

INSIDE



2

CELEBRATING THE 4TH



3

NEW RIDGEFIELD VIDEOS



4

PORT LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE AND LOGO

COMMISSION STAFF & ADVISORS

COMMISSIONERS

Scott Hughes • *Chairman*
Joe Melroy • *Treasurer*
Bruce Wiseman • *Secretary*

STAFF

Brent Grening • *CEO*
Nelson Holmberg • *VP of Innovation*
Laurie Olin • *VP of Operations*
Wonder Baldwin • *Admin Assistant*
Jeanette Ludka • *Accounting Mgr*
Pat Kirby • *Maintenance*
Kevin Oldham • *Maintenance*

ADVISORS

Bill Eling • *Port Counsel*
Scott Fraser • *Commercial Real Estate*
Susan Trabucco • *Communications & Marketing*

PORTWORKS is published quarterly by the Port of Ridgefield. ©Copyright 2016

FOLLOW US Facebook & Twitter



111 West Division St,
Ridgefield, WA 98642
360.887.3873
portridgefield.org

U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL ENJOY DAY ON THE RIVER IN RIDGEFIELD



A supportive crowd welcomes active and veteran U.S. military personnel to the Operation Salmon fishing event held at the Port of Ridgefield June 26.

Photo credit: Ralph Walker

U.S. military personnel enjoy day on the river in Ridgefield

Under brilliant blue skies on June 26, the Port of Ridgefield served as the launch point and home-base for Operation Salmon, a fishing-related event with fun at its core, but with a mission to serve a higher purpose – to provide U.S. military veterans and active-duty soldiers the opportunity to experience the great outdoors and the prospect of hooking a highly-prized Columbia River salmon or steelhead.

Ridgefield resident Dion Hess was one of the event organizers. Hess said Ridgefield was chosen this year because the fishing here is great.

“I’ve been boating here for 10 years, and Ridgefield is a gem, with great salmon fishing March through October. Fishing out of Ridgefield is world-class on good days,” said Hess.

Hess worked with the port, which waived the parking fees for veterans participating in the event.

“We’re so appreciative of the service and sacrifices of our nation’s military personnel,” said Port Commissioner Joe Melroy. “It’s an honor to have this group here in Ridgefield.”

This year’s event included a 50-person strong, flag-waving welcoming committee, fishing tournament,

barbecue, and a welcome message from Ridgefield Mayor Ron Onslow.

Approximately 140 military veterans, 40 sponsors – who each pay between \$400 and \$600 – 38 fishing boats and their guides, and many other volunteers participated in the event, including Vancouver police officer Ray Reynolds and three of his four sons, all of whom are active-duty military personnel. While Walmart donated all of the food for the event, the Ridgefield Lion’s Club and Woodland’s American Diner restaurant prepared and cooked the meals.

Hess had a special word of thanks to Commissioner Melroy, who showed up at the event at 4:30 a.m. and was there all day.

“Joe kept his eye on everything, and helped to keep the event run smoothly. He was a big part of the event’s success,” said Hess.

Although Ridgefield has been home to some of the fishers for previous Operation Salmon events, this is the first year the entire event was held here. For Hess, there’s no going back.

“Great fishing, a fantastic venue, and a highly supportive community make Ridgefield the perfect place to hold the event,” said Hess. “I don’t think there’s any place else that could offer all of these things.”

U.S. MILITARY, PAGE 2

PORT PUSHES TO EDUCATE AND BE EDUCATED ON HIGH-SPEED FIBER FOR RIDGEFIELD

The Port of Ridgefield has been making headway in its efforts to develop high-speed dark fiber infrastructure for the benefit of Ridgefield area citizens and businesses. For many, the term “dark fiber” is technical mumbo-jumbo that has no direct effect on their daily lives.

Nelson Holmberg, vice president, innovation for the port, knows dark fiber out of the shadowy world of misunderstanding into the light of day, the port hosted a public information session on June 28 about the port’s fiber development project, and its significance to the Ridgefield community and beyond.

“Moving information at the highest speeds possible affects



Developer Ellie Kassab, left, confers with Nelson Holmberg, vice president, innovation for the Port of Ridgefield at the port’s June 28 dark fiber event.

many aspects of the world we live in today,” Holmberg said. “And to be competitive in a global economy, having this technology available to our community is critical.”

At the public event held in Ridgefield, a panel discussion was part of the program; panelists explained what dark fiber is, why the port is undertaking the project, and why the project is important to WSU-Vancouver and to private industry in the area.

Panelists were Joe Poire, chief executive officer, Port of Whitman County; Michael Stamper, chief information officer, Washington State University Vancouver; and Mike Bomar, president, Columbia River Economic Development Council.

PORT EDUCATES, PAGE 3



CHARTING OUR COURSE

A salute to those who sacrificed

BY JOE MELROY
PORT COMMISSIONER

It was purely coincidental that the fishing expedition for veteran and active military personnel we feature on the front page of this newsletter was held around the Fourth of July. Salmon runs, not celebrations, dictated the timing of this inspiring event.

The typical activities associated with this time of year include parades, marching bands, candy-tossing, and amusement parks.

The young and old come together in Ridgefield to enjoy these annual seasonal rituals; patriotism is an important part of the spirit of this community. But we sometimes forget that these festivities are intended to celebrate our independence from Britain. America gained its independence by fighting a war, of course. And to fight a war, it meant the bravery and sacrifice of many people was required. That sacrifice continues today; our military personnel are positioned in dangerous territory around the globe with one mission – to keep the rest of us safe.

So when Dion Hess, one of the fishing expedition organizers, approached the port about launching from our facilities, supporting the event was not a difficult decision for us. We were proud to help provide this exceptional fishing experience to around 140 active and former members of our country's military, many with the physical and emotional scars of battles fought on our behalf.

And while the decision to help was easy, hearing the stories of loss and sacrifice in developing the article was not. So to our honored veterans and active-duty military folks – a huge and heartfelt “thank you” for your service.

U.S. MILITARY, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Who started this event?

For five years, Hess has been a tireless volunteer and champion of this annual event, held at different places in the region each year. He helps find organizations to sponsor seats on guided fishing boats, which take veterans and active military personnel on this fishing adventure.

“The main purpose of this event is to show appreciation to our military, and to provide the opportunity to integrate military personnel with civilian community,” Hess said.

The inspiration

Nearly 25 years ago, Dion was friends with a Vietnam vet with whom he frequently hunted; the friend has since passed on. One day Hess' friend told a story, and showed Hess a UPI picture of a Vietnam battle scene in which Hess' friend was carrying a soldier on his back, to safety. For his bravery, Hess' friend earned a Bronze Medal of Valor. But, he told Hess, when he came back to the States, society put him down. Like other Vietnam vets, he wasn't accepted, and was shunned. Conversely Hess' grandfather was a WWII POW, and was treated as a hero.

“My hunting buddy's story never left me,” Hess said.

Inspiration meets opportunity

Hess works for Walmart. So in 2013, when Walmart committed to hiring veterans, Hess met U.S. Army Battalion Commander Col. Tom Crowson, who was dedicated to the concept of getting soldiers integrated into the community. Based on his conversations with Crowson, Hess decided to take two soldiers fishing.

“With my friend's story of being ignored and shunned in my memory, and Tom's words fresh in my mind, I wanted to do something to thank our veterans,” Hess said.

Because Hess didn't know any soldiers, he went to a

recruiting station to find them. Then, Eric Linde, a fishing guide from Camas jumped in. He offered up his boat that seated up to six people. More boat operators and then sponsors stepped up to pay for the seats – including all nine SW Washington Walmart store managers who donated personally. Hess was able to help not just two soldiers to go fishing that first year. A total of 34 soldiers were in the boats that day.

While the first year of the event was considered a success, sponsor participation continues to grow, with his employer making a significant contribution this year.

“I'm very proud of the fact that 29 Walmart stores in the Pacific NW Region each donated \$500 from their limited available grant funds for this year's event.”

What keeps Hess going?

Sal, in his 30s, is a soldier who suffered serious injuries during a bomb explosion in Iraq. He was to fish on Linde's boat that first year.

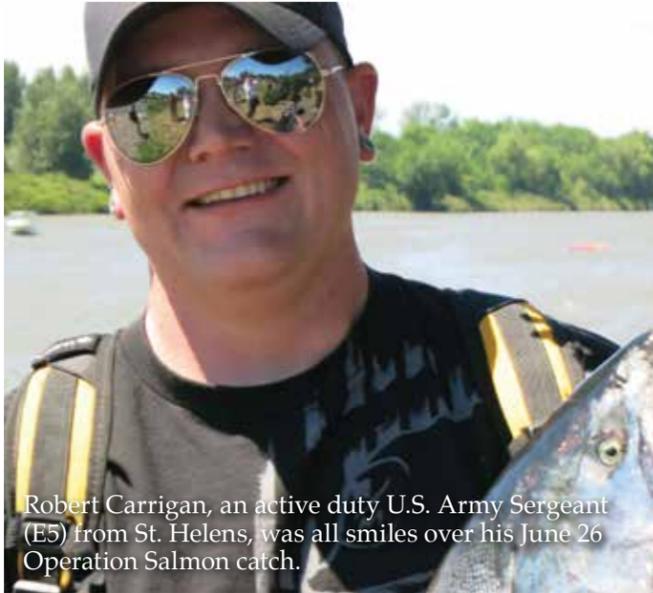
When Hess asked how they would recognize him, he said, “You'll know who I am; I'm badly burned.”

They took Sal on that first trip. In a recent interview with Sal, he expressed his appreciation for the event, in which he's participated several times, and which he describes as “relaxing and therapeutic.”

“I learned about bank fishing from a friend, but being on a boat is amazing,” Sal said. “You might be full of anger that day for what life has doled out, but when you hook a fish, and you're out there on the water, there's camaraderie and excitement with fun chaos when there's a salmon on someone's line. You can't help but come out happy.”

In addition to meeting Sal at that first event, and knowing how it touched his life, at the end of that day Hess also heard from an older veteran who had said very little all day.

“He told me it was the first time he had gone fishing in three years,” said Hess “and the most fun he'd had in 20 years. It means so much to these people to be outdoors; they need someone to help make it happen. How do you not keep doing this?”



Robert Carrigan, an active duty U.S. Army Sergeant (E5) from St. Helens, was all smiles over his June 26 Operation Salmon catch.



Operation Salmon organizer, Dion Hess, with supporters neighbor Hayden Hunzeker, 7, and Alishia Topper, Vancouver City Council member.

Photo credit: Ralph Walker

EVENT SPONSORS

- Central Washington Asphalt
- Shamrock Paving
- Trager Family Trust
- Cabela's
- Washington Waterfowl Association
- Camas Washougal VFW Post 4278
- Bob Day
- 29 Walmart stores throughout the region
- Port of Ridgefield

SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS

- **The Fallen Outdoors;** they now find the soldiers to go on the trip. Funds donated are funneled through The Fallen Outdoors to allow a non-profit contribution. Visit the Fallen Outdoors on Facebook.
- **Community Military Appreciation Committee (CMAC)** is a Clark County non-profit that facilitates support of veterans and their families. CMAC executes and plans community-wide events

for Clark County such as Memorial Day, Veterans Day, POW/MIA Day and recognition and support of military families of all services. CMAC serves veterans and active-duty military. Visit www.cmac11.com for more info.

To volunteer, be a sponsor or otherwise help with this annual event to honor U.S. military members, contact Dion Hess by emailing dionhess174@gmail.com.

RIDGEFIELD CELEBRATES THE FOURTH!



Port gains more knowledge

To get more up to speed themselves, Port of Ridgefield CEO Brent Grening and Holmberg attended the Fiber to the Home Council conference held June 13-15 in Nashville, Tenn. At the event, titled FTTH Connect 2016, the port duo had the opportunity to learn from industry experts and successful network operators, who discussed the latest solutions available to help overcome deployment challenges, and how municipalities can effectively monetize a high-speed fiber network.

One speaker at the Nashville event was Ted Smith, chief innovation officer for the City of Louisville, Ky. Louisville developed its fiber network in 2014. Smith is a believer that fiber infrastructure development is a good investment for cities and ports. Unlike some municipal endeavors that can be controversial, fiber isn't one of them.

"There is nobody who is against faster, cheaper Internet," Smith said.

He also said that video, Internet and new apps are driving bandwidth increases that require fiber. "Fiber optic technology is the best way to provide low cost, high bandwidth."

In Louisville, developers see fiber as "one of the most important things differentiating themselves in the market."

How the port got involved in fiber development

The Port of Ridgefield made the decision to research the idea of developing a dark fiber network last year after learning about the success of a similar project undertaken by Whitman County 16 years ago. The existence of its fiber network has helped private sector communications companies reduce their capital investment outlays, has attracted quality companies that provide living-wage jobs, and assist public sector entities deliver educational and healthcare services more cost-effectively.

The port has completed the design phase of the fiber installation project, and mapping was completed in mid-June. Holmberg is optimistic the demand for fiber leasing will be significant.

"We continue to get calls from private enterprise; there is keen interest in our project."

For more presenter comments and audience Q&A from the June 28 dark fiber event, visit portridgefield.org and view the News & Events section. Visit our Facebook page for more pictures from the event.

KEY BENEFITS

- High-speed Internet to area residents and businesses will be available through privately owned and operated service providers, creating business opportunity for entrepreneurs.
- Makes Ridgefield more attractive to technology-oriented businesses; they rank the presence of fiber as a key differentiator in location decisions.
- Provides the port a clean, environmentally sound revenue stream not dependent on local taxes.

- Allows for the growth of important research to be done at WSU Vancouver.
- Provides state-of-the-art infrastructure that is increasingly needed in growing communities with demand for connectivity.

Do you need high-speed internet? The port is very interested in your need for this kind of infrastructure in our community. Please share your story about how reliable high speed broadband would help your business grow, or how it would change your life by emailing NHolmberg@portridgefield.org, or comment on our Facebook page.

Photos from the port's June 28 dark fiber event, top to bottom:

1. Dena Horton (Senator Maria Cantwell's office), Scott Sawyer, center (City of Battle Ground) and Kevin Witte (Clark College); **2.** Joe Poire, center (Executive Director, Port of Whitman County) talks with attendees to the port's dark fiber event; **3.** Port CEO Brent Grening welcomes special guest and panelist Michael Stamper (Chief Information Officer at Washington State University Vancouver); **4.** John McDonagh, left, (Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce) and Max Ault (Columbia River Economic Development Council); **5.** Panelists Michael Stamper (Chief Information Officer, WSU Vancouver) and Mike Bomar (President, CREDC) confer during the question and answer segment of the program.



NEW VIDEOS SPOTLIGHT RIDGEFIELD

CREDC, Ridgefield Main Street and Citizens for Ridgefield Schools have recently created videos that highlight Ridgefield. Visit their respective websites or YouTube for a look.



IN Brief

WHAT THE QUEEN WANTS, SHE GETS!

If you've kicked around Ridgefield for a while, you probably know "Queen Allene" aka Allene Wodaeye - Ridgefield's Grand Champion for over 60 years. Always the organizer, always the volunteer, Allene gets things done. "At the port, we've learned not to mess with the Queen" said Brent Grening, the port's CEO.

So, when at the Port Commission meeting on June 8, Allene made a request of the commission that she be allowed to purchase and place a bench on the port's waterfront trail near the Sacajawea kiosk, a well-meaning commissioner took a momentary leave of his senses - and insisted the port, not Allene, should purchase the bench and put her name on it to honor her. He was immediately reminded that disagreeing with Allene generally proves fruitless.

"At the port, we've learned not to mess with the Queen."

Brent Grening
CEO, Port of Ridgefield

"I've lived here a long time," she said. "This is a legacy I want to leave for the people who live here. I want to provide a bench for people to sit on after they've walked that far and need to rest. I want to buy it, and I don't want something with my name on it." She spoke in her "don't even think about disagreeing with me tone," as she is known to do.

Port Commissioner Joe Melroy spoke up in her defense. With his head bowed and with a contrite tone, he said, "I would not want to deny her this opportunity."

Laughter ensued, after which the Port Commissioners voted unanimously to allow Allene to buy and place a bench on port property.

If you want to join us in thanking Allene for her generous spirit, we invite you to do so on our Facebook page.



ON THE LEVEL

Next up: the gig-economy

BY BRENT GRENING, CEO

I have a friend whose favorite question is, “what’s next”? He even named his boat Proximo – Latin for “next”. If you’re a sailor, it’s a good idea to keep a look out for what’s ahead and be prepared for what’s next. It’s also a good question if you are in economic development. What’s next? What opportunities lie ahead? Are we prepared?

When we look ahead, we see increasing demand for high-speed, high-bandwidth, high-quality connectivity. Whether you’re online at home, at work, shopping, or just watching a movie on TV, data is flowing. As we spend more time online and the internet of things explodes, the amount of data flowing from one point to another grows exponentially.

Broadband connectivity is fast becoming a basic piece of community infrastructure – having the technology in place and knowing how to use it is imperative. Broadband connectivity is going to change the way we work, play and live. Technological advances will transform the way we access healthcare. It will do the same for education, research, entrepreneurship, and even transportation and government.

This is why the port has taken on the challenge of building a fiber optic network. We won’t be your ISP, but we will help you connect to the ISP of your choice. Our goal is that you have plenty of high-quality bandwidth. If you need to move a gigabyte of data, we want you to be able to do it from here. More bandwidth makes sense for our people, our community and our economy.

If you want to learn more, please visit our Facebook page or website. Tell us what you think. After all, the more we know the better we’re prepared for what’s next.

PORT READIES FOR GLOBAL PRESENCE



The port has made the transition from an “environmental clean-up port” to a community port, focused on bringing quality businesses and jobs to Ridgefield.

The agency is taking on more development projects, including construction and leasing of a new Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife building in Ridgefield, and actively searching for a developer for its waterfront site. The port is also pursuing construction of a dark fiber infrastructure that will bring high-speed internet capability to Ridgefield and the surrounding area (see article on page 4).

To telegraph its expanding development and innovation capacity, the port has been working on a new, mobile-friendly, graphically-exciting website and digital presence. Also, early this year the port worked with its marketing and graphic design team to develop an updated logo, waiting to unveil it with the launch of its new website on July 1.

Port representatives have been working with Vancouver-based Webfor on development of the website.

“We chose Webfor because we felt their team was most qualified to address our desire to employ next generation thinking in website design,” said Nelson Holmberg, the port’s vice president, innovation. “Additionally Webfor provided the port with a modern platform and digital design structure that is highly-navigable and has more of an easy-to-use mobile ‘app’ feel when viewed on mobile devices.”

Now that the website is completed, work will be focused on developing an appropriate Facebook networking presence, as well as other social media avenues.

“In addition to showcasing our ‘bleeding edge,’ mindset, the port wants to increase its ability to engage in two-way dialogue with people in our community, and even globally,” said Brent Grening, port CEO. “There’s a great deal of knowledge and insight outside of our port walls – we want to be part of that conversation.”

To view the port’s new website, visit portridgefield.org.

NEW LOGO AND WEBSITE EXPRESS INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO BUSINESS



The port launched a new logo and website recently. These images are screen captures of the new website.



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT: GREEN LIGHT FOR WDFW BUILDING



The regional headquarters for the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife will be constructed by the Port of Ridgefield on port-owned land at South 11th Street in Ridgefield. Elevation by Mackenzie.

On June 3, the Port of Ridgefield executed final documents with the Washington State Department of Enterprise Services for the construction and leasing of a building on port-owned property at South 11th Street in Ridgefield. The building will house the regional headquarters of the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife. In December last year the port was named the apparent successful proposer in a bid process; negotiations had been taking place since then.

The agency manages its operations in Clark, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum, Skamania, Lewis and Klickitat counties, plus Columbia River fisheries, from its regional office.

“This is fantastic news for the

community,” Port of Ridgefield Commission Chair Scott Hughes said. “Our commission and staff are thrilled to be able to bring this significant employer to Ridgefield.”

Port of Ridgefield CEO Brent Grening said the port also holds permits for an 112,000 square foot building on port-owned property across the street from the WDFW site.

“The WDFW development will be attractive to other developers and retailers who want to capitalize on the proximity to 100-plus employees and a number of daily visitors to the WDFW offices. The project also showcases Ridgefield as a growing employment hub,” Grening said.

Building design, site analysis and permitting is now underway. The port expects to finish construction by June 30, 2017.

WDFW building JUST THE FACTS

- Cost: \$8 million
- Building size: 31,000 sq. ft.
- Covered outdoor storage: 8,000 sq. ft.
- Permanent Employees: 103
- Seasonal Employees: 80 (approx.)
- Office Spaces: 154
- Parking Spaces: 100
- Daily Avg. Visitor Count: 30
- Pike minnow: Approx. 110,000 frozen at site for counting/later rendering
- Programs run from site: Fish, Wildlife, Habitat, Enforcement & Administration
- Boats stored at site: 6 or more (enforcement & field work)