



# Port Pages

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE PORT OF RIDGEFIELD  
Jobs • Economic Stability • Diverse Tax Base • Vibrant Communities

Volume 2011 Issue 1



## Inside this issue:

<i>WA Ports 100 Years</i>	1
<i>POR Slice of History</i>	1
<i>Commissioner's Corner</i>	2
<i>Marketing Campaign</i>	2
<i>"Captain" Jack's Barking News</i>	2
<i>Director's Message</i>	3
<i>Pioneer Rail Overpass</i>	3
<i>Ridgefield History</i>	4

## OUR MISSION

To responsibly develop property and facilities that encourage private investment, job creation, local economic diversity and stability; to preserve and better the quality of life for citizens of the greater Ridgefield area.

### Board of Commissioners

Joe Melroy — District 1  
Scott Hughes — District 2  
Bruce Wiseman — District 3

### Executive Director

Brent Grening



## WASHINGTON PORTS CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

2011 marks 100 years since Washington State legislation paved the way for citizens of Washington to form port districts. It was on March 14, 1911, that then Governor Marion E. Hay signed the *Port District Act*, permitting citizens to form and vote on the establishment of port districts and thereby end the private monopoly of urban harbors and docks. Later that same year, Seattle and Grays Harbor became the first two ports to be established under the new act. By 1920 port districts had been formed by Vancouver, Bremerton, Tacoma and several others. Currently, Washington has more port districts than any other state in the union, 75 to be exact, serving a population of over 6 million residents through trade and economic development.

As a part of the year's celebration of public ports, the Washington Public Ports Association has worked closely with History Link ([www.historylink.org](http://www.historylink.org)) to document the early history of ports in the state of Washington from 1911 to present day. Also included are essays on each and every one of the 75 ports, including the Port of Ridgefield. History Link is an online reference library dedicated to Washington state and community history. It should be mentioned that History Link was the first of this type of internet service and the largest. Thanks WPPA and History Link!

### PORT OF RIDGEFIELD SLICE OF HISTORY EXPANDING AND DEVELOPING IN 1984

*The first large purchase, in 1984, a 78-acre tract near the freeway that the Port planned to develop into the Ridgefield Industrial Park, immediately attracted a large tenant, Swing Shift Manufacturing. Located in Rainier, Oregon, the forklift manufacturer planned to move to Ridgefield to take advantage of tax breaks, a better location, a larger labor pool, and assistance with financing water and sewer lines. At Ridgefield the company planned to expand from 60 employees to 500.*

*In order to prepare the site for industrial use, the Port had to obtain water and sewer service and work with the county to enlarge the local water-treatment facility to accommodate the increase in water use. The state Community Economic Revitalization Board provided financing for the project and the County contributed to the effort on the condition that the Port and the City revise the community's long-range comprehensive plan. A committee made up of representatives from the Port, the City of Ridgefield, and community members undertook the project and received an enthusiastic community response. According to Ridgefield mayor Ralph Kraus (1929-2005), "It [the increase in community planning and development] was triggered by the Port saying, 'We've been sitting here for years doing nothing.' Port commissioners took a 'bold step' and purchased about 80 acres just west of Interstate 5 and south of Northwest 268th Street for development" (Gilbert, "Ridgefield Gains").*

Excerpt From [Historylink.org](http://Historylink.org)  
By: Jennifer Ott

**Commissioner's Corner**  
**Bruce Wiseman**



When we think of ports most of us naturally think of large cargo ships, busy docks and bustling air terminals or an aged to perfection adult beverage from Portugal.

Many of the ports in Washington State do manage one or more (not the latter) of these types of facilities. Others operate and manage small local docks, public marinas or general aviation fields. Some don't have anything to do with ships, boats, aircraft or even that other 'port', although some are doing great things for the Washington wine industry. However, all ports work to create jobs. So why do we call them ports?

It all goes back to the Port District Act of 1911. Washington's Port District Act permitted the people of *any county* in the state to establish a port district and interestingly enough, that district could include all or even a portion of the county. Consequently we have port districts today that do not have anything resembling an airport or seaport, but we still call them ports as a result of the legislation that grants them their authority.

This year we celebrate 100 years of port service to the citizens of Washington. I want to thank my fellow commissioners and port staff, both past and present, for a job well done in promoting trade, industrial development, and jobs in their regions.

Till Next

**PORT & LOCAL BIZ SUPPORT REGIONAL MARKETING CAMPAIGN**

*Land Here~Live Here* is a simple enough theme, but it is catching on like wildfire. It was just under a year ago that business leaders in the region joined with Identity Clark County, to brainstorm ideas for promoting the Portland/Vancouver USA area. More than 200 individuals from both private and public sector were involved, all volunteering their time and creative energies. Five design/marketing firms offered their services and when the dust settled, Tribe2 Studios based in Vancouver had submitted the 'odds-on' favorite *Land Here~Live Here*



theme and logo design.

Ron Arp, president & CEO of Amplify Group, who is donating his time to lead the grass-roots movement, said recently, "The point of adopting the regional brand Portland/Vancouver USA, was to prevent the area from being overlooked by companies eyeing Vancouver, B.C., Seattle or Los Angeles. *Land Here Live Here* is heightening awareness of the Portland-Vancouver area, and to creating curiosity.

"The campaign is grounded in the best of what the region has to offer prospective employers: low energy costs; a high quality of life; business clusters, including the technology, manufacturing, clean energy and



Jeff Shaiffer, founder of Agave Jeans in Ridgefield is fully behind the campaign.

apparel sectors; and access to rail, roads and other important infrastructure", added Ginger Metcalf, executive director for Identity Clark County.

For more information contact:  
Ron Arp: 306-601-2991  
rarp@amplifygroup.com

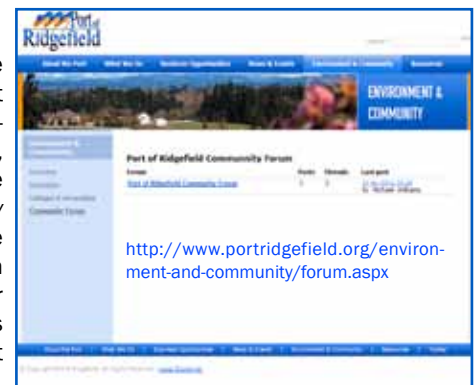


**"CAPTAIN" JACK'S BARKING NEWS ONLINE COMMUNITY FORUM**

Ahoy me hearties!

I be keepin' watch on the port's website and see that ya lubbers haven't discovered one of its treasures, aye treasures mates, for ye ta plunder! The *Community Forum* mates! A spot fer ye ta pipe up and palaver with

yer mates an tell the brass on board what be on yer mind! Thar be gold in them thar pages! Arrrrr! And this be safe harbor, so while ye's thar put yer eye to what else at the Port be afoot!



<http://www.portridgefield.org/environment-and-community/forum.aspx>



# PIONEER STREET RAIL OVERPASS REACHES 90% DESIGN COMPLETION

Pioneer Street Rail Overpass project has reached 90% design completion and plans have been submitted to Washington State Department of Transportation and the City of Ridgefield for review. "The Pioneer Street Rail Overpass is now considered shovel ready, and construction could start next year if funding for the project is included in this year's federal transportation bill", said Randy Mueller, Director of Business Development for the Port. "The House will begin drafting a transportation bill in May", said "Scott Hughes, Port of Ridgefield Commissioner, who recently returned from a trip to D.C., where he and Executive Director Brent Grening met with federal legislators including Senators Murray, Cantwell and Congresswoman Hererra-Butler. "This overpass means a great deal to the community with regard to improved public safety and continued redevelopment of the City's waterfront and economic growth. There is cautious optimism back east, but we've got some good momentum going for us", concluded Hughes. "Our plan fits right in with high speed rail and the US Fish & Wildlife Service just received \$950,000 to begin planning a replacement bridge over Lake River to the River S Unit of the Refuge".



The overpass will extend Pioneer St., out over the railroad tracks and land on the waterfront. "Our goal is to provide safe, unobstructed, and direct access to the redeveloped Ridgefield waterfront, as well as to the "Carty" unit (and potentially the "River S" unit) of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge", stated Brent Grening, Executive Director of the Port. "At present, safety and access to the waterfront by emergency vehicles, cars, trucks, and pedestrians are considered deficient because of the street-level rail crossings and inadequate emergency access."

Major benefits to the community and to the region include: allowing closure of up to three at-grade railroad crossings, including the Mill Street crossing which has been ranked the 5th most dangerous crossing in Washington State, improved visitor and tourist access to the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. Presently, the "Carty Unit" of the refuge is not easily handicapped accessible and the "River S Unit" is currently accessible only via a failing bridge on Refuge Road. Furthermore, this project will increase railroad mainline capacity through the Portland metro area - where 70-80 trains pass through Ridgefield on a daily basis and enabling the extension of the high speed rail corridor between Eugene, Oregon and Vancouver, BC and provide safe access to the Port of Ridgefield, a major job center for the city of Ridgefield.



engineering and administration, right-of-way acquisition, environmental impact mitigation, construction, contingency and mobilization.

Total cost of the project is estimated at approximately \$12.5 million including: final design, en-

## Message from Executive Director Brent Grening



We are always pleased at the port when our public, the folks we work for, let us know how we are doing. Public input is what keeps us on track and let's us evaluate our successes and thankfully not very often, our shortcomings.

After a Commissioner's Workshop reviewing the proposed planning agreement for Millers' Landing held on March 24th at the port offices, the following note was received from one of our citizen attendees:

*The meeting at the Port was great. I got really turned on to all the ideas that were presented for the future of the property. It concerned two subjects - both in draft format - the proposed agreement with the City of Ridgefield, setting forth development standards, and Design Guidelines for the Port property.*

*We did not get through the whole second document, so there will be another meeting before the next Port Commissioner's meeting, starting at 1:30 on Wednesday, April 13. They are looking ahead to the next 50 years of growth in Ridgefield and trying to plan responsibly for it.*

*I especially liked the care that's been given to view corridors, 'green' building habits, making the space and buildings friendly to people. It covered all aspects of developing the area: building heights, setbacks, parking, access, sidewalks, refuse collection etc etc. Somebody spent a lot of time thinking things through so our waterfront will be a benefit to the whole community.*

*Everyone is welcome at the Port meetings, and it's good to have community members involved, so if you're able to attend meetings, it's a good thing to do. They're at the Port offices, 111 West Division.*

Kathy Winters

Thank you Kathy and thanks to all who have shared their thoughts and ideas through the years.





Raising Tomorrow's Standard  
TODAY

P.O. Box 55  
111 W Division Street  
Ridgefield, WA 98642

### Public Meetings & Events

Port public meetings every 2nd and 4th Wednesday of the month, check our website for schedule.

Celebrate Independence ~ July 4th  
Ridgefield parade

8th annual **Commissioner's Picnic**  
~ free hotdogs, root beer floats!  
August 17th at the boat launch

"Captain" Jack

Barking News

SCUTTLE BUTT STRAIGHT FROM THE POOP DECK



Only a stupid golfer throws his club behind him. The smart golfer throws his club ahead so he can pick it up on the way to the next hole.

Tommy Armour

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Comments or questions may be addressed to Michael Williams, Marketing & Communications Manager, by email to mwilliams@portridgefield.org. Your phone calls and letters are also welcome.



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## RIDGEFIELD HISTORY

### RIDGEFIELD VENEER & PACIFIC WOOD TREATING

It appears the Port did not actively develop land or facilities during World War II. In 1956, however, the Ridgefield Veneer Company plant opened on 13 acres leased from the Port and adjoining land that it purchased. By 1957, the town's last shingle mill had closed and the veneer plant offered the only industrial employment in the area. The company built radar reflector towers, dummy Polaris missiles, cargo containers, and other wood products.

Ridgefield Veneer was joined in 1963 by Pacific Wood Treating. A laudatory article in *The Oregonian* reported the newly estab-



lished Pacific Wood Treating plant and noted that, "Two years ago this site was a virtual wasteland. Now all the prime industrial property is gone" ("Once-Bustling"). It noted that tugs and barges served the port and that the town was seeing more activity than it had for some time. Pacific Wood Treating Corpora-

tion, a division of Niedermeyer-Martin of Portland, treated lumber for industrial use. In the 1970's the plant would also pressure-treat Douglas fir timbers that would be used by another Niedermeyer-Martin company, Timber-Form, to create the wooden playground structures that would become ubiquitous in American public parks and backyards. The chemicals used on the lumber would have significant environmental consequences.

Excerpt From Historylink.org  
By: Jennifer Ott