



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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VANCOUVER WELCOMES THE 2009 NAIA NATIONAL CROSS COUNTRY CHAMPIONSHIPS

VANCOUVER, Wash. – In just over a week, 650 plus student-athletes representing nearly 150 institutions in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics will converge on Vancouver for the 2009 NAIA Cross Country National Championships. Great news for the fans of men’s and women’s cross country running, but even better news for the local economy which expects that the competing athletes, their families and those attending the championships will utilize more than 1,600 hotel room nights translating into a half million dollars of economic impact for the hotels, restaurants and local businesses in our community.

The event, which is free and open to the public, will take place on Saturday, November 21, on the grounds of the Fort Vancouver National Site. The championships will feature athletes from around the nation representing 32 teams plus more than 100 individual competitors that will race in men’s 8k and women’s 5k races. Fort Vancouver has been a competition venue for a number of USA National Cross Country Championships in the past, but this is the first time in 34 years that this event has made it to the West Coast.

The Cascade Collegiate Conference and Concordia University of Portland who are co-hosting the event lobbied hard to get the event here and were awarded not only the 2009 championships but they will also be hosting it again at Fort Vancouver in 2010. Dave Haglund, Commissioner for the Cascade Collegiate Conference said, “Bringing the NAIA Cross Country Championships to this area is a natural, and we are honored and excited to have been awarded this event for the next two years. This is a special opportunity to add to the outstanding running tradition this region is known for and to showcase the sport of collegiate cross country in a national championship setting.”

The Southwest Washington Convention & Visitors Bureau, who played a role in getting the event here and in booking the overnight hotel rooms, said they are also thrilled to be able to bring such a high-level national event to Vancouver. “It is a great win when we can get a true city-wide event to come here,” said Rosemary Cooke, the Bureau’s Director of Sales. “This event will utilize hotels all around the county; the whole community will benefit from the direct spending that results from out-of-town attendees.”

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Earlier this year, the SWCVB worked with both the Washington State Republicans and the Washington State Democrats to bring their 2010 conventions to Vancouver next June. Both these events, just slightly larger than the NAIA championships, in combination with the two NAIA events will bring a total economic impact of 3 million dollars to the area.

Last year, tourism spending in Clark County was up by over five percent at \$421 million. It is too early to tell how the 2009 spending will stack up, but if our community can continue to attract the larger conventions and sporting events such as these, we're all winners.

About the SWCVB

The Southwest Washington Convention & Visitors Bureau is an economic development organization responsible for competitively marketing Vancouver and the surrounding area as a destination for meetings, conventions, and group and leisure travelers. The SWCVB is located at 101 E 8th Street, Suite 240, Vancouver, WA 98660. You can reach the Bureau at 360-750-1553, or via e-mail at info@southwestwashington.com. You can also visit them on their web site at www.SouthwestWashington.com.

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