

the Courthouse Journal

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*Washington Association of County Officials
Washington State Association of Counties*

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*Inside the
Courthouse Journal*

**Courts, Public Safety,
Law & Justice**
Pages 3

**Environment, Land Use
and Resources**
Pages 3-4

**General Government
Issues**
Page 4

**Public Health and
Human Services**
Pages 5-7

**Transportation &
Public Works**
Pages 8-9

Association News
Page 9

**Boards and
Commissions**
Page 9

**Training and Upcoming
Events**
Page 10

Courthouse Ramblings
Page 10

Calendar of Events
Pages 11-13

**New Name
Reflects
Expanded
Mission**

See Page 8

Hearings Held this Week on Presidential Primary, Blanket Primary and Electronic Voting Devices

County Auditors were in town this week to be present and testify at several hearings concerning elections issues. The hot topic on the list - canceling the 2004 Presidential Primary - was heard by both the House State Government Committee and the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee, in preparation for the Friday special legislative session, called specifically by Governor Locke, to cancel the scheduled March 2 Presidential Primary.

County Auditors testifying before the House State Government Committee included Karen Flynn, Kitsap County; Auditors' Association President Suzanne Sinclair, Island County; Vern Spatz, Grays Harbor County; and David Bowen, Kittitas County, all testifying in favor of **HB 2297**, which would cancel the 2004 election only. Points brought up during the hearing included: Cost of the presidential primary would be over \$6 million and serve little purpose because the state Democratic Party has decided it will allocate all of its delegates to the Democratic National Convention next year based only on the results of party caucuses. Republicans would allocate one-third of its delegates to the Republican National Convention based on the primary, with the other two-thirds coming from caucuses. Because the Democrats will choose their nominee on February 7, 2004, almost one month before the election, and because the Republican nominee will be George W. Bush, the results of a presidential primary will mean nothing. During one of the most serious economic downturns in state history, \$6 to \$7 million can be better used on other programs.

The Senate Government Operations and

Elections Committee heard the same information, but due to time constraints, none of the county auditors were called forward.

On Wednesday, Auditors' Association Legislative co-chairs Pat McCarthy, Pierce County and Kim Wyman, Thurston County, along with Karen Flynn, Kitsap County, spoke to the Senate Government Operations and Elections Committee about alternatives to the blanket primary. This will be one of the major issues to come before the 2004 legislature. Washington's popular 70-year old blanket primary was outlawed when the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals sided with the state's political parties a few months ago, saying it was unconstitutional. The state has since filed a petition asking the U.S. Supreme Court to review that decision. The House State Government Committee, held a work session on the subject as well.

Snohomish County Auditor Bob Terwilliger and State Elections Director Dave Elliott made a presentation before the House Technology, Telecommunications and Energy Committee, Wednesday, on the technology and privacy issues of internet and touch screen voting, more specifically the Direct Recording Electronic Voting Device (DRE) required under the new Federal Help America Vote Act (HAVA). Many legislators and the political parties are concerned that there is no paper trail with these devices and are looking at requiring voting machines to generate paper trail verification. Snohomish County has used DRE's for the past two years and Auditor Terwilliger demonstrated one of the touch screen machines for those interested in following the hearing.

BULLETIN – During a special session of the legislature today (Dec. 5), the 2004 Presidential Primary in this state is cancelled.



Preview of a Lively Legislative Session

As the Courthouse Journal goes to press, the Legislature is convening in Special Session to eliminate this year's presidential primary for Washington. Despite the importance of this issue, the hill was also buzzing with talk of other issues including:

Election of New Leaders in the Senate Republican Caucus: Senator Bill Finkbeiner was elected to replace Senator Jim West as Majority Leader. Senator West was elected Mayor of Spokane in November. Senator Luke Esser will serve as Floor Leader. Speculation continues over whether Senator Dino Rossi will resign to spend full time running for Governor and avoid the fund raising ban imposed on Legislators during the Legislative session.

House State Government Hears County and City Finance Issues: The House State Government Chair, Representative Sandra Romero, held a hearing on local government finance. Counties were represented by WSAC, Clark and King Counties. Legislators were told that most county governments face endless rounds of budget cutting, despite an economic recovery. Some of the problems discussed included county reliance on property tax, jail over

crowding, rising criminal justice costs, and the failure of GMA to provide an incentive for cities to annex residential as well as commercial areas. Legislators were reminded that a number of counties face financial disaster if the Legislature does not renew funding for small counties this year. The hearing was recorded by TVW and is available on their website at www.tvw.org

GMA Back on the Burner: There is a growing realization by all Legislators and the Governor that the core unfinished business of GMA is financing – especially for counties. See the article in the Environment, Land Use and Resources section of the Courthouse Journal.

Supplemental Budget: All legislators have been told in no uncertain terms by their leadership that the budget is tight and there is no room for election year items in the operating budget. That said there will be a supplemental budget to deal with a number of mandatory spending items from school transportation to forest fires. WSAC and WACO will be there to push county funding priorities and defend existing funding.

The Courthouse Journal

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

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NOTE: Legislative Committee schedules and agendas can be found at <http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm>

Courts, Public Safety, Law & Justice

Forensic Investigations Council Adopts Rules

Washington Administrative Codes governing the disbursement of funds to assist counties in the investigation of multiple deaths or from catastrophic circumstances took effect this week after adoption by the Forensic Investigations Council in late October. Adoption of the rules is the final step in implementing legislation most hoped would never be used in Washington State.

In 1999 the legislature approved House Bill 1069 that authorized the Council to expend funds from the Death Investigations Account to provide direct assistance to local jurisdictions "in the investigation of multiple deaths involving unanticipated, extraordinary, and catastrophic events, or involving multiple jurisdictions." The intent of the bill was to provide immediate assistance to counties when they encounter demands they could not have reasonably have planned to handle.

Wahkiakum County Prosecutor Fred Johnson chairs the twelve-member Council that is made up of county and city legislative authorities, the chief of the Washington State Patrol, a private forensic pathologist and representatives of sheriffs, police chiefs, prosecuting attorneys, coroners and medical examiners.

Environment, Land Use and Resources

Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003

Date: December 3, 2003

President Bush signed the Healthy Forests Restoration Act of 2003 today. This law represents the most significant change in the management of federal forest lands in the last 25 years. The act will enable the US Forest Service and the BLM to address the severe forest health problems of the great western forests and potentially reduce the repeated occurrence of massive wildfires experienced in the western states in the last decade.

H.R.1904 Title: An act to improve the capacity of the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of the Interior to conduct hazardous fuels reduction projects on National Forest System lands and Bureau of Land Management lands aimed at protecting communities, watersheds, and certain other at-risk lands from catastrophic wildfire, to enhance efforts to protect watersheds and address threats to forest and rangeland health, including catastrophic wildfire, across the landscape, and for other purposes.

Sponsor: Rep McInnis, Scott [CO-3] (introduced 5/1/2003)

Cosponsors: 137

Related Bills: H.RES.239, H.RES.457

Latest Major Action: 12/2/2003

Presented to President.

The conference report and the text of the bill can be reviewed at the following web address:

http://www.house.gov/rules/health_forest_cr.pdf

A CNN report on the presidents signing of the act is available at the following web address:

<http://www.cnn.com/2003/ALLPOLITICS/12/03/forests.initiative.ap/index.html>

Growth Management Negotiations Continue

It is down to crunch time for the negotiations on growth Management. We are making significant progress as we approach our deadline. The next, and last meeting, will be December 18. There are tentative agreements on: providing flexibility within agricultural lands of long term significance; flexibility in the sequencing for planning and developing industrial land banks; flexibility in redeveloping limited areas of more intense rural development; and providing direction to the growth boards to review and update many of their operating rules and procedures. We are still working on a potential revised update schedule and best available science provisions.

Over the next couple of weeks, WSAC staff will be sending out draft bill language for you and your staff to review and comment on. Thank you for the comments and help that you and your staff have provided up to this point.

Water Storage Proposals Sought

The Department of Ecology's Water Resources Program is requesting submission of proposals for grants for the development of plans, engineering and financing reports, acquiring land and facilities, and other preconstruction activities associated with the development of water storage and groundwater storage and recovery projects. The purpose of providing this funding is to identify and investigate water storage projects that would help provide solutions for reliable water supplies and instream flows, and to resolve conflicts among competing water uses. The funding of preconstruction activities associated with surface and underground water storage projects is authorized in section 316(1) (c) of the state capital budget.

Even if projects are not ready to receive funding in the current biennium, we are still interested in learning about potential storage projects that have been identified in order to help inform future capital budget funding decisions. So if

Environment, Land Use and Resources (continued)

your organization is considering or knows of one or more storage proposals, we would appreciate it if you or another responsible person would provide the information in the attached form.

Priority for the use of available funds will be given to projects that have been identified for early action through watershed plans, comprehensive irrigation district management plans, or other similar plans, or to projects that are part of an approved habitat conservation plan, or other intergovernmental agreement or to joint projects with federal entities. Projects may precede completion of comprehensive watershed plans if resolution of conflicting water uses is needed and the actions are compatible with the long-term planning effort.

Proposals must be provided in electronic format using a project proposal form developed by Ecology. To obtain that form, and to pursue questions about this proposal, please contact Dave Burdick at (360 407-6094) or dbur461@ecy.wa.gov. Please note that a similar but separate solicitation has been made provided for water conveyance project proposals.

The deadline for submitting proposals is January 9, 2004. Ecology may be making funding decisions as soon as the end of January.

Ecology Outlines Phase I and Phase II Stormwater Proposal

At the closing meeting of advisory

committees assisting the Department of Ecology in developing permit requirements for the NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System) municipal stormwater program, Ecology staff informally indicated its intent to develop separate Eastern Washington and Western Washington permits by the end of 2004. The Department indicated to the Westside Stormwater Group that it generally plans to adhere to the minimum federal requirements listed by EPA, but that it will probably require greater geographic coverage to ensure equity within cities and urban growth areas otherwise only partially covered by the NPDES requirement, and that it will require permits for some discharges to groundwater.

Ecology is expected to formally announce its direction by the end of December in a report to the Legislature. The full recommendation will be summarized and sent to all affected counties at that time.

Senate Land Use Committee Holds Work Session on GMA

The committee held a work session on best available science (BAS) and the Governor's response to his partial veto of the GMA provisions in the local options revenue bill from last session.

The business community and local governments expressed their concern about trying to find the perfect science to meet local conditions. The cities are concerned the only science that is available to protect fish is for the forested environment and not an urban

environment. Both cities and counties asked for a better definition of what "best" means and the flexibility for local conditions. Concerns were also expressed about the growth management hearing boards being able to substitute their judgment instead. The recent Court of Appeals decision for Island County entitles the board to disagree with the county regarding the content of BAS.

The Governor's Office summarized their visits with rural local governments this summer and fall about GMA. They indicated their willingness to work on the following issues: flexibility within the existing limited areas of more intense rural development; flexibility on what activities can occur on agricultural lands of long term significance; flexibility in the process to designate industrial land banks; an openness to a revised update schedule; an openness to look at how the boards operate; and appointing a committee to review the financial consequences to counties from the GMA. There is a growing realization from the Governor's Office and some members of the Legislature that GMA has significantly impacted the ability of counties to finance their operations. The committee thanked the Governor's office for visiting with the rural local governments and taking their concerns into consideration.

General Government Issues

Thurston and Yakima Counties Top in Job Growth

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) just produced county-by-county local employment and wage trends in the nation's 315 largest counties. Two Washington Counties made the top ten

list for job growth from March 2002-03. They are Thurston County with 4.10% change and Yakima County with 3.60% change over the same period the previous year. The National average was -0.30%. While these counties may boast great job growth, no Washington Counties made the top ten list in the BLS

survey ranking counties by average wage and average wage growth.

Other Washington Counties researched by the BLS included Clark at 1.6%, King -1%, Kitsap 2.1%, Pierce 2.4%, Snohomish 1%, Spokane 1.4%.

Mentally Ill Losing Care: Spokane County Must Drop Hundreds of Patients by Jan. 1, 2004

By - Benjamin Shors (Published in the Spokesman-Review on November 23, 2003)

One day in 1986, in the throes of a psychotic fantasy, an advertising salesman named Tom Reber drove his Porsche 912 through the glass doors of a Seattle television station, hoping to kill himself and bring glory to God. He failed. Onlookers tackled him, police arrested him, and Reber spent six weeks in a psychiatric ward. "I thought I was supposed to announce the Second Coming," said Reber, sitting in his small apartment in Spokane this week.

For the past decade, Reber managed to stabilize himself with frequent visits to psychiatrists and a catalog of closely regulated drugs to control his psychoses and depression. "Medication is my link," said Reber, 50. "It's what keeps me stable." In December, Reber and hundreds of poor and elderly people in Spokane County will be dropped from a mental health system that served them for years or, in some cases, decades.

In an attempt to control rising Medicaid costs, the federal government has cracked down on people who aren't enrolled in Medicaid but receive treatment from the state-federal insurance program. Some meet the income restrictions, but refuse or are unable to fill out government paperwork. Others make too much money on disability to be eligible but can't afford other mental health coverage. The income limit for a single person is slightly more than \$1,000 a month. As many as 900 mentally ill people, primarily poor and elderly, will lose coverage by Jan. 1. That's about one-third of the county's caseload. They elude easy stereotypes. Some have threatened the lives of others and have had repeated encounters with police. Others are passive, and the only threat they pose is to themselves. Some are college-educated. Others struggle to fill out simple forms.

The announcement in late October sent shivers through the mental health community and its clients. Dr. Matt Layton, chief psychiatrist at Spokane Mental Health, said two patients attempted to kill themselves after learning of the situation. "These are patients who have been very, very ill," Layton said. "It's just the beginning of what we're afraid is going to happen."

The Human Toll

Last year, the Bush administration ordered enforcement of a federal law requiring mental health systems to serve only those enrolled in Medicaid. Many other Washington counties had already weaned their non-Medicaid clients from the mental health program. But Spokane County, with few other resources available to clients, continued to serve the population for years. Idaho, too, serves the non-Medicaid population but only on an emergency basis, and its spending is dwarfed by Washington's. Last year, Idaho spent \$16million on adult mental health -- about half Spokane County's budget for mental health programs. Spokane County imposed the Jan. 1 deadline because the federal government will audit the state's Medicaid system next year. If the county lists non-Medicaid clients in its enrollment, it will lose funding for those clients, about \$6million a year or 17percent of its budget. "The feds are essentially saying we don't want to pay for people who aren't in our program," said Steve Norsen, Washington's interim chief of mental health services. "It's not an unreasonable position."

The county's dilemma highlights a national problem: Who pays for those people who don't qualify for Medicaid but can't afford insurance or medications? Washington State relies heavily on Medicaid. It pays for 90percent of the state's public outpatient mental health costs. Even though Spokane County's regional support network, which coordinates mental health services, will serve fewer people this year, its budget has not shrunk. In fact, it grew 19percent to about \$35million this year, drawn from state,

federal and local sources. After the changes, the county will simply spend more per person on its Medicaid clients. Much of that will benefit children's mental health services, said Kasey Kramer, the county's head of community services. Like other Washington counties, Spokane will set aside a small amount of money -- about \$750,000 -- to treat non-Medicaid clients in emergency situations.

Kramer acknowledged the decision will weaken the county's mental health safety net but said the federal rules are clear. "When you look into the eyes of the people who are affected, it's very tough," Kramer said. "That's the human toll." Advocates say the clients will increasingly surface in local jails, emergency rooms and at the state psychiatric hospital, all at a cost to taxpayers.

There are already signs that the state's mental health system is falling apart at the seams. In Spokane County alone:

- One-third of the people in jail are mentally ill, according to county officials. In the past five years, the jail's prescription drug costs rose from \$100,000 a year to \$500,000.
- In an average month, the county pays \$36,000 in fines for sending more than its share of patients to Eastern State Hospital. In three years, the county racked up \$1.5million in fines. In the 1990s, the rate of hospitalizations climbed steadily, even as the number of psychiatric beds declined.
- Advocates for the homeless say one-third of their clients suffer from some form of mental illness.
- Each year, about 60 people kill themselves in Spokane County, a rate 24percent higher than the national average.

It Hurts Society

Ellen Prine, 61, of Spokane, worked as a psychiatric nurse in Oregon and Washington before she was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. The illness threw her into psychotic episodes, and she made several attempts to kill herself.

Public Health and Human Services (continued)

Once, instructed by voices, Prine walked out of a motor home traveling 60 mph down Interstate 84. She survived relatively uninjured. Prine stayed at Eastern State Hospital several different times. Once, she believed she was a spy with sensitive information. Fearing she'd disclose it, Prine attempted to kill herself, using a ballpoint pen to rip the veins in her wrists. She bled slowly, and her roommate found her. "I only tell you this because there are so many people struggling like this," Prine said. "This is the way we live. This isn't just a selfish thing. When we don't do enough for our mentally ill, it hurts society." Tim, a 49-year-old Spokane man who asked that his last name not be used, tried to kill himself three times. He's been hospitalized and relies on medication and counseling to survive.

The state covers his medication, but not his counseling. Four months ago, the state Department of Social and Health Services terminated his medical coupon, arguing that he is not ill enough to qualify. So he is unable to afford new glasses or dentures. Medicaid officials have repeatedly turned him down; a decision Tim has been appealing since 1999. He receives \$339 a month from the state to live on, plus \$149 in food stamps. He pays \$54 in rent for a subsidized apartment and relies on buses -- whose services may be scaled back in an unrelated cut -- for transportation. "You have to be really careful about managing your money," he said. Last winter, Tim spiraled into depression and anxiety. He locked himself in his apartment for weeks, scared to leave. "When I ran out of food, I'd have to go to the store," he said. "It would take me a day to psych myself up. I said, 'I can do this.' I got dressed and went early in the morning, before anyone else was there."

A Daily Reminder

Many have taken novel approaches to try to qualify for Medicaid. John Schumacher, a 55-year-old with severe depression, must liquidate most of his savings, about \$5,000, to meet Medicaid restrictions. He plans to buy a sports car so he can qualify. Schumacher said he has little need for the car. And on his

\$742-a-month budget, he can't afford to drive it much. "It doesn't make any sense," said Schumacher, who has a master's degree in counseling. "But they set these certain limits and you have to meet them." Others will not qualify. Tom Reber remains unsure.

Last week, he chased down several dead ends. His general practitioner said she was unqualified to oversee his regimen of psychotropics and anti-depressants. He takes 13 pills a day and visits a counselor twice a month.

Reber's medications, which he's been getting free from Spokane Mental Health, cost more than he receives from federal disability payments. His prescription for Depakote, a mood stabilizer, would cost \$600 a month -- about half his budget. He has progressed well under a psychiatrist's care, and now serves on a community mental health advisory board. He has a slight palsy in his hands from the medication, but no other outward signs of illness.

Reber lives in a small apartment with his cat. A single mattress lies on the floor of his bedroom. On his fridge, he hung a picture of the author Virginia Woolf, who filled her pockets with stones and drowned herself in the river Ouse. She is a daily reminder, he said, of what could happen to him. He still suffers from mood swings and depression. He wrote a book on his experiences, paid to have 45 copies published and threw them away several months later, disgusted by his writing. Each day, he vows not to kill himself. "I think about death a lot," he said. "I dwell on it. The natural end point is suicidal thinking. But I try to reason my way out of it. I don't want that to be my legacy."

Workin' Against Me

At the Evergreen Club, a day-treatment center for the mentally ill in east Spokane, the coffee talk has centered on the cuts. About 40 of the 180 members may lose coverage. Ed Geter, a 47-year-old with schizophrenia, has been confused and terrified by the changes. He draws too much from federal disability to qualify for Medicaid. But he can't afford his own insurance.

He's relied on Spokane Mental Health for his counseling and medication. Friendly but shy, he talks openly about his mental illness. Geter "entered the system" -- slang for the first interaction with mental health treatment -- in Spokane in the 1990s. He was arrested for assault and evading police -- but says he remembers nothing of the incident. Police just showed up at his door one morning. A judge found him innocent by reason of insanity and sent him to Eastern State Hospital. For years, he believes, two men have been using his name, his Social Security number, even his appearance to perpetrate crimes. Most of it is little stuff, minor assaults; running from police. The men have haunted him since he was a teenager, he said, trailing him from the cotton fields of Arkansas to the streets of east Spokane, committing crimes with impunity and laying the blame on him. "I'm still nervous," said Geter, who talks with a soft Southern twang. "I never hurt nobody. I must be a twin or a triplet, I don't know. They work together. Seems like they workin' against me. Seems like they work with the police. Put my name in the dirt." He said the men have laid low since he was released from the state hospital in 2000. He hopes, at last, they are gone.

\$10 Recording Fee for Affordable Housing Goes Into Effect

Just a reminder that effective June 13, 2002, **SHB 1060**, relating to the \$10 recording fee went into effect. This means that an additional \$10 is to be collected for each document recorded in each county. The 39 county auditors determined that certain documents would be exempt from the \$10 surcharge. These include:

- *No fee documents
- *Marriage records
- *Assignments of Deeds of Trust
- *Substitutions of Trustee
- *Appointments of Trustee
- *Resignations and Appointments of Trustee
- *Request for exemption from public disclosure of discharge papers

Public Health and Human Services (continued)

As enacted, **SHB 2060** calls for up to five percent of the revenue collected to be retained by the auditor for fund administration. Of the remaining funds, forty percent of the revenue generated will be transmitted monthly to the state treasurer who will deposit the funds into the Washington State Housing Trust Fund account.

Sixty percent of the revenue generated will be retained by the county and be deposited into a fund that must be used by the county and its cities and towns for housing projects or units within housing projects that are affordable to very low-income persons with incomes at or below fifty percent of the area median income. The funds shall be used according to an interlocal agreement between the county and the cities within the county, consistent with countywide and local housing needs and policies. There is nothing in the bill that discusses the outcome when a city chooses not to sign an interlocal agreement or requires all the cities within a county to sign. The funds may be used for acquisition, construction, or rehabilitation of housing projects or units within housing projects. They may also be used for supporting building operation and maintenance costs of projects or units within projects

built with Housing Trust Funds for those with income at or below 50% of the area median income. In addition, they may be used for rental assistance vouchers for housing projects or units within housing projects for the very low-income, to be administered by a local public housing authority or other local organization that has an existing rental assistance voucher program consistent with section 8 standards and finally, they can be used for operating costs for emergency shelters and licensed overnight youth shelters.

The Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development will develop guidelines for the use of the 40% of funds to support building operation and maintenance costs of housing projects and units within housing projects that are affordable to extremely low-income persons with incomes at or below 30% of the area median income.

The funds from the \$10 surcharge are not to be used for construction of new housing if at any time the vacancy rate for available low-income housing within the county rises above ten percent. Washington State University's Real Estate Research Center will be

developing a vacancy rate standard for low-income housing in the state.

Member organizations of the Washington State Coalition for the Homeless and CTED's Housing Division have offered whatever assistance they can provide in encouraging these funds to be used. They are more than willing to assist in providing the names of groups in every area that might be included in planning for the use of the new funds. The Coalition's website is www.endhomelessnesswa.org. Included on the site are contacts for interested agencies such as community action agencies, housing authorities, service organizations, tribal affiliates, federal contacts, and others in your local communities. Both the Coalition and WSAC have several copies of interlocal agreements as examples which any county or city is free to receive. The Coalition can also be reached in Tacoma at 253-572-4237. Corine Knudsen of CTED is also available to provide assistance. She can be reached at 360-725-2931.

Transportation and Public Works

Make History by Receiving the *First Preserve America* Presidential Award

With the January 15, 2004, deadline to apply for the new *Preserve America* Presidential Award rapidly approaching, outstanding historic preservation accomplishments have an unprecedented opportunity to receive national recognition at the highest level. President and Mrs. Bush will recognize award recipients at an annual event.

Nomination forms must be received by January 15, 2004, and are available at www.PreserveAmerica.gov or by e-mail request to Paawards@achp.gov. Awards will be announced during National Historic Preservation Week, May 3 through May 9, 2004.

Each year, President and Mrs. Bush will give four *Preserve America* Presidential Awards – two for projects that advance heritage tourism and two for exemplary privately funded historic preservation projects or programs.

Presidential Awards will honor organizations, businesses, government entities, and individuals for:

- Exemplary accomplishments in the sustainable use and preservation of cultural or natural heritage assets;
- Demonstrated commitment to the protection and interpretation of America's cultural or natural heritage assets, and the integration of these assets into contemporary community life; and
- Innovative, creative, and responsible approaches to showcasing historic resources in their communities.

The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, in partnership with the National Park Service, is administering the awards program on behalf of the White House. Complete information and the nomination form can be found at www.PreserveAmerica.gov. Don't miss this opportunity to make history and gain the national recognition your historic preservation project deserves

Applications for *Preserve America* Community Designation Sought

The first applications for the new *Preserve America* Community Designations are arriving, but there is still time to be among the first communities to receive this special White House honor that recognizes communities that are leaders in building the future on the strong foundation of their heritage.

Communities are urged to apply as soon as possible for the first round of designations, as announcements are expected to begin soon.

Preserve America Community Designation will be granted on a continuing basis. These designations will go to communities that meet three general criteria:

- The community has recently supported a historic or cultural preservation project that promotes heritage tourism or otherwise fosters economic vitality, and involves a public-private partnership between government entities and at least one civic association, non-profit, and/or business enterprise.
- The governing body of the community has adopted a resolution indicating its commitment to the preservation of its heritage assets.
- The community meets at least five criteria specified in three broad categories: discovering heritage through historic places, protecting historic resources, and promoting historic assets.

Detailed information on *Preserve America* and the community designation application form can be found at www.PreserveAmerica.gov or by calling 202-606-8584. E-mail questions can be directed to PAcommunities@achp.gov.

Preserve America, a White House initiative developed in cooperation with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the U.S. Department of

Commerce, highlights the efforts of the President and Mrs. Bush to preserve our national heritage.

I-776 Initiates a Discussion to Increase the Gas Tax to Fill the Whole

The state's 28-cents-a-gallon gas tax needs to be hiked by a penny or two to fill a new hole in the state transportation and State Patrol budgets, a key legislator said. State Rep. Ed Murray, a Seattle Democrat and chairman of the House Transportation Committee, says Initiative 776 is to blame. Tim Eyman's latest initiative added 2-ton, 3-ton and 4-ton trucks to the list of cars subject to a flat \$30 car tab fee, instead of \$37, \$44 and \$55 fees, respectively. When the state Supreme Court upheld I-776 on Oct. 30, the decision formally cut \$199.6 million over 10 years from highway, ferry and State Patrol budgets. "We are once again moving backward," Murray said. The state Transportation Commission is scheduled to see a list of proposed project cuts next month. The state Legislature approved a 5-cent increase in the state's gas tax this spring, as well as weight and other fees, to create \$4.15 billion in funding and projects. Murray said he wants to broach the subject of an additional gas tax increase now. "I think it's time to start discussing this," he said. "The last one took 13 years."

Senate Highways Committee Holds a Work Session of Levels of Service and Concurrency

The Department of Transportation provided an excellent overview of how levels of service (LOS) are set by the state and local governments. They also provided a great description of how the GMA concurrency requirements are supposed to work. The Puget Sound Regional Council and Thurston County Regional Council provided examples of how regional coordination and project selection work. Then the fun began. The Chair asked each speaker to answer how a local government develops and implements a solution when a part of the

Transportation and Public Works (continued)

system is failing. Both local government associations explained to them that LOS and concurrency are tools to help with system management and design. The problem we face is how to finance the improvements. One Senator suggested that local governments impose

moratoriums if the system improvements can't be made. Their also was a suggestion that State take back the responsibility for LOS and concurrency for approaches, intersections and onramps with state highways. The committee expressed an interest to keep

learning more about LOS and concurrency.

Association News

New Name Reflects Expanded Mission

Washington State University Cooperative Extension now has a new name to go with its expanded mission. It now is Washington State University Extension.

Extension work has been part of the university's mission since 1913. It operates non-credit educational programs for adults and youth in all 39 Washington counties. Mike Tate, extension dean, said the word cooperative was dropped to reflect the university's expanded commitment to outreach.

The word cooperative has long been

part of extension's name. "It signified the federal, state and county partnership that historically has provided the foundation of our public funding," Tate said.

"While we continue to rely on these three partners for funding, over time we have expanded our partnership definition to include other educational institutions. At the University of Washington, for example, we share a commitment to fund an extension position in the College of Forest Resources. We also share funding for one and soon two extension faculties in the Washington Sea Grant Program, which is based at the UW."

Tate said, "WSU's 10 learning centers, which have helped increase access to higher education for place-bound adults, are a joint venture linking extension with

several of the state's community colleges".

"We also partner with four community colleges in the Partnership for Rural Improvement," he said. PRI is a consortium of educational institutions, government agencies and citizens based at Washington State University that act as a catalyst for community development.

"The new name more accurately reflects extension's evolving and expanding mission to serve life-long learning and economic development needs of Washington State," Tate said.

Boards and Commissions

New Appointment to Growth Management Hearings Board

Governor Gary Locke today announced the appointment of Bruce Laing of Bellevue to the Central Puget Sound Growth Management Hearings Board.

Laing will serve on the board for a term ending June 30, 2006. He is currently a self-employed planning and government relations consultant. He previously served as a King County Councilman for 16 years and as the chief zoning and subdivision hearing examiner for the county.

Laing has also been an executive

board member on the Puget Sound Regional Council and a councilmember for the Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (METRO). He received his master's degree from the University of Washington and his bachelor of arts from Seattle University.

Training and Upcoming Events

<i>Training or Workshop</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Information</i>
JANUARY 2004			
WCRP Training Liability re: Pre-Trial Release & Post-Conviction Community Supervision	Skamania Lodge, Stevenson	January 20 - 22	(360) 586-7447
APRIL 2004			
WAPA Spring Training Program	Spokane	April 21-23	(360) 753-2175
JULY 2004			
WCRP Summer Conference	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	July 20 - 22	(360) 586-7447
WCRP Risk Managers Training	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	July 20	(360) 586-7447
WCRP Board of Directors Workshop	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	July 21	(360) 586-7447
WCRP Annual Board Meeting	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	July 22	(360) 586-7447

Courthouse Ramblings

Secretary of State Sam Reed has promoted David Elliott to the permanent position of Director of Elections. Elliott has been acting director since his predecessor, Dean Logan, took the top

elections job in King County, in August. Elliott began his career in elections in 1984 when Reed was Thurston County Auditor. He then moved on to the Secretary of State's office under former

Secretary Ralph Munro in 1990 and has served many years as Assistant Director of Elections.

Calendar of Events

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Information</i>
2003			
EMC Task Force	WCB, Olympia	December 11	(360) 753-1886
Christmas Day	WACO/WSAC offices Closed	December 25	
2004			
New Years Day	WACO/WSAC offices Closed	January 1	
Washington State Association of County Treasurers' Legislative Meeting	Olympia	January 26-27	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Association of County Assessors	Olympia	February 3 - 5	(360) 753-7319
WSAC Legislative Rally	Olympia	February 5	(360) 753-1886
NACo Legislative Conference	Hilton Washington & Towers, Washington, DC	February 27 - March 2	www.naco.org
Washington State Association of County Auditors Recording Conference	Sun Mountain	March 16 - 18	(360) 753-7319
WSAC Spring Eastern District Meeting	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	April 8 - 9	(360) 753-1886
WCRP Risk Managers Roundtable	Icicle Inn, Leavenworth	April 14	Kitty at (360) 586-7447
WCRP Spring Board Meeting	Icicle Inn, Leavenworth	April 15	Kitty at (360) 586-7447
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
Washington State Association of County Auditors' Annual Conference	Lakeway Inn, Bellingham, Whatcom Co	June 16 - 18	(360) 753-7319
National Sheriffs' Association	Seattle	June 26 - 30	www.sheriffs.org
County Clerk's Association 2004 Summer Conference	North Bonneville Hot Springs Resort, Skamania	June 22 - 25	(360) 753-7319
County Treasurer's Association 2004 Summer Conference	Heathman Lodge, Vancouver	June 22 - 25	(360) 753-7319
WSAC 98 th Annual Summer Convention	Pierce County, Sheraton, Tacoma	June 22 - 25	(360) 753-1886
WAPA Summer Conference	Chelan	June 23 - 25	(360) 753-2175
NACo Annual Conference	Maricopa County, Phoenix, AZ	July 16 - 20	www.naco.org
WCRP Annual Board Meeting	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	July 22	Kitty @ WCRP (360) 586-7447
WSACRPD/City Planning Directors Joint Conference	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	September 14 - 17	www.geocities.com/wsaacrpnd

Calendar of Events (continued)

WACO/WSAC Joint Fall Conference	Spokane	October 4 - 8	(360) 753-7319
WASPC Fall Conference	Shilo Inn, Ocean Shores	November 15 - 18	(360) 486-2380
2005			
NACo Legislative Conference	Marriot Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, DC	March 3 - 4	www.naco.org
WASPC Spring Conference	WestCoast Wenatchee Center Hotel, Wenatchee	May 23 - 26	(360) 486-2380
WSAC 99 th Annual Summer Convention	WestCoast Hotel at Columbia Center, Kennewick	June 13 - 16	(360) 753-1886
WAPA Summer Conference	Chelan	June 22 - 24	(360) 753-2175
NACo Annual Conference (City & County of Hawaii)	Honolulu, HI	July 15 - 19	www.naco.org
County & Regional Planning Directors/City Planning Directors Joint Conference	Campbell's Resort, Chelan	September 13 - 16	www.geocities.com/wsacrp
WACO/WSAC Joint Fall Conference	Ocean Shores	October 3 - 7	(360) 753-7319
2006			
WSAC 100 th Annual Summer Convention	Whatcom County, Bellingham	June / TBD	(360) 753-1886
NACo Annual Conference	Denver, CO	July 21 - 26	www.naco.org
2007			
NACo Annual Conference (Sponsored by the counties in the Metropolitan Richmond Area)	Richmond, VA	TBD	www.naco.org

Calendar of Events (continued)

December 2003 County Calendar

- 1 Property taxes not paid to county treasurer by this date are subject to an additional penalty of 8% on the total amount of the tax delinquent. RCW 84.56.020
- 1 County assessors to begin preliminary work for assessing property. RCW 84.40.040
- 1 Alternate date for budget hearing. County legislative authority may meet for purpose of holding a budget hearing. RCW 36.40.071
- 9 Election date for irrigation district directors. RCW 87.03.080
- 25 Christmas Day. RCW 1.16.050
- 31 The county prosecuting attorney shall make an annual report to the Governor. RCW 36.27.020(12)
- 31 The county prosecuting attorney shall report to the State Liquor Control Board all state liquor law prosecutions during the calendar year. RCW 36.27.020(13)
- 31 Last day to apply for January 1 (coming year) open space classification on qualifying properties. RCW 84.34.030
- 31 By this date, applications for classification as eligible historic property shall be approved or denied by the local review board. If the property qualifies as eligible historic property, the review board shall certify this fact, in writing, to the county assessor within 10 days. The county assessor shall record these certificates with the county auditor. RCW 84.26.050, .060
- 31 By this date, every special purpose district shall file a statement with the auditor of each county in which it lies including the following information: name of special purpose district; location; statutes under which it operates; name, address, telephone number and remaining term of office of each member of its governing authority; and the functions that the district is presently performing. RCW 36.96.090(1) NOTE: This information shall be forwarded by the county auditor to the State Auditor by January 31. RCW 36.96.090(2)
- 31 On or before this date, the Department of Revenue sets stumpage values for January through June (of coming year). RCW 84.33.091
- 31 By this date, the county treasurer shall designate one or more financial institutions in the state which are qualified public depositories as set forth by the public deposit protection commission as depositories for public funds. RCW 36.48.010