

**Articles:**

- Richland Innovation Ctr.
- Dr. Zirkle
- Airports
- Tenant Spotlight
- Crow Butte Park



## Richland Innovation Center



The above photo shows machinery leveling land for a commercial site being privately developed by Innovation Center, LLC. University Square will be a commercial development with plans for up to ten separate buildings.

The Port of Benton acquired Hanford's 3000 Area (JA Jones) in 1996 when it was transferred from the government to the Port. This 71 acre site needed major infrastructure upgrades before the Port could effectively market the land. The site was renamed Richland Innovation Center (RIC) and the Port has been systematically upgrading the roads, sewer, water lines, utilities and landscaping. Several buildings have been demolished or remodeled and now the RIC is starting to attract interest from private developers.

The Port recently partnered with the City of Richland to use Local Revitalization Financing for road construction and the extension of Fermi and Currie Street at the entries to the RIC.

Adjacent to the street extensions, developers from Innovation Center, LLC have started construction of University Square. This commercial development is located at the corner of Stevens and University Drive.

*Continued on page 2*

## Sammy Award



*Lewis Zirkle, MD was honored by the Richland Rotary Club for his entrepreneurial endeavors.*

On February 21, 2012, Lewis Zirkle, MD received the Sam Volpentest Entrepreneurial Leadership Award (Sammy) from the Richland Rotary Club. The awards luncheon was sponsored by PNNL, TRIDEC, Port of Benton and the Tri-Cities Chamber of Commerce.

Dr. Zirkle has lived and practiced in the Tri-Cities for 40 years. He specializes in orthopedic surgery and has used his surgical skills to treat thousands of patients here and throughout the world.

He received his undergraduate degree from Davidson College via a football scholarship and received his medical

*Continued on page 2*

# Richland Innovation Center

Continued from page 1

The company has begun \$2 million in roads and infrastructure.

Innovation Center, LLC is a private developer that has constructed two other buildings and road infrastructure within the Tri-Cities Research District and is anticipating food, financial and other commercial services to be located within the project as early as this summer. Discussions with several commercial institutions are underway.

Columbia Energy is continuing to reconstruct one of the old warehouses left over from Hanford. The high bay space in this building has been completely renovated into a fabrication facility. This has resulted in Columbia Energy being able to hire additional workers and has made them more vertically integrated and competitive.



**For more information call Diahann Howard: (509) 375-3060**

*Columbia Energy purchased this warehouse at the RIC site, which was deemed unsafe and listed as condemned by the Department of Energy. They have demolished part of the building and re-purposed the remainder into a state of the art production facility.*

Sammy Award, Continued from page 1

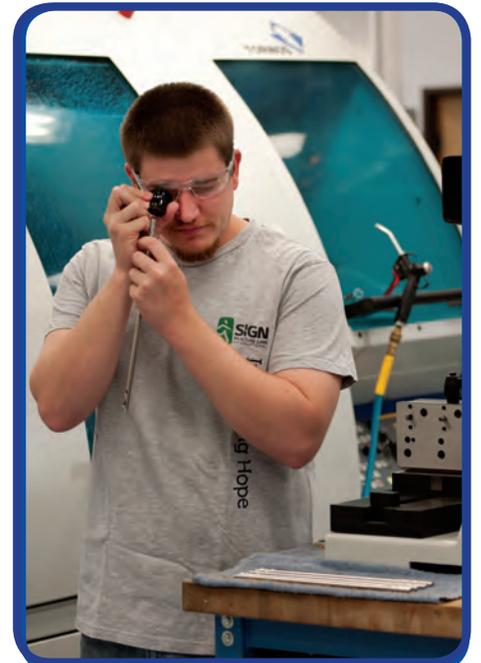
degree from Duke University. His surgical training came from residency training at Duke University and the Vietnam War. While still in the Army he received further training at Shriners Hospital for crippled children and with Dr. C.O. Bechtol, one of the pioneers in hip replacement design.

Dr. Zirkle founded SIGN Fracture Care International in 1999 and has trained hundreds of surgeons, from around the world, to develop new orthopedic implants that treat life threatening fractures occurring in patients every day throughout the developing world.

He has used his creative and surgical talents to build a humanitarian organization that has prevented long-term disabilities in nearly 100,000 patients of all ages from the poorest countries in the world.

Congratulations Dr. Zirkle, another Tri-Cities resident, making a difference world wide!

**To contact SIGN Fracture Care International, call: (509) 371-1107**



*Josh Howell is inspecting one of the nails to be used during a surgical implant procedure.*

# Crow Butte Park

The Port of Benton received a grant from the State of Washington Recreation Conservation Office in the amount of \$88,000.

The grant will allow the Port to procure engineering plans for the purpose of upgrading our marina. Our plans will include building a self-contained rest room, adding twelve new boat slips and erecting a fish cleaning station at the marina.

Riedesel Engineering has been hired to produce the plans and engineering for the project. The next phase will be constructing the marina facilities.

Future plans for Crow Butte Park will include new playground equipment at the Day Area.



**Discover Crow Butte Park without a Discover Pass!**

**Crow Butte Park is managed by the Port of Benton, no Discover Pass required.**

Crow Butte Park opened on March 15, 2012 and will be in service through October 30, 2012. Reservations can be made on-line at [www.crowbutte.com](http://www.crowbutte.com).

*This fisherman has just pulled a fish out of the protected bay at the marina. The new boat slips will make it harder for predator fish, like this bass, to hide under the slips.*

# Walter Clore Wine & Culinary Center

Clore Board Representative Mike Hogue announced that ALSC Architects of Spokane, Washington has been awarded the contract to design the 15,000 square foot Walter Clore Wine and Culinary Center.

The Center will promote the quality and diversity of Washington State wine and food through education and hands-on experience. The Clore Center site is owned by the Port of Benton and easily accessible from I-82.

The Clore Center and Port of

Benton were co-applicants and recipients of a \$2 million Public Works Grant awarded by the State of Washington's Economic Development Administration in April of 2011.

The design will complement the Clore Center's natural surroundings overlooking the Yakima River in Prosser. The 15,000 square foot wine/agritourism center will offer several indoor and outdoor venues including a tasting room, demonstration kitchen, agriculture and viticulture exhibits, classrooms, conference rooms, office space,



*The Vineyard Pavilion is available for rental by calling the contact below.*

retail shop, instructional vineyards, interpretive and production gardens and a walkway along the Yakima River.

Commission meetings are open to the public and held the second Wednesday of each month at 8:30 a.m. in the Port of Benton Conference Room, 3100 George Washington Way. March and September Commission meetings are held in Prosser, Washington.

**Contact Abbey Cameron  
509-786-1000  
for rental information.**

# Columbia Valley Luxury Cars

Tenant  
Spotlight

*Editor's Note: I interviewed Nathan Merz, President of Columbia Valley Luxury Cars, on March 20th in his showroom located at the Richland Airport.*

*Editor: How did you get into the car business?*

Nathan: It's been my passion since I was little. I read all the car magazines. My dad was into Porsches and European cars. We had a lot of Volkswagens, the entry level European car. When I was in high school I worked at Bellevue Porsche/Audi as a lot attendant.

*Editor: How did you get from Bellevue to Richland?*

Nathan: My wife is from here, I was in the pharmaceutical business which was a little frustrating and I thought it had a limited future. We just made the decision to do what I loved to do, buy and sell cars. I started selling cars on eBay, which worked really well until they started selling advertising and the percent of transactions dropped dramatically.

*Editor: Did you buy and sell on eBay?*

Nathan: I only sell cars on eBay. It still works if you have a niche product that no one else has. So, my wife really wanted to get back to the Tri-Cities and we decided to start our car business here.

*Editor: Starting from scratch?*

Nathan: Yes, our first event was the Parade of Homes. We parked our cars in the garages and talked to a bunch of people, handed out fliers and we just took off from there and haven't looked back.

*Editor: Do you buy cars and then find a customer, or the customer comes to you with a request and you find the car?*

Nathan: The short answer is both. If I find a car I like, I buy it; however, sometimes a customer comes in with a specific request and then I'll start looking for their dream car. Occasionally we'll take



in a trade that doesn't fit our market so I'll resell it to a local dealer or auction house.

*Editor: Are all your cars European?*

Nathan: Yes, I just don't have the passion for Japanese or American cars, so I just specialize in the European brands.

*Editor: What are some of your favorite cars you've purchased?*

Nathan: I purchased a 1996 Porsche 993 Twin Turbo with only 11,000 original miles that was museum quality. It went to a buyer in Germany.

*Editor: It went back to Germany?*

Nathan: Yes, we export quite a few cars. The cars in the U.S. are usually in great condition compared with the European counterparts. We sell a lot of older Porsches in Germany. I found a Ferrari 360 Modena with only 13,000 original miles that was in perfect condition.

*Editor: What was the hardest car to find for a customer?*

Nathan: I've had some customers that I've literally looked for years trying to find a specific model. European cars come with so many options so there are an unlimited number of configurations if someone really wants to be picky. A couple of weeks ago I had a customer wanting a Porsche 2002 Carrera coupe in seal gray with a tiptronic. I had sold that exact car to another client in the

past, so I was able to negotiate a sale and everyone was happy.

*Editor: Of all the cool cars you've driven, what's your favorite?*

Nathan: The one I like to drive the best is my 1971 Porsche 911, it's sitting outside. I like the way it looks, sounds and drives. They're really light compared to today's cars.

*Editor: What other cars do you specialize in?*

Nathan: Porsche, BMW, Mercedes, a little Audi, Saab and Ferrari are the cars I really have a passion for.

*Editor: Who's your customer?*

Nathan: Our customers obviously have a high disposable income. They typically just write a check instead of finance, although we do have connections for financing if they need it.

*Editor: Do you have a lot of repeat customers?*

Nathan: Yes, I've had some customers buy over 20 cars. I'm not limited to what I can sell; it's limited to what I can buy.

*Editor: What if someone wants to contact you.*

Nathan: My contact info is:

---

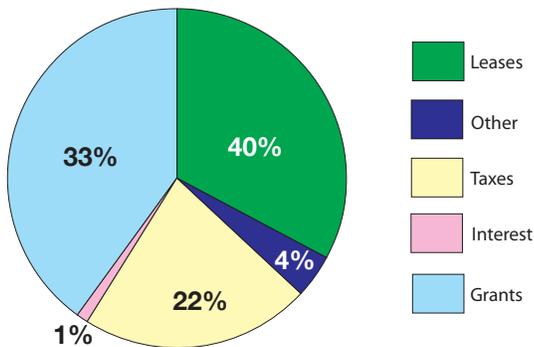
**Nathan Merz**  
**(509) 946-2000**  
**[www.cvluxurycars.com](http://www.cvluxurycars.com)**

---

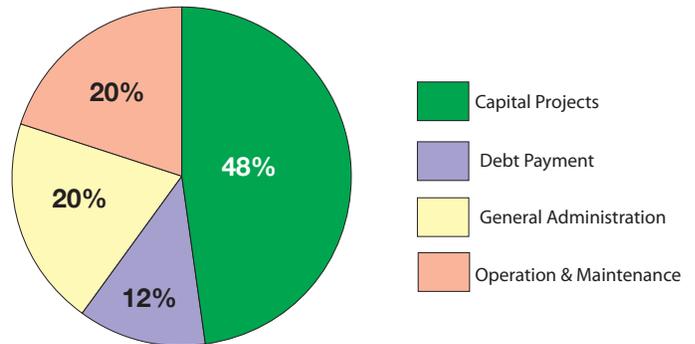
# Financial Report

## 2012 Projected Budget

### Income



### Expenses



The Washington State Auditor is responsible for conducting an annual financial, accountability and legal compliance examination of the Port of Benton. In September 2011, the Port was audited with no findings for the thirteenth year in a row. The financial highlights of the audited report included:

- Total current assets increased 9% over the past year.

- Net fixed assets increased 8% over the past year.

The Port of Benton strives to keep our tax levy rate as low as possible. In the past five years, the rate has decreased 8%. Currently, the owner of a \$100,000 home pays \$41.95 annually in property taxes to the Port of Benton.

## Richland & Prosser Airport Projects

The Port is planning to expand an area at the Richland Airport which will include relocating taxiway B and the development of additional hangar sites. The relocation will increase the separation between runway 26 and taxiway B to meet current Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements of 240 feet. It will also tie taxiway B into the area planned for hangar development. Phase I construction will be the first of seven phases to complete the entire project.

An Automated Weather Observing System (AWOS) unit will be installed at the Port's Prosser Airport. AWOS systems are operated and controlled by the FAA.

The Prosser Airport AWOS system will include: wind speed, wind gust, wind direction, variable wind direction, temperature, dew point, altimeter setting and density altitude. The system will report at 20-minute intervals but will not report special observations for rapidly changing weather conditions. The AWOS system can be accessed by phone or radio frequency.



The circular area at the Richland Airport, shown above, will be converted into hangar space and taxiway B will be relocated and link to the hangar area.

The photo at right shows the Automated Weather Observing System at the Richland Airport. A similar system will be installed at the Prosser Airport this year.



# President's Message

From our historic beginning with the Manhattan Project to our mission with clean up, our community has been tackling national missions with science and technology. As a result, we now have a unique set of assets: knowledge-based workforce, Battelle Pacific Northwest National Laboratory and Washington State University Tri-Cities.

Our national lab has a diverse portfolio of work with less than 7% of their work related to the Hanford site. WSU Tri-Cities has the Bioproducts, Science and Engineering Laboratory along with the Viticulture and Enology program that are two new growth areas both locally and across the state.

The Port of Benton, Benton County, City of Richland and TRIDEC have begun the process of transitioning Hanford lands for industrial uses in order to serve new missions such as clean energy and biofuels. The land request is only one part of a larger effort led by the Mid-Columbia Energy Initiative.



Photo shows scientists at WSU-TC's Bioproducts, Science & Engineering Laboratory. Courtesy of WSU Tri-Cities.

Our past missions have resulted in new developments and, once again, we are ready to step up and meet the needs of our nation while leveraging our local assets and abilities.

## Management Team



**Scott D. Keller, PPM®**  
Executive Director



**Stuart B. Dezember, CPA**  
Director of Finance/  
Auditor



**Diahann C. Howard**  
Director of Economic  
Development &  
Governmental Affairs



**John D. Haakenson**  
Director of Airports  
& Operations



**Kevin Howard**  
Director of  
Maintenance

## Commissioners



**Robert D. Larson**  
Commission Secretary



**Roy D. Keck**  
Commission President



**Jane F. Hagarty**  
Commission Vice President

This newsletter was produced by the staff of the Port of Benton, Jan Jackson, editor. For information about property acquisition and leasing opportunities, please call the Port of Benton at

**(509) 375-3060**

3100 George Washington Way  
Richland, WA 99354

**[www.portofbenton.com](http://www.portofbenton.com)**