

August 25, 2009

**Fort Vancouver National Trust**  
General O.O. Howard House, 750 Anderson Street  
Vancouver, WA 98661  
360.992.1800 \* [www.fortvan.org](http://www.fortvan.org)



**NEWS RELEASE --For Immediate Release**

**Contacts**

*Kim Hash*  
Director of Programs & Donor Relations  
360.992.1804; cell: 360.907.1310  
[kim.hash@fortvan.org](mailto:kim.hash@fortvan.org)

*Susan Holton*  
Communications Manager  
360.992.1814; cell: 360.936.3561  
[susan.holton@fortvan.org](mailto:susan.holton@fortvan.org)

**Pearson Air Museum's Fourth Annual "Dancing with the Local Stars" Raises \$72,000;  
Susan Courtney wins competition by raising largest donation total**

The Fort Vancouver National Trust, which operates the Pearson Air Museum, has reported that Saturday's Dancing with the Local Stars event broke records for attendance and dollars raised. The August 22 hangar dance competition was attended by more than 550 people and raised more than \$72,000 for the aviation museum's educational programs.

Elson Strahan, President and CEO of the Fort Vancouver National Trust, expressed his thanks to the dancers. "We are deeply appreciative to our dancers for their commitment to the Trust and the Pearson Air Museum. Clearly, our success was due to their generous contribution of time and energy, not to mention their willingness to step outside their comfort zone to perform in front of over 550 dinner attendees, and they all gave great performances."

Based on the format of the popular TV program, eight local "stars" were partnered with Arthur Murray Dance Studio instructors and were taught dance routines. The celebrity dancers are Susan Courtney, Courtney Consulting, swing dance; Michael Ciraulo, Mayor, City of Battle Ground, tango; Tamara Fuller, NAI Norris, Beggs & Simpson, hustle; Lisa Lowe, Schwabe, Williamson & Wyatt, waltz; John McDonagh, Vancouver Business Journal, salsa; George Middleton, Limoges Investment Management, cha-cha; Terry Murphy, Design Showroom Inc., foxtrot; Tommy Owens, Tommy O's, rhumba. The community was encouraged to "vote" for their favorite dancer with their dollars. This year's winner was Susan Courtney. Her partner was Arthur Murray dance instructor Kealoha Hooper.

Because the \$30,000 pre-event fundraising benchmark was reached, Elson Strahan, president and CEO of Fort Vancouver National Trust, and Kim Capeloto, president and CEO of the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, skydived and landed at the event

as the James Bond theme song blared from speakers. They pulled off their flight suits to reveal classic tuxedos. For both men, it was their first skydive. Each did a tandem jump with an experienced skydiver.

**Background:** The Pearson Air Museum, 1115 East Fifth Street, is located on the Fort Vancouver National Site east of historic Fort Vancouver and is operated by the Fort Vancouver National Trust. The museum interprets the history of Pearson Field, the oldest operating airfield in the country. For information contact Pearson Air Museum at 360-694-7026 or visit their Web site at [www.pearsonairmuseum.org/](http://www.pearsonairmuseum.org/).