

# CHEERS & JEERS

## Presidential debate, company memos, dog 'voter' and inspectors all in spotlight

**Cheers:** Clark College President Bob Knight is active with the group pushing to have one of the 2008 presidential debates conducted in Portland, with Clark among the sponsoring organizations.

Knight and Vancouver Mayor Royce Pollard joined Portland movers and shakers Tuesday at a meeting with representatives of the Commission on Presidential Debates and the U.S. Secret Service to pitch Portland as a host city. The commission is expected to announce the debate cities in October.

Knight says it would "offer great teaching and learning opportunities" and Clark would host related events during debate week.

**Jeers:** Here's an example of why the Bush administration can't shake the perception that it is overly chummy with industry. The Seattle Post-Intelligencer has reported that the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service offered a Weyerhaeuser Co. bigwig a chance to edit a letter the agency was sending to the company itself about Weyerhaeuser logging operations harming the spotted owl habitat.

Another document, which also surfaced in a federal courtroom in Seattle, was a Weyerhaeuser memo that The P-I said "shows the company wants to do as little as possible to get environmentalists off its back while still cutting as much timber as possible."

**Cheers:** Lifeline Connections, a nonprofit inpatient treatment program for drug and alcohol addicts ([www.lifelineconnections.org](http://www.lifelineconnections.org)) is making a difference. That was clear at a picnic last weekend for alumni and some current residents of the 60 residential drug

and alcohol treatment beds for its 28-day get-clean program.

**Jeers:** We're repeating ourselves (See May 12 Cheers & Jeers), but the Clark County prosecutor's office *still* hasn't announced whether there will be charges filed in the case of Peter Gecho in the accidental death of his 9-year-old daughter, Madison Jo Gecho, on

Jan. 16. There was snow on the ground, school was canceled and he was pulling her behind his vehicle on an inflatable tube. She struck a brick bench on the grounds of Thomas Jefferson Middle School and died from the injuries. Witnesses reported he had been drinking.

**Cheers:** Let's hear it for the Clark County Health

Department for its diligence every summer in monitoring water quality at Klineline Pond in Salmon Creek and Vancouver Lake Park.

They are each a quantum leap from anything that could be described as a pristine swimming hole. But they still attract waders and swimmers. This week, the department's regular tests showed the bacteria level at Klineline was too high for such activity, so officials closed it until the next test showed improvement.

**Jeers:** A King County woman thought it'd be fun to see if she could fool the election workers and get her dog, named Duncan M. MacDonald, registered to vote.

"I know I'm guilty," said Jane Balogh when finally tracked down after ballots were sent to her dog. "I wasn't trying to do anything fraudulent. I was trying to prove that our system was flawed." That was last week. Thursday of this week, she pleaded innocent to charges of making false statements on a voter registration form.

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