

the Courthouse Journal

W A C O U N T I E S . O R G

January 22, 2010

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

Renewal of Meth Pilot Counties

This pilot really works! The attached factsheet is one used this week by Grays Harbor County Sheriff Mike Whelan and Pacific County Sheriff John Didion when they met with several legislators this week in Olympia. The other eleven counties who were part of the pilot are waging a huge campaign from the homefront. The renewal of the 6239 monies is a WACO priority and the statistics speak for themselves!

State Association Presidents and Executives Meet in Washington, D.C.

WSAC President and Stevens County Commissioner Merrill Ott and WSAC Executive Director Eric Johnson joined their peers from more than 40 other states at the National Association of Counties' annual meeting of State Association Presidents and Executives in Washington D.C., last week.

This event was highlighted by a number of topics and activities including:

- Presentations on NACO Business and Program Services
- Updates on Federal Legislation and NACo Positions
- Updates and briefings from members of the Obama Administration
- Networking with peers on State Association business, programs, and services
- Economic Outlook for 2010 and Beyond
- Assistance to Returning Service Members and Services to Service Members and their Families
- Views of the Political Landscape from Chuck Todd, NBC News Chief White House Correspondent

Commissioner Ott and Eric also made visits to Capitol Hill for meetings and briefings with members and staff of Washington's Congressional Delegation. We were reminded by many of those we met with about the importance to keep your Congressional members and their staff apprised of successful projects and programs being completed with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

Job announcements & links to County Employment pages at:

<http://wacounties.org/>

Next up is NACo's 2010 Legislative Conference set for March 6th -10th at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel in Washington, D.C. For more information, please visit:

<http://www.naco.org/Template.cfm?Section=Legislative&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=78&ContentID=29751>

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(WSAC) wacounties.org/wsac

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Legislative Committee Schedules and Agendas:

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm>

Bill Information: www.leg.wa.gov

Budget, Finance and Taxes

County Treasurers Meet with Legislators

County treasurers have been meeting “on the hill” with their legislators and others in between meetings of the Washington State Association of County Treasurers (WSACT) Annual Legislative Conference. The treasurers were lobbying **HB 2410** and its companion **SB 6190**, which would require all monies due under a foreclosure certificate of delinquency be paid if the property changes ownership. They also spoke for the rest of the WACO Legislative Package. The meeting was held at the Washington Counties’ Building and was led by Legislative Chair Lewis County Rose Bowman and President Whitman County Treasurer Bob Lothspeich.

County to Continue Friday Closures for Most Offices

By Barbara LaBoe / The Daily News | Posted: Thursday, December 31, 2009 5:45 pm

Most Cowlitz County offices will remain closed Fridays in 2010 as a cost-cutting measure.

The closures started in May to allow for employees who had volunteered for furloughs to help save jobs within the county. Furloughs and other reductions to benefits were again offered to employees as part of the 2010 budget, as was an early retirement buyout.

Officials said there have been a few complaints about inconvenience of the Friday closures, but mostly the public has accepted them.

As in 2009, all county administrative offices in the Administration Building, 207 North Fourth Ave., Kelso, will be closed Fridays. Employees may still be on the job, but there will be no public access or counter service on Fridays. Employees who volunteered for furloughs also can take the time off on Fridays.

Family Court will be closed Thursdays. Juvenile Probation will be closed Mondays.

Public safety services, corrections, courts and 911 dispatch will remain open to the public on Fridays, but some offices will have decreased hours.

The Public Works office will remain open five days a week. The Parks Department also will remain open but with limited services. Mail still will be delivered to county offices five days a week.

The county offers several online services at www.co.cowlitz.wa.us that can be used on the closed Fridays, including land parcel search, utility payments, vehicle and vessel licensing, public record search and property tax payments.

FRIDAY CLOSURES

The Cowlitz County administrative offices closed to the public on Fridays include:

- Assessor
- Asset Management
- Auditor
- Building and Planning
- Central Services
- Commissioner's Office
- Coroner

- Elections
- Facilities Maintenance
- Finance Office
- Personnel
- Superior Court Clerk
- Treasurer
- Willow Grove boat launch permits

Courts, Public Safety, Law & Justice

Roundup Kills “Weed” Bills

The House Public Safety and Emergency Management Committee met in Executive Session on January 20 and eradicated any hope that marijuana will be legalized in Washington this session. Neither **HB 2401**, the bill to allow adults 21 and older to use marijuana and the sale of it in state liquor stores, or **HB 1177**, making under 40 grams of marijuana a class two civil infraction, mustered enough votes to get out of committee.

HB 2389 Forensic Investigations

Clark County Medical Examiner Dr. Dennis Wickham spoke in support of **HB 2389** for the Forensic Investigations Council and the Washington Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners (WACME) this week in the House. He applauded the prime sponsor Representative Jim Moeller for his willingness to tailor the bill to the concerns of all the stakeholders including WACME. The bill will direct the Forensic Investigations Council to develop standards for autopsy facilities used by coroners and medical examiners and adds one more medical examiner to the Council. **HB 2389** should move out of the Public Safety and Emergency Management Committee today.

12 Hour Impounds for DUI Vehicles

Whatcom County Sheriff Bill Elfo testified in support of **HB 2565** on Thursday in the House Judiciary Committee for the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC). Both the Washington State Sheriffs’ Association (WSSA) and WACO support the bill which requires that the vehicle operated by a person arrested for driving under the influence of drugs or alcohol be impounded for 12 hours, unless the operator is not the registered owner, in which case the vehicle may be released to the registered owner within 12 hours. It also requires that the impounding police officer notify the vehicle operator of the time the vehicle may be released from impound. **HB 2565** also releases a registered tow truck owner who complies with these impound requirements from liability for injuries or damages sustained from the operator's intoxicated state.

Elections, Licensing & Recordings

County Auditor Legislative Conference

The Washington State Association of County Auditors (WSACA) was in Olympia this week for their Annual Legislative Conference. Legislative Co-Chairs Snohomish County Auditor Carolyn Weikel and Pend Oreille County Auditor Marianne Nichols chaired the meeting. The hectic few days were spent meeting with legislators testifying on several bills along with a review of legislation affecting the office of the county auditor. They also reviewed bills being promoted by the Secretary of State and the Department of Licensing.

General Government Issues

Institute for Local Government Releases New Publication: *A Local Official's Guide to Selecting a Conflict Resolution Professional for Inter-Agency Disputes*

The Institute for Local Government has published *A Local Official's Guide to Selecting a Conflict Resolution Professional for Inter-Agency Disputes*, the third publication in a series of resources to encourage and support local officials' use of alternative dispute resolution to address disputes and disagreements between public agencies. The guide was published thanks to the generous support of McDonough Holland & Allen PC and the JAMS Foundation.

Finding a conflict resolution professional is not unlike finding other kinds of professionals, but there are some nuances to be aware of. This guide outlines a six-step strategy to select the most effective conflict resolution professional for the situation. Here are the six steps:

1. Determine the Skill Set
2. Compile a List of Names
3. Evaluate Written Materials
4. Interview Candidates and Check References
5. Compare Competencies
6. Make a Selection

The publication is available online without charge in electronic form at www.ca-ilg.org/mediatorselection. Hardcopy versions are also available for a small charge. Proceeds from all publications sales support the Institute's work in service to local officials.

This publication is the product of the Intergovernmental Conflict Resolution Program (www.ca-ilg.org/mediate). Also available on the Institute's website is information about situations in which local agencies have used alternative dispute resolution to resolve interagency disputes, as well as information about the conflict assessment services the Institute offers. The site also includes a link to the Munilink database which offers local agencies information on professionals available to provide alternative dispute resolution services.

The Institute for Local Government is the nonprofit research affiliate of the League of California Cities and the California State Association of Counties. The Institute promotes good government at the local level through forward-thinking resources to help local officials in their service to their communities.

Transportation & Public Works

New Transportation Recovery Funding Requirement to Receive Reimbursement

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) was recently notified of a new ARRA requirement that is integral to ensuring that your agency is eligible to receive ARRA funds. Please work with your executive staffs and financial officers to ensure that your county has a current DUNS number and is registered in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) database and the registration is active.

In the event your agency is currently not registered and active, WSDOT will be unable to reimburse your agency for any expenditure on your ARRA projects. Once your agency is registered and active, payments will resume.

Background

As many of you are aware, your agency must have a Data Universal Number System (DUNS) number to do any work with WSDOT and FHWA. The DUNS number is a unique nine-character identification number provided by the commercial company D&B and is free of charge. For more information the website is http://www.dnb.com/US/duns_update/.

For ARRA funding, there is a mandatory requirement that all local agencies receiving ARRA funds must register in the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) at <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/default.aspx>. An updated copy of the user's guide is available at <https://www.bpn.gov/ccr/Handbook.aspx>.

The Central Contractor Registration (CCR) is the primary vendor database for the U.S. Government. The CCR collects, validates, stores and disseminates data in support of agency missions, including federal agency contract and assistance awards. Agencies must have a DUNS number to register in the CCR.

Both current and potential government agencies are required to register in CCR in order to do be awarded contracts by the Federal Government. All agencies are required to complete a one-time registration to provide basic information relevant to procurement and financial transactions. In addition, all agencies must update/renew their registration annually to maintain an active status.

It is essential your agency review the information on these websites to ensure reimbursements for your projects is not delayed. If you have any questions regarding the information WSDOT currently has, please contact your Region Local Programs Engineer. Thank you for your immediate attention to this issue.

Association News

Deadline Approaching for 2010 NACo County Leadership Institute Nominations

Don't forget that WSAC is seeking nominations for the 2010 County Leadership Institute, which has been moved from New York City to Washington D.C. this year. WSAC members who meet the criteria below and are interested and available in participating in the June 1-5, 2010 event in D.C. should submit an online nomination form **by Friday, January 29** at: http://www.wacounties.org/wsac/boards_membersonly.asp.

The WSAC Board of Directors established the following criteria for nomination:

- Member must have served at least one term and have been reelected to office.
- Member must be in an active WSAC leadership capacity, e.g., Board Member, District Officer, LSC Member, etc.
- Member must be willing to continue serve in a leadership position.
- Member will report to the WSAC membership following completion of the program.

The WSAC Board of Directors approved that WSAC will cover the registration cost of \$1,500 which includes four nights lodging, receptions, lunches and public transportation. Other program costs are supported by Institute sponsors. The selected participant is responsible for travel to and from Washington D.C, some meals, ground transportation to/from airport, and incidentals.

New WSAC Staff Phone Numbers in Effect

Please note that all WSAC staff has new direct line numbers, listed at:

http://www.wacounties.org/wsac/contactus_main.asp. The WSAC office number remains the same (360) 753-1886.

Training & Upcoming Events

Washington Counties – [wacounties.org/Calendar of Events](http://wacounties.org/Calendar%20of%20Events)

County Training Institute – www.countytraininginstitute.org

Community Forums on Jobs & Economic Growth

You are cordially invited to attend one of the two Community Forums on Jobs and Economic Growth hosted by the United States Department of Agriculture in Washington State. USDA is leading an effort nationwide to listen to Rural America's thoughts and ideas about what is needed to create jobs and stimulate economic development in rural communities across the country. These forums follow the lead of President Obama's December 3, 2009, national roundtable discussion.

Please share your thoughts and ideas about job creation and economic growth. Your input and participation at one of the following Community Forums would be greatly appreciated.

Western Washington

Tuesday, January 26

6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Cowlitz Regional Conference Center

1900 7th Avenue

Longview, WA 98632

Eastern Washington

Thursday, January 28

6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.

Perry Technical Institute Auditorium

2011 W. Washington Ave.

Yakima, WA 98903

Forum Purpose

From these listening sessions, USDA is compiling a report on what is needed to create jobs and stimulate growth in rural America. The actual agenda is very brief and speakers will be experts in key economic areas. The presentations are to be short and help stimulate discussion from the audience and what can be done.

The sessions will be in a simple town hall format. There is no charge to attend the session. The only thing USDA requests from participants is they are encouraged to share their thoughts on what can be done to stimulate rural Oregon's economy and they allow others the same opportunity to do so. The effectiveness of the forums will be based on the amount of input received from the audience.

Open to the public

Everyone who has ideas on how to improve the economy is welcome to participate including, state, local and tribal government; private industry, small business owners, entrepreneurs, academia, and concerned citizens.

Can't attend? You can email your suggestions to USDA Rural Development to: philip.eggman@wa.usda.gov.

Questions include:

- What parts of the local economy are working and thriving? What business centers are expanding and hiring? What can be done to encourage these efforts?
- What parts of the local economy are not working and thriving? What businesses and sectors have been hit the hardest? What are people struggling with the most? What can be done to help these sectors?

- What are the opportunities for growth in your community? What business sectors seem poised to rebound? What do you see as the "jobs of the future"?
- What are the obstacles to job creation in your community? What could make local businesses more likely to start hiring?
- Are there specific changes to USDA programs and regulations that could positively impact the development of businesses in Rural America or strengthen current businesses? What innovative ideas should USDA consider to increase economic opportunity in rural areas?
- What other issues and ideas should the President consider?

Comments from the forums and the website will be compiled and sent to President Obama.

For More Information:

If you have any questions about the Community Forums, please contact:

Phil Eggman, USDA Rural Development, (360) 704-7709; email: philip.eggman@wa.usda.gov

Chris Bieker, Farm Service Agency, (509) 323-3014; Email: chris.bieker@wa.usda.gov

Courthouse Ramblings

Herbert E. Wieland, 87, retired Pacific-Wahkiakum County Superior Court Judge, passed away on Thursday, January 14. Herb had his own law practice in Raymond from 1957 until he became Judge in 1977. He retired from the bench in 1988. Herb is survived by a daughter, Jennifer Wieland and son-in-law Mike Whelan, Grays Harbor County Sheriff, of Montesano; a son, William K. "Bill" Wieland of South Bend; two granddaughters, Katie and Gillian Whelan, both of Montesano.

Attachments

RENEW FUNDING FOR RURAL COUNTY DRUG ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS

FOR THE CRIMINAL JUSTICE TRAINING COMMISSION:

\$1,658,000 of the general fund- state is provided solely to provide financial assistance for counties enforcing illegal drug laws that have historically been underserved by federally funded state narcotics task forces. The Washington association of sheriffs and police chiefs, the Washington association of prosecuting attorneys and the Washington association of county officials shall jointly develop funding allocations for the offices of the county sheriff, county prosecutor and county clerk under this appropriation. The department shall not impose an administrative cost on this program and shall distribute funds under this appropriation as allocated.

Background

The 2006 Washington State Legislature enacted SB 6239 and funded \$1,575,000 annually (beginning July 1, 2006 and ending June 30, 2010) for drug enforcement efforts in 13 of Washington's rural counties, which had been historically underserved by federally funded state narcotics task forces (Byrne/JAG funds).

The 13 counties were divided into three regions (NE, SE and SW), and jointly represent less than 6% of Washington's total population. While many believed that these three regions did not face significant illegal drug trafficking and use, Sheriffs, Prosecutors and Clerks in these counties (and the communities they represent) maintained otherwise.

This funding was divided equally among the three regions and to be used to fund 4 additional Deputy Sheriffs, 2 additional Deputy Prosecuting Attorneys, and an additional Superior Court Clerk in each of the 3 regions. The Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs administered the law enforcement funds and the Washington Association of Prosecuting Attorneys administered the funds for the prosecution of crimes and court proceedings.

Since being provided the resources necessary to combat illegal drug activity in their communities, these 13 counties have mounted unprecedented efforts and achieved unprecedented results (*see table*). It is important to note that the effort included more than enforcement of drug laws – it included community action, community awareness and prevention efforts.

PROVEN RESULTS

Drug Enforcement efforts in the 13 counties made possible through this program:

- 2,400 criminal investigations
- 694 Controlled Narcotics Buys
- 1,380 arrests (1,232 adult/148 juvenile)
- 434 Search Warrants Served
- 494 Guns Seized
- 337 Public Presentations
- More than \$1.5 million in property seizures
- More than \$393 million worth of illegal

Funding for this program is scheduled to end June 30, 2010.

SW Region Counties:

Pacific County
Wahkiakum County
Lewis County
Grays Harbor County
Cowlitz County

SE Region Counties:

Walla Walla County
Columbia County
Garfield County
Asotin County

NE Region Counties:

Stevens County
Ferry County
Pend Oreille County
Lincoln County

**Washington Association of
County Officials (WACO)
(360) 753-7319**

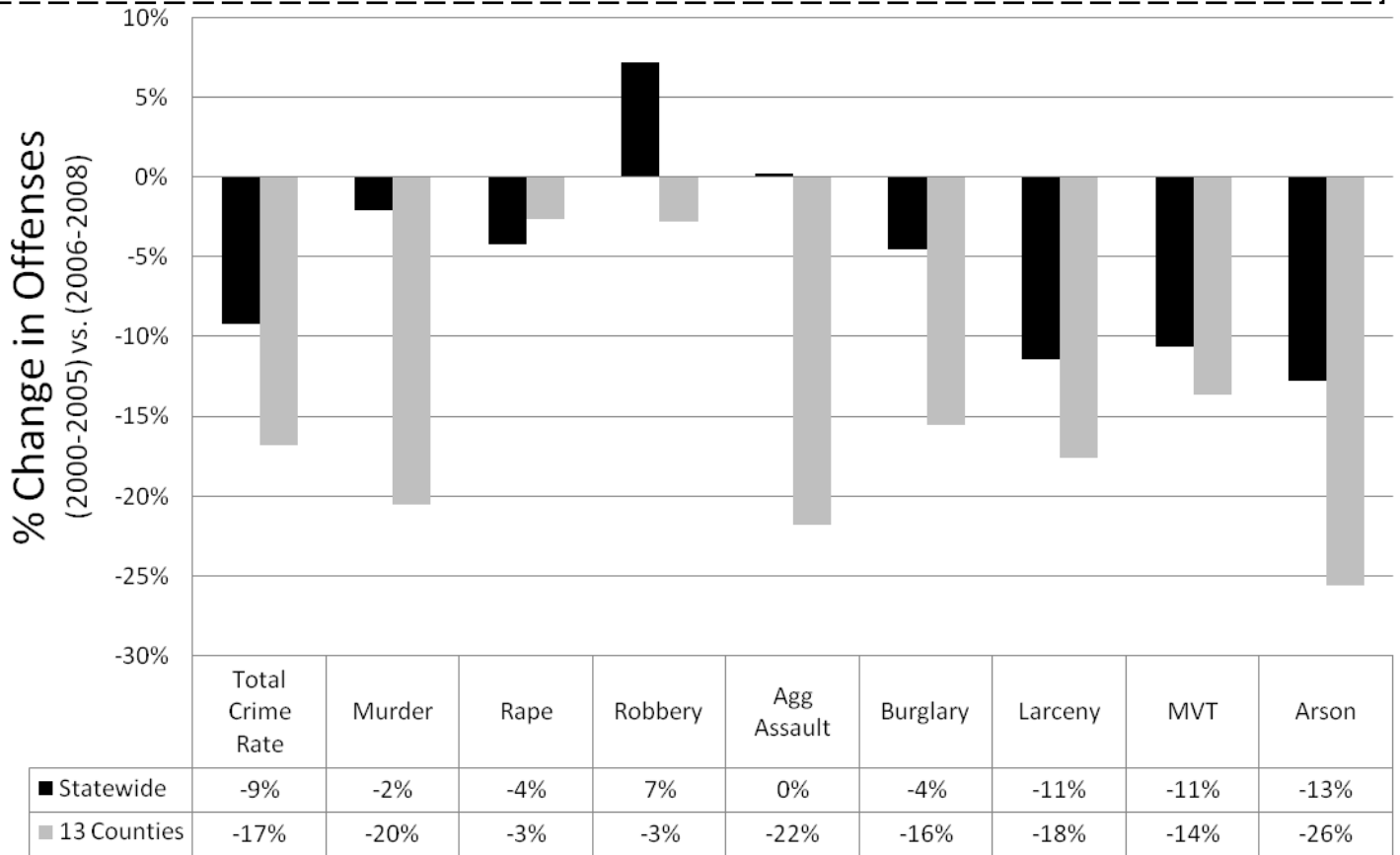
**Washington Association of
Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC)
(360) 486-2380**

**Washington Association of
Prosecuting Attorneys (WAPA)
(360) 753-2175**

Improving Community Safety

An examination of the crime rate in the years before (2000-2005, averaged per year) and after (2006-2008, averaged per year) the creation of these task forces shows that overall, **crime in Washington decreased 9%**. **The same comparison in the 13 "pilot" counties shows that crime decreased 17%**.

This same trend continues across all crimes included in crime rate, except for rape:



“Without [this] funding, we will almost certainly be forced to cut our office back to three attorneys.” - Asotin County Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Curt Liedkie (who also prosecutes in Garfield County as a result of this program)

“Lincoln County has been more successful in the proactive drug investigations than at any time in my 19 years of law enforcement.” – Lincoln County Sheriff Wage Magers

“Multi-Agency probe nets drugs, money and guns... Police agencies in five counties worked together to break into a major drug distribution ring from Mexico supplying northwest Oregon and southwest Washington. The five-month-long investigation ... netted nearly two pounds of meth and rock cocaine, valued on the street at \$44,000, plus \$16,800 cash, 10 guns, including an AR-15 assault rifle, and seven arrests. ... Sheriff John Didion said, **“The funding provided by the Washington State Legislature to our Regional Drug Task Force enabled this operation to happen.”** – Pacific County Narcotics Task Force, March 22, 2007

State funding for rural drug enforcement has reduced serious crimes by 17% in the 13 counties.

Funding for this program is scheduled to end June 30, 2010.