHCS) helps young people thrive, supports families, maximizes community resources and strengthens community ties. The SHCS is offering free "after-school" programs for sixth through eighth-grade students, as well as personal development classes for adults and families.

St. Helens Community School is funded by a grant from the Oregon Commission on Children and Families and is administered by the Columbia County Commission on Children and Families. The project is a collaboration of students, parents, teachers, partner organizations, and community members. Community Schools are focused on school success and are required to show an improvement in academic scores of the students participating in activities at the end of this school year. SHCS has already shown positive results.

Earl Fisher, County Commissioner and Chair of the Columbia Commission on Children and Families says, "Community Schools build character and protect the community. They're an asset and an important tool in our toolbox that helps us enrich the lives of our children and community."

SHCS provides supervised extended-day activities such as Cooking, Fitness, Tae Kwon Do, Chess, knitting, sewing, jump rope, basic rhythm and dance, introduction to theater, paper crafts, book club, and American Sign Language. Students can also participate in academic clubs such as, Homework Club, Math Club, creative writing, computers and Science Club.

The first session of the Community School Program started February 2 and ends March 18. The second session will start after spring break and run to Memorial Weekend. The activities will be Monday through Friday with the students starting each day with a snack then off to their one hour activity at 3:25. By 4:30 each day the student will board a bus headed for home.

Additionally, we are able to provide educational resources to adults at low cost or free. The first session will offer free classes in Yoga, Core Pilates and NIA which is taught by Violeta Bailets at the Body Motion Studio. Gentle Yoga will be taught February 4 and 11. Core Pilates and Flow Yoga will be taught February 18 and 25, and NIA will be taught March 4, 11 and 18. If there are a large number of participants, these classes will be held at the Middle School Cafeteria.

To register please see the attached registration form, or call/email: Diane Kadolph-Ray at the Community School of-

fice, 503-366-7316, dianek@sthelens.k12.or.us

Community schools combine the best quality educational practices with enhanced and extended day programming to ensure that children are physically, emotionally, and socially prepared to learn. Community schools function as community hubs where public and private resources converge to address barriers to learning through shared leadership and shared accountability for student learning, healthy families and thriving communities.

Joanna Tobin, Principal of St. Helens Middle School says, "We have approximately 25% of 6th-8th grade students in this community participating in the St Helens Middle School, Community School Program. This is extremely exciting and I am so thankful for the grant funding, volunteer support from community members, and dedication from school district employees. We are starting to see positive impact on student success in school as a result of students engaging in the Community School Programs."

According to Jan Spika-Kenna, Director of the Columbia County Commission on Children and Families, "St. Helens Middle School staff have done an outstanding job implementing the program, and we are proud to be their partner". Community Schools act as a hub where public and private resources meet to address barriers to learning. Leadership and accountability are shared so that students learn and communities thrive.

According to Fight Crime Invest In Kids, "America's law enforcement leaders know from experience and research, that the hours from 2 to 6 PM on school days are the prime times for juvenile crime. Quality, constructive and highly supervised programs can cut crime immediately and convert after school hours into safe learning time." Youth need positive after school activities to fill their time and SHCS serves that need.

For more information about the St. Helens Community School, call Diane Kadolph-Ray at 503.366.7316 or email dianek@sthelens.k12.or.us.

For information about the Commission on Children and Families, please call, Jan Spika Kenna at 503.397.7225. For more information about Community Schools, visit the Coalition for Community Schools website at www.communityschools.org and Fight Crime Invest In Kids at www.fight-crime.org

New Oregon Transfer Days Partnership Smooths Students' Transition

Representatives from community colleges, public and private four-year universities have collaborated to help students transfer more easily

Thanks to a new approach, the Oregon Transfer Days will make the transition from two- to four-year colleges easier for students.

Portland Community College's Oregon Transfer Day will have representatives on hand to offer information and advise about bachelor's degrees at the state's four-year institutions. PCC is part of a consortium established in 2007 that created a statewide approach to hosting transfer fairs at the state's 17 community colleges. A more state-oriented structure helps get information out about Oregon's community colleges and four-year universities more easily to students and the public. Representatives from Oregon's community colleges, public and private four-year universities will be on hand.

Rock Creek Campus

Tuesday, Feb. 16, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM
17705 N.W. Springville Road

Sylvania Campus

Wednesday, Feb. 17, 10:00 - 1:00 PM
12000 S.W. 49th Ave.

Cascade Campus

Thursday, Feb. 18, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM,
705 N. Killingsworth St.

Southeast Center

Thursday, Feb. 18, 4:00 - 6:00 PM,
2305 S.E. 82nd Ave. and Division St.

For more information on the Oregon Transfer Days tour at PCC visit <http://www.oracrao.org/OTD>, or call Kathleen Bradach at (503) 977-4578.

THIS WINTER IF YOU NEED LOCAL TOWING SERVICE IN THE VERNONIA AREA

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