

the Courthouse Journal

WWW.WACOUNTIES.ORG

Washington Association of County Officials
Washington State Association of Counties

August 14, 2003
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**IMPORTANT
NOTICE:**

**WACO/WSAC
Counties
Scholarship
Challenge**

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Save the Date!

The Western District of the Washington State Association of Counties will meet November 7, 2003 from 9:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Fort Worden State Park Conference Center in Port Townsend, Jefferson County. Details will follow but for now, please mark your calendars and plan to attend this meeting.

Walla Walla County Wants You! Don't Miss the Fall WSAC Eastern District Meeting

The deadline for early registration for the Eastern District Meeting at The Marcus Whitman Hotel & Conference Center in Walla Walla, September 11 – 12, 2003 is near.

Cutoff for the **amazing room rate of \$55 per night** at the historic **Marcus Whitman Hotel** is August 20. The early registration fee **must** be received by August 27. If you have not already done so, please mail or fax your registration as soon as possible.

You will not want to miss this meeting focusing on key Eastern Washington issues, a "blow your socks off" wind energy farm tour, and dinner at Three Rivers Winery on Thursday.

The program begins with an Eastern District Business meeting and an agenda-free Roundtable Discussion on Thursday morning, September 11. Next, State Parks Director Rex Derr will discuss his vision for the future of state parks and gather Eastern Washington perspectives on that topic. State Senator Larry Sheahan will deliver the luncheon keynote address.

Two additional roundtable discussions are being arranged: one Thursday afternoon on the topics of watershed planning and salmon recovery and the other Friday morning on state agency land acquisition and maintenance. We are expecting Commissioner of Public Lands Doug Sutherland for the Friday roundtable, along with two members from the Fish and Wildlife Commission, State Representative Dave

Mastin, and a representative from the Washington Wildlife and Recreation.

Walla Walla County hosts have planned a spectacular field trip Thursday afternoon to the nation's largest wind energy farm, followed by wine-tasting and dinner at one of the county's premier wineries.

Please make your room reservations by calling the Marcus Whitman hotel at (509) 525-2200 or toll-free at (866) 826-9422 as soon as possible. Room rates are \$55 per night plus tax. Again, the cut-off for your guaranteed rate is August 20. Reservations after this date will be made on a space available basis. Please be sure to give the reservation desk our group name, Washington State Association of Counties, when making your reservation.

In order to receive the advance registration rate for the Fall Eastern District Meeting, the registration form **must** be faxed or postmarked by August 27. Registrations **after** August 27 will be charged the regular registration rate. If you have any questions please call Ginni Peppert at the Association office.

**SEE WACO/WSAC FALL
CONFERENCE INFORMATION
ON PAGE 2 OR AT
WWW.WACOUNTIES.ORG**

2nd Annual WACO/WSAC Fall Conference Registrations in the Mail and Online

The 2nd Annual WACO/WSAC Fall Conference will be held at the DoubleTree Inn at the Seattle Airport, September 30 – October 3. Conference registrations and draft agendas were mailed to all county officials this week. Please register and make room reservations as soon as possible to help facilitate our conference planning. We

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We welcome your suggestions and contributions. The weekly deadline is noon Wednesday.

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need to get a good idea of the number of attendees not only for this year, but to help with hotel contract negotiations in future years.

All information concerning the conference can be found at our website at www.wacounties.org. For the first time this year, those who wish to pay by credit card can do so online!

The Great Washington Counties Scholarship Challenge

Each year, the Washington Counties Scholarship Fund awards scholarships to deserving children of county employees. In order to ensure that this worthwhile endeavor continues, we need contributions each year to the scholarship fund. That's where you come in!! This year, WSAC and WACO are asking all of their members to make a donation, however big or small, to keep the scholarship tradition going strong.

WACO is again promoting an affiliate challenge to see which of its seven affiliate groups can come up with the most contributions to the scholarship fund, and WSAC is challenging all of its members and affiliate members to a little friendly competition, as well. We are hoping this will stimulate everyone's competitive instincts and encourage participation in this most important undertaking.

To that end, we are challenging all WACO and WSAC members to beat all previous year's cash donations to the Washington Counties Scholarship Fund. Remember, your child may be one of the five scholarship winners next year or in years ahead!

The challenge will run through noon on Thursday, October 2. During the

banquet that evening at the Annual Fall WACO/WSAC conference, we will announce the results. Stay tuned for more fun reminders!!!

WACO/WSAC Accepting Bids for Conferences

The Associations are currently accepting bids for the Annual Fall Conferences in 2006 and 2007. If you are interested in bringing the conference to your county, please call Chris Bridston at WACO, or Ginni Peppert at WSAC, to find out requirements for meeting space and accommodations. Even-year conferences are held on the eastside of the state and odd-year conferences on the westside.

The first week of October is the preferable date. Several bids for 2006 and 2007 have already been submitted. All bids will be reviewed by staff and the WACO and WSAC Boards. Those conference site bids that meet the requirements will be put to a vote at the annual conference, in October.

Budget, Finance and Taxes

King County Follows Up on Annexation Recommendations

King County is urging its cities to consider annexing urban areas within its urban growth boundaries. Two task forces have recently looked at the county's finances. Both found that the cost of continuing to provide municipal services (parks, police, or social services, etc) in urbanized or incorporated areas was a factor in the county's fiscal crisis. Some cities have responded to economic incentives in the current tax system and have avoided annexing urban residential areas. Of the county's total population of 1.7 million, about 200,000 live in unincorporated urbanized areas and only 134,000 live in rural areas.

Some cities have responded to the county's overtures by asking the county to fund capital improvements before the area would be annexed. Other cities have pointed out that with the slow economy they cannot consider taking on the new expenses. As the county continued work on its 2004 budget, it expects to cut about \$25 million per year for the foreseeable future.

Some Counties Discuss Use of Local Voter Approved Taxes

At least two counties are exploring ballot measures for this November. San Juan County is using the price of government approach to look at its budget. Its review of services and costs may result in a proposal to citizens to fund some services which cannot be purchased with current revenues.

In Pierce County, concern over rising crime rates and resulting increases in prosecutorial and judicial workloads is driving the discussion. During the legislative session, Pierce County and its cities advocated for increased local revenue powers so that they could raise money as a region. County Executive John Ladenburg, Prosecutor Gerry Horne and Sheriff Paul Pastor support sending a proposal to the voters to raise the sales tax county wide by 0.3%. They hope to have a proposal that will add 77 deputies in the county's unincorporated

areas, three more Superior Court Judges, 11 new prosecutors and 18 more corrections officers. In 2002, a four-year trend of declining crime rates came to an end in Pierce County. Violent crimes increased by 165 and property crimes rose 1.5%. Pierce County is asking its cities to commit to providing a specific number of new police officers with their share of the potential new sales tax. A County Council Committee will be meeting this week to discuss whether the ballot measure should be set at 0.2% or 0.3%.

A Different Kind of Senior Property Tax Exemption

A Referendum passed in Florida last November giving counties the option of offering residents tax breaks if they build new additions to house their aging parents or grandparents. The Referendum would allow counties to exclude the value of the new addition when assessing the property. Supporters of the measure see the tax cut as a way to provide affordable housing for the state's large population of seniors.

To date, only one of the 67 counties in Florida has passed the "granny flat" tax break. Although they have instituted the tax break, Leon County has administrative concerns and plans to reduce the possibility of fraud by conducting field reviews of purported granny flats.

LOCAL Program Advisory Group Gains Another Member

Whitman County Treasurer Bob Lothspeich has been named to the statewide advisory group for the Local Option Capital Asset Lending (LOCAL) program, State Treasurer Mike Murphy has announced. Lothspeich was appointed to serve on the committee by the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO).

The 13-member LOCAL Advisory Group was formed in April 1998, with 11 members appointed by associations and two members appointed by the State Treasurer. Lothspeich's term extends through February 2006. Other WACO

members on the advisory group are Lewis County Treasurer Rose Bowman, Douglas County Auditor Thad Duvall, Clallam County Treasurer Ruth Gerdon, Walla Walla County Treasurer Ken Osborne, and Spokane County Treasurer Linda Wolverson.

The LOCAL program, managed through the Office of the State Treasurer (OST), offers local governments a low-cost way to issue debt for equipment or real estate. The 1998 Legislature authorized local governments to participate in the lease-purchase program OST has operated for state agencies since 1991.

Financings through LOCAL are pooled into a certificate of participation (COP) and sold competitively in the national municipal bond marketplace. COPs issued through the program carry an Aa2 rating from Moody's Investors Service, which means attractive borrowing rates for LOCAL participants.

Generally, all municipalities with voter-approved bonds qualify automatically to participate in LOCAL. For financing not approved by voters, a municipality would need to complete a Credit Form to determine whether it qualifies. For more information, call Kristi Wolgamot at (360) 902-9020 or Sue Melvin at (360) 902-9022.

WACO Board Approves ESSB 5990 Distribution

The WACO Board of Trustees met last week in Olympia and approved a distribution formula for funds to assist county clerks in the collection of criminal offender legal financial obligations.

The legislature directed in Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5990 and the State's 2003/05 Biennial Operating Budget that \$1.8 million be provided to county clerks to assist their efforts to collect legal financial obligations of offenders who are no longer under the supervision of the Department of Corrections. It also directed that WACO approve an equitable formula that would distribute \$1 million in October of 2003 and an additional \$800,000 in fiscal year 2005. The formula was ultimately based on a county's percentage of the state's total criminal case completions and sentences over a five year period.

The county clerks are to be commended for their willingness to assume the additional responsibility for collections. ESSB 5990 also included a less popular provision that gave 50% goodtime and released non-violent offenders from state corrections facilities early.

Elections, Licensing and Recording

Secretary of State's Elections Director Takes King County Position

King County Executive Ron Sims has announced the appointment of Dean Logan as the Director of the King County Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division. Logan is currently the Director of Elections for the State of Washington, and has worked in this capacity in the Secretary of State's office for the past two years. As the State Elections Director, he oversees all federal, state and local elections.

"Dean has worked in county and state government for over 17 years in elections, recording, as an elected official, and as the State's highest election official," Sims said in making the announcement. "Dean has a demonstrated history of achievement, innovation, and collaboration," Sims added. "In his present position, he is familiar with our King County issues and aware of the challenges. He is exactly what King County needs to lead us forward in elections, recording and licensing."

Logan began his career with Kitsap County and served as Assistant Supervisor of Elections, Supervisor of Elections and Chief Deputy Auditor. His experience as Kitsap County's Chief Deputy Auditor exposed him to the breadth of duties he will find in the King County Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division. In 1998, he was appointed Kitsap County Clerk and subsequently elected to that office where he championed services for domestic violence victims and advocated and implemented electronic records systems.

Following statewide elections issues in 1992, Logan helped develop and manage Washington State's Certification and Training Program for county election officials. The purpose of the program is to ensure election integrity statewide.

"I believe very strongly that there is a great opportunity to make positive contributions in this position," said Logan. "Regaining public trust and confidence in King County elections and ensuring that all services are delivered

effectively and efficiently will be my top priorities."

Logan's start date of September 1 will allow him the opportunity to observe the September 16 Primary. Jim Buck, Interim Director of the Records, Elections and Licensing Services Division, will continue in that capacity through the September Primary Election and will provide necessary transition through the November General Election.

The elections office has had difficulties with the mailing of absentee ballots in two recent elections. After an exhaustive review, Sims implemented staffing changes and recommendations to manage the elections process more efficiently. A citizens' oversight committee has also been established to observe the elections process.

Candidate Filings for November 2003 Elections

*denotes incumbent

Adams County County Clerk

Paulette Gibler (R)
*Jadine Grams (R)

Clallam County Commission Dist 1

Sue Forde (R)
*Steve Tharinger (D)

Grays Harbor County Commission Dist 3

Jack L. Burtch (D)
*Al Carter (D)
Gayle Connor (D)
Roger Jump (D)

Jefferson County Commission Dist 3

Pat Rodgers (R)
Mark Rose (D)
Bob "Cougar" Garten (D)

Kittitas County Commission Dist 2

*Bruce Coe (R)
David Gerth (D)

King County Assessor

*Scott Noble (D)
Richard Pope (R)

County Council Dist 2
Bob Ferguson (D)
*Cynthia Sullivan (D)

County Council Dist 4
*Larry Phillips (D)

County Council Dist 6
*Rob McKenna (R)

County Council Dist 8
*Dow Constantine (D)
Michael Nelson (L)

County Council Dist 9
Phil Fortunato (R)
*Steve Hammond (R)
Barbara Heavey (D)
Pam Roach (R)

County Council Dist 10
*Larry Gossett (D)

County Council Dist 12
Brian Derdowski (D)
*David Irons, Jr. (R)

Lincoln County Commissioner

*Dennis Bly (R)
Fred Allington (R)

Pierce County

County Council Dist 6
*Paul Bocchi (R)
Richard "Dick" Muri (R)

Snohomish County Assessor

Kent Hanson (NP)
Cindy Portman (NP)
Stuart W. Stavig (NP)

Auditor

Jerry Goodloe
*Bob Terwilliger (NP)

Clerk

*Pam Daniels (NP)
Sandra Fitzpatrick

County Council Dist 2
*Kirke Sievers (D)

Elections, Licensing and Recording (continued)

County Council Dist 3

*Gary Nelson (R)
D.J. Wilson (D)

County Executive

Dave Earling (R)
Millie Judge (D)
Bob McCaughan (R)
Betty Neighbors (R)
Kevin Quigley (D)
Aaron Reardon (D)

Sheriff

*Rick Bart (NP)

Treasurer

*Bob Dantini (NP)

Whatcom County

Assessor

*Keith M. Willnauer (NP)

Auditor

*Shirley Forslof (NP)

County Council Dist 1

Kerry Chappel (NP)
Charles "Chuck" Lind (NP)
*Dan McShane (NP)

County Council Dist 2

*Sam Crawford (NP)
Mike Kaufman (NP)

County Council Dist 3

*Barbara Brenner (NP)

County Executive

*Pete Kremen (NP)

Sheriff

*Bill Elfo (NP)

Treasurer

*Barbara J. Cory (NP)

Environment, Land Use and Resources

SEPA Rule Changes Adopted

The Department of Ecology has amended the State Environmental Policy Act rules to make the rules consistent with the statute. When the SEPA rules were adopted in 1984, the "statutory exemptions" contained in RCW 43.21C

were included with the list of "categorical rule exemptions" in Part Nine of the SEPA rules. This has resulted in the "statutory exemptions" being subject to WAC provisions requiring SEPA review in certain instances. This inconsistency with statutory direction is therefore eliminated

with the rule amendment.

The rule amendments take effect On September 1, 2003.

More detail is available at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sepa/revision.htm>

General Government Issues

State Ready to Help with Rural Economic Development

State Senator Tim Sheldon and representatives from the Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of

Ecology met last week in Yakima with several county commissioners, county staff and Jim Lowery, Executive Director of the Rural Development Council. All attending this meeting of the WSAC Rural Issues Subcommittee agreed that the state can and should be more helpful with rural economic development efforts.

On several occasions, pens frantically scribbled on notepads writing down ideas to pursue and barriers to address. Subcommittee Vice-chair Perry Huston will be developing draft action plan for rural economic development based on the discussion at the meeting.

Association News

WACO Think Tank

On August 6, WACO members met in Olympia to discuss their input into the Tri-Association Package for the 2004 Legislature. There were members from each affiliate group represented and many great ideas. The gathering started with a brainstorming of ideas for proposed legislation. A discussion followed noting the pros and cons of each suggestion. The meeting concluded with each participant ranking the almost 25 suggestions, therefore making them recommendations.

The top 5 ideas were the only ones ranked with double-digit votes and include:

1. To stop the abuse of the Public Information Act. Members support the public's right to know how their government functions, but expressed concerns regarding protecting public employee information.
2. Many agreed the county should have parallel authority to collect a public utility tax. The cities currently have this authority, but counties do not. This creates a situation where one neighbor is paying (inside a city limit) and one neighbor is not (in the unincorporated county).
3. Members would like to see the state create a "statewide defense team" to defend counties with property tax, bankruptcy, and land use disputes.

Members felt individual counties continue to reinvent the wheel surrounding these subjects and defense is costly to many small counties.

4. Most also recommended that local law enforcement have the same authority as community correction officers when criminal activity is suspected among probationary felons. Again the thought was it would save counties time and money and give them a better ability to monitor criminal behavior of known offenders.
5. Agreement was also reached on the subject of jail costs. Members think if offenders have the ability to pay, they should be paying the cost involved with their incarceration. In some cases the offender can afford this expense better than the county who is paying them.

WACO will present these ideas to the Tri-Association for inclusion in the 2004 legislative package. In addition there were many efficiencies suggested that will be included.

Eight or nine written comments were received from members prior to this meeting. Those in attendance included: Dean Takko, Cowlitz County Assessor; Rena Hollis, Skamania County Clerk; Richard Lathim, Franklin County Sheriff; Dave Cook, Yakima County

Assessor; Jack Westerman, Jefferson County Assessor; Dan Blasdel, Franklin County Coroner; Greg Sandstrom, Kitsap County Coroner; Donna Eldridge, Jefferson County Auditor; Suzanne Sinclair, Island County Auditor; Tom Fallquist, Spokane County Clerk; Ron Strabbing, Grays Harbor County Treasurer; Mary Dodge, Douglas County Treasurer; Barbara Cory, Whatcom County Treasurer; Gary Edwards, Thurston County Sheriff; Betty Gould, Thurston County Clerk; Rose Bowman, Lewis County Treasurer, Kent Patten Sue Rohr, King County Sheriff's office; and WACO staff.

Training and Upcoming Events

Mark your Calendars for CPO 2003.....

2003 CPO Scheduled Courses

<u>September</u>	Ethical Dilemmas: Integrity as a Tool for Successful Public Officials (Full day Core course – 4 credits)	September 30, SeaTac
	Conducting and Managing Effective Meetings (Half day Elective course – 2 credits)	September 30, SeaTac
<u>October</u>	Making a Difference in County Communication: Speak and Write More Confidently (Full day Elective course – 4 credits)	October 30, Eastern WA Location TBD
<u>November</u>	Making a Difference in County Communication: Speak and Write More Confidently (Full day Elective course – 4 credits)	November 6, Western WA Location TBD

CPO Credit Update: Your CPO Transcripts have been updated with the 2003 course credits for all classes held to date. If you would like to check your credit totals, request your transcript. We have several county officials who will receive their CPO designation at the Joint Fall Conference. An awards ceremony is being planned for those who have completed the requirements. There is still time to complete your requirements. Those officials currently needing the Ethics class to complete their core requirements can register attend and receive their certification at the conference.

Early in September you will all receive a new training needs assessment. This assessment will be very important as we plan the 2004/2005 training calendar. Always, if you have suggestions or comments about the program, please share them with us.

<i>Training or Workshop</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Information</i>
SEPTEMBER 2003			
WAPA Special Assault Training Program	Leavenworth	September 3 - 5	(360) 753-2175
WAPA Juvenile Training Program	Leavenworth	September 7 - 9	(360) 753-2175
APRIL 2004			
WAPA Spring Training Program	Spokane	April 21-23	(360) 753-2175

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Brownfields 2003: Growing a Greener America, a national conference on cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated properties, takes place in Portland, Oregon October 27-29. It is considered the premier event for anyone interested in brownfields and economic revitalization of former industrial area. The conference also covers sustainable development, green building and more. To register, go to www.brownfields2003.org.

Nearly \$130 million in grants are available this year to states, communities and tribes for brownfields assessment, cleanup and redevelopment.

Courthouse Ramblings

We were sorry to learn that Skamania County Clerk Rena Hollis' father passed away this week, after suffering from a stroke on an Alaskan cruise ship. Our thoughts and prayers are with Rena and her family at this very difficult time.

* * * * *

Clallam County Sheriff Joe Hawe is leaving office as of October 1, citing personal reasons and a desire to spend more time with his family. Joe has been with the Clallam County Sheriff's department for 19 years, and has served as sheriff since 1991. He has also been a reserve special agent for the Coast Guard for 20 years and was called up for active duty in March because of the war in Iraq and increased homeland security. Joe will return from his Coast Guard assignment gathering intelligence about possible terrorism activities on Puget Sound, September 19. After October 1, Joe will head the new statewide program

to provide Internet mapping of school buildings, working for the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police chiefs, in Olympia. We wish Joe the best of luck in his new endeavor!

* * * * *

The new issue of *Washington Law and Politics* contains its annual list of Washington's best lawyers. Included on the list from the counties were Norm Maleng, King County Prosecutor; Seth Fine, Snohomish County Deputy Prosecutor (Criminal Appellate Unit); Pam Loginsky, Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys; and Tom Moser, former San Juan Prosecutor and former Skagit County Prosecutor, who is now in private practice.

* * * * *

Lewis County Commissioners received word that former County Commissioner Gary Ely passed away on August 13 at St. Peters Hospital. Gary served three

terms as Lewis County Commissioner from 1977-1988. Gary was an avid golfer and fisherman. He will be remembered for his sense of humor and easy going ways. A memorial service is scheduled for Saturday, August 16, at 3:00 p.m. at Immanuel Lutheran Church, 1209 Scheuber Road, Centralia, WA with a fellowship reception following at the St. Mary's Catholic Church, 225 N. Washington, Centralia, next to the Ely house.

Calendar of Events

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Information</i>
2003			
WCIP Board of Directors Rate Setting	Wyndham Gardens, SeaTac	August 21	(360) 586-0466
Washington State Association of County Assessors' Fall Conference	Red Lion, Kennewick	September 8 - 11	(360) 336-9370
County & Regional Planning Directors/City Planning Directors Joint Conference	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	September 9 - 12	www.geocities.com/wsacrpdc
WSAC Fall Eastern District Meeting	Marcus Whitman Center, Walla Walla	September 11 - 12	(360) 753-1886
Association of County Human Services (ACHS)	Moses Lake	September 17 - 19	(360) 786-5585
WCIF/WCIP Insurance Advisory Committee 2004 Renewal Meeting, WCIP and WCIF Board of Directors	WestCoast Hotel, SeaTac	September 18	(360) 586-0466
Washington Association of County Treasurers' Legislative Meeting	Summit Inn, Snoqualmie Pass	September 22 - 23	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Emergency Management Association (WSEMA) Fall Conference	Red Lion Hotel, Pasco	September 23 - 24	John Scheer at jscheer@co.franklin.wa.us
WACO/WSAC Joint Fall Conference	DoubleTree Hotel Seattle Airport	September 30 - October 3	(360) 753-7319
WCIF Board of Trustees	DoubleTree Hotel, SeaTac	October 1	(360) 586-0466
WCIF/WCIP A.C.E. Committee Meeting	Yakima	October 15	(360) 586-0466
L & I Retro Fall Meeting	TBD	October 16	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Fall Western District Meeting	Fort Worden State Park	November 7	(360) 753-1886
WASPC Fall Conference	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	November 17 - 20	(360) 486-2380
Association of County Human Services (ACHS)	Seattle	November 19 - 21	(360) 786-5585
2004			
WSAC Legislative Rally	Olympia	February 5	(360) 753-1886
NACo Legislative Conference	Hilton Washington & Towers, Washington, DC	February 27 - March 2	www.naco.org
WSAC Spring Eastern District Meeting	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	April 8 - 9	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Spring Western District Meeting	Heathman Lodge, Vancouver	April 22 - 23	(360) 753-1886
WASPC Spring Conference	Yakima Convention Center, Yakima	May 24 - 27	(360) 486-2380