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New Web site launches, pushing for commercial flights out of Paine Field

 By **CONOR GLASSEY**

The debate on whether or not Paine Field should allow commercial aviation is not new, but there is a new Web site advocating passenger air service out of Everett.

FlyFromEverett.org was launched recently and the group claims to be "dedicated to realizing a simple vision: regional commuter air service at Paine Field."

Greg Tisdel, owner of Tiz's Doors in Everett, is leading the group.

"We get painted as a pro group, but we're a group of individuals that are supporters of FlyFromEverett and we're a fact-gathering organization so the public can make some intelligent decisions

on their input as to what they would like to see (Paine Field) look like," Tisdel said. "The real reason all of us are involved in this is to get the rest of the county engaged in the process. Mukilteo doesn't own Paine Field, the citizens of Snohomish County do."

On the other side of the issue is the Mukilteo-based group, Save Our Communities, which describes itself as "a nonprofit organization of concerned citizens from communities throughout Snohomish, Island, and northern King counties dedicated to preserving the quality of life in this primarily residential area of Puget Sound." The group was formed in 1992 and opposes "any attempt to transform Paine Field into a 'SeaTac-North'."

However, the people with FlyFromEverett don't want to see Paine Field expanded or converted into an international airport. The group is in favor of regional commercial flights

to areas like Spokane, Portland, Los Angeles, Denver, San Francisco, Las Vegas and Hawaii.

"Paine Field can become a fully-functioning, operational passenger airport in less than 60 days. That's how simple this is," Tisdel said in a press release. "People could drive to Paine Field 45 minutes before their flight, spend 10 minutes going through check-in and security, and fly to San Francisco or Hawaii, and all of that could happen without any expansion of the existing airfield."

Tisdel said Paine Field, which is currently used for private, general aviation, along with Boeing and B.F. Goodrich, is only using about 45 percent of their capacity.

"We don't want to make Paine Field bigger, we want to use it the

way it is, and we think most people in the area believe like we do — that it makes sense to have passenger service at Paine Field," Tisdel said in a press release.

Tisdel said having commercial flights out of Paine Field would reduce traffic on Interstate 5, as approximately 7,000 single-occupancy vehicles travel from Snohomish County to SeaTac International Airport every day. His research indicates that about 1,000 of those could be reduced because they are going to SeaTac for regional flights.

Other advantages he discussed include the increased aviation regulations that would come with commercial aviation and, of course, the financial boon commercial passenger airlines could bring to the county.

"This isn't taxpayer money," Tisdel said. "This is people from out of the

"Seussical The Musical"



Photo by Sam Freeman, www.nwphoto.biz

Mukilteo students from Kamiak and Harbour Pointe were part of the Everett Village Theatre Kidstage Summer Production of "Seussical," a musical based on the works of Dr. Seuss. Amanda Hamill, Karina Keyser and Sunita Chepuri play colorful jungle animals, Brianna Stiegler, Jesslyn Freeman and Shannon Flynn were Who's from Whoville, Dylan Pickus played the Grinch, Nicole Erickson was a Sour Kangaroo, and Sabrina Otness (pictured) was a bird girl. Rayla Freeman was part of the tech crew and controlled the lights for the show.

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Artists strut their stuff at Fresh Paint



Doug Ramsay photo

Heather Beach, 18, of Snohomish (above) paints an umbrella with waterproof permanent paint during the 11th annual Fresh Paint art festival at the Everett south marina Aug. 18. Beach paints and sells the umbrellas as a way to raise money for her art school tuition. She said the umbrellas are fully functional and are a way to "laugh at the rain."



Doug Ramsay photo

Kg Miyata of Brier (above) works to sculpt fish in ice during a demonstration of his artistic talent at the 11th annual Fresh Paint art festival at the Everett south marina Aug. 18. Miyata has been sculpting ice for nearly 20 years, and was one of several dozen artists demonstrating and selling their work at the two-day festival, which is sponsored by the Arts Council of Snohomish County.

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area putting money into (the county's) checking account."

Candidates for County Council position 2 are split on their stances regarding commercial flights out of Paine Field.

In an Aug. 6 debate, candidates Jean Berkey and Brian Sullivan were asked whether they would allow increased commercial air traffic into Paine Field. Berkey said yes and Sullivan said no.

However, their opinions could be moot. Snohomish County has little power to keep commercial air service out of Paine Field.

In November 2005, a group appointed by Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon began meeting to discuss a document called the Mediated

Role Determination — a 1978 agreement between the county and citizen groups that, at the time, sought to limit aircraft usage at Paine Field.

Denver attorney Peter Kirsch, who consulted the group, said under the Federal Aviation Administration regulations any entity operating a public-use airport, such as Paine Field, has little power to prevent any air carrier from starting service there.

Kirsch also said the entity doesn't have to encourage it either.

So far, there has not been a lot of interest from airlines to fly out of Everett, but many believe commercial flights are just a matter of time.

Only time will tell whether or not citizens will be able to fly from Everett or if the community will be saved.