Vancouver, Portland host free arts events

By MATT WASTRADOWSKI
Columbian staff writer

Are you looking for ways to have fun without spending a lot of money this week? Several free events offer a blend of theater and music throughout Clark County this week. In Portland, the Rose Festival's popular Fleet Week wraps up this weekend, offering visitors up-close looks at several ships docked on the Willamette River. Here are a few ideas for having free and frugal fun.

Clark College concerts offer variety:
Clark College's music programs wrap up their seasons with free concerts over the coming week that will showcase several musical genres. The groups offer a variety of styles, ranging from jazz to orchestral works.

The Clark College Vocal Jazz Ensemble and Jazz Ensemble will perform tonight. The groups will cap the evening by performing together.

On Sunday, the Clark College Orchestra will perform works by several European composers. The concert will feature Italian pianist Antonio Di Cristofano as a soloist on the U.S. premiere of Domenico Bartok's Piano Concerto in C.

The Clark College Concert Choir and Concert Band perform Wednesday. The Concert Choir will sing American spirituals and hymns. The Concert Band will perform traditional and contemporary wind music compositions.

Production mixes Shakespeare, high school:
Shakespeare fans, strapped for time and money, are in luck this evening in downtown Vancouver. Magnolia Theater is offering free 15-minute performances of "Curtain Always Get What You Want." The production, which was written using lines from various Shakespeare plays, is set in a high school in the 1960s. It touches on love, triangles, secrets and magic.

Where: 1414 E. 3rd St., Vancouver
Admission: Free
Telephone: 360-775-1818
On the Web: magnoliatheater.com

Fleet Week wraps up this weekend:
Those curious about what life is like aboard military ships can take free tours about the vessel this weekend as the Rose Festival's Fleet Week wraps up. Naval vessels from the U.S. Navy, U.S. Coast Guard and the Canadian Marine forces will be open for tours which will be offered daily through Sunday.

When: Today through Sunday
Where: Tours will be held on deck and given at 11:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. daily
Admission: Free
Telephone: 360-267-5588
On the Web: VisitVancouver.com/FleetWeek

Reading the stars:
Celebrities step into the world of juvenile fiction as authors of new children's books.

By LEANN LITTLIE
Associated Press writer

Michael Phelps channels dinosaurs in a world absent of scandium or borangis. Julianne Moore refines her red-haired back, this time facing down a large and daunting dogflegler player who throws a way too hard. Our girl heroine with cup-sized freedans uses her imagination and a dose of compassion to win over Windy Potts. Patrick, who — as it turns out — has fears in "I Am a Rainbow" (Penguin, $16.99, ages 3-5) by Dolly Parton and illustrated by Heather Shepliff. Shepliff's rhymes and even simpler drawings of children express emotions as colors, including red for anger, blue for sad.

Freckleface Strawberry and Dodgethe Blob