State auditor’s office unable to determine what happened to revenue from city-sponsored events

By MARILISS HARMISAN
Columbus Dispatch

After nearly six months of digging, the Washington State Auditor’s Office has completed its special investigation into missing revenue from city-sponsored events in Washougal but was unable to determine what happened to more than $100,000.

Due to insufficient record-keeping and one company’s refusal to participate in the audit, the investigators were unable to determine if the city owed any money or whether public money was misused, lost or misappropriated.

However, Mayor Sean Guard said he has no doubt city money was mishandled. Guard has asked the Clark County Sheriff’s Office to launch a criminal investigation, which has already begun, to try to get answers from people unwilling to cooperate with state auditors.

“I firmly believe there is still more to the story than anyone has been able to accurately portray,” he said. “You don’t go down the road for so long without looking under the rug.”

The auditor’s office met with city officials Friday morning to release its findings. The auditor’s office provided the city with a one-page summary of the investigation and will not be issuing a report. Guard said. To date, the city has paid $33,379 for the investigation. It is unclear if the city will incur additional costs.

As part of the special investigation, the auditors interviewed current and former city staff members, council members, former Mayor Stacie Sellers, Guard, nonprofit employees and vendors. However, the main vendor involved, Columbia River Productions, declined to provide the auditor’s office with records and declined numerous requests for an interview, according to the auditor’s letter to the city. Columbia River Productions and a nonprofit group, Washougal Downtown Revitalization and Implementation Committee, helped organize and host the events.

The auditor’s investigation also found the city had no written agreements detailing duties and responsibilities with DRC or Columbia River Productions for any of the events. Guard said the city’s office was unable to find any business filings for Clark’s-based Columbia River Productions or Washington. The company is not listed in the phone book. The Columbian on Friday could not locate the business in the state Department of Revenue’s database of businesses. The city of Camas does not issue business licenses.

WASHINGTON, Page C9

Achieving women thank honorees recount mothers’ leadership

By SCOTT HAWK
Columbus Dispatch

When you start down the road of psychoanalysis, Linda Glover chuckled, it doesn’t take long to get to your mother.

When Glover learned she’d been named a 2010 Woman of Achievement, she considered what she’d accomplished — as a businesswoman, civic booster and champion of nonprofit and the needy — and arrived back, at least, at her mother.

Glover’s mother, a tireless volunteer and board member with groups like the YWCA and Campfire Girls, was responsible — along with a circle of women friends — for all kinds of good works and community improvements, from new playgrounds to arts festivals. It was her mother’s example that taught Glover how people can pull together to achieve something great.

Now executive director of Gifts for Gild Hall, a community and president of the city’s Downtown Association, Glover was one of eight leading local women celebrated at an annual luncheon at the Hilton Vancouver Washington. Sponsored by the Clark County YWCA and Clark College and now in its 35th year, the women of Achievement award honors outstanding community contributions by women.

But here’s a secret confirmed by honoree Senator Atkins, the chief operating officer of Southwest Washington Medical Society: “Extraordinary people are rarely ordinary people with extraordinary determination.” That wisdom came from Atkins’ mother — we’re back to Mom again — who added that if you’re someone lucky, someone with a voice, you must speak out on behalf of the uncomfortable and voiceless.

Atkins urged the appreciative women — and their male fans (and friends) who packed the luncheon to be on the lookout for great opportunities cropping up in unlikely places. For example, there’s Safe Purpose, a manicure salon on East Evergreen Boulevard where Donna Bird works as a nail technician. Both, a dedicated community volunteer, is a single mother with one child. But擘 who had extra money but not necessarily.

ACHIEVEMENT, Page C9

Governor nixes C-Tran’s advice, names Harris to bridge council

Jeanne Stewart ‘stunned’ she wasn’t appointed

By ERIC ROBINSON
Columbus Dispatch

Vancouver city Councilor Jeanne Stewart

Harris will join other state and local officials struggling to nail down details of a project designed to replace the twin-three-lane drawbridges over the river, improve four miles of Interstate 5.

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stated that she was “stunned” by the choice. “I am, to myself, a editor. Of course, want to see what’s on the inside of the book — much like you would look at the back of a book — and only at the front, you see the spine of the book and the title on the spine. In part, to make her task easier, the Beach House Salad in the core of the city was my favorite. Recently, the book was a number of stories I wrote in a specific way, specifically on what and how that compares with others.

A large audience celebrates the honorees.

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Achievement:

From Page C1

easily extra energy — so she offered to do the shopping and make the delivery if the client just wrote a big enough check to feed everyone at Share House a real Thanksgiving dinner.

The meal got paid for and delivered; 500 hungry people got fed and gave thanks.

"I found a small niche connecting those in need to those who have resources," said Bleth.

Another special niche is filled by Bobbi Bindreiff, a certified public accountant. That's generally considered "one of the world's most boring occupations," Bindreiff said, so she decided to "spice it up by working for nonprofits."

She has been president of the YWCA board and of Women in Action, encouraging women to get involved in politics, and a board member of Affordable Community Environments, a nonprofit housing developer.

People make fun of boards and committees, she said, but the ones she's been on have been a source of delight and progress for the community.

Bindreiff has long aspired "to become the person my dog thinks I am" — but now that she's been named a 2010 Woman of Achievement, she said, she'll be changing that motto to: "I hope I can become the person my friends think I am."

The other 2010 Women of Achievement are:

- **Joyce Carter**, music educator, volunteer for the YWCA's Court Appointed Special Advocates program and a founder of the Vancouver Counseling Center.
- **Leslie Durst**, philanthropist, president of Friends of the Arts and "I Have a Dream" sponsor.
- **Nancy Simmons**, busy volunteer and community partnership program coordinator at Larch Corrections Center.

Also honored were three Young Women of Achievement:

- **Nadia Mousleh**, of Prairie High School, recipient of the $1,500 Violet Richardson Scholarship from Soroptimist International of Vancouver.
- **Holly Vogel**, of Ridgefield High School, recipient of a $1,500 First Independent Scholarship.
- **Jing Xue**, of Mountain View High School, recipient of a $1,500 Donna Roberge-Nozel Scholarship.

Plus, five Young Women of Achievement were honored specifically for community service: Michelle Taylor of Vancouver School of Arts and Academics; Shailah Ricketts of Heritage High School; Hannah Jones of Camas High School; Shelley Adao of Hudson's Bay High School; and Madeline Thompson of Vancouver School of Arts and Academics.

**Scott Hewitt:** 360-735-4525 or scott.hewitt@columbian.com.