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*Inside the
Courthouse Journal*

*Washington Association of County Officials
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June is Affiliate Conference Month

June is traditionally the month where most WACO affiliates hold their annual affiliate conferences. In recognition of the six WACO affiliates with conferences this month (four of them the same week), we have dispensed with the traditional Courthouse Journal headings this month, and provided our summaries of as many affiliate conferences that we could attend. The Courthouse Journal will resume its traditional headings next month.

Assessors Ascend on Spokane

The Washington State Association of County Assessors (WSACA) met for their Annual Assessors' Conference at the Davenport Hotel in Spokane. Known for its rich history, the Davenport proved to be an affordable location for Assessors to conduct the business of their association.

Assessors kicked off their conference Tuesday morning with welcoming remarks from Spokane County Sheriff Ozzie Knezovich and Commissioner Todd Milke. Assessors held their annual meeting with the Department of Revenue, and conducted the business of several WSACA Committees, including the Levy Ratio Committee, Education Committee and Assessment Standards Committee. Assessors were also given a presentation on Spokane County's Interactive Maps and GIS Tools for the Assessor's Office by Shawna Ernst, ISD Spokane County.

Assessors continued their committee meetings on Wednesday with the Open Space Committee, Education Committee, Timber/DNR Committee, Computer Technology Committee, and Legislative Committee. Assessors were also given a "WACO Briefing" by WACO Staff. Wednesday evening brought the Annual WSACA Banquet, topped off with a fantastic vocal performance by family members of Byron Hodgson, Chief Deputy Assessor, Spokane County Assessor's Office.

Assessors concluded their business on Thursday morning with a business meeting. Assessors retained Kittitas County Assessor Marsha Weyand as their representative to the WACO Board of Trustees, and discussed their 2012 conference location options before launching into final deliberations on their 2012 legislative priorities. After discussion and consideration, Assessors adopted two resolutions – one requesting that the Legislature index the exemption income levels for the Senior Citizen and Disabled Exemption Program to a percentage of median income for each county or the current income levels of the program; and another to oppose any change to the current standard of clear, cogent and convincing for appeals pursuant to RCW 84.40.0301. Assessors then adopted their 2012 legislative priorities, relating to facilitating commercial property

**Job announcements & links
to County Employment
pages at:**

<http://wacounties.org/>

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valuation appeals, and creating additional efficiencies and increasing productivity in the Assessor's Office. Assessors also adopted as a 2012 WSACA priority the goal of consolidating designated forest lands and open space timber lands for ease of administration.

3rd Annual Pacific Northwest Elections Conference in Vancouver

County Auditors from Washington State and County Clerks from Oregon met jointly in Vancouver, WA for the 3rd Annual Pacific Northwest Elections Conference. Held at the Hilton in Vancouver, WA, the conference is designed to bring a national perspective to elections administration issues such as HAVA (the Help America Vote Act of 2002), minority language requirements, voting accessibility, and voter registration. Elections administrators from each state meet and share innovative ideas to better serve the voting public and more effectively spend scarce public resources.

Monday hosted a series of user group meetings, enabling elections administrators to convene with their software vendors, learn new features and functions, develop new ideas, and troubleshoot. The warm summer Monday evening was the perfect venue for an outdoor barbecue reception.

The official conference events kicked off Tuesday with welcoming remarks from Oregon and Washington Secretaries of State Kate Brown and Sam Reed, respectively. Conference attendees also heard from Keynote speaker Doug Chapin, founder of the Pew Center on the States' electiononline.org. Mr. Chapin discussed strategies and challenges faced by elections officials nation-wide, and shared his thoughts on how to best navigate an ever-changing environment.

The first general session of the day brought a panel to discuss "21st Century Reform: Where are we going after ten years of change?" The three-person panel included keynote speaker Doug Chapin, Dr. Paul Gronke, an associate professor at Reed College in Portland, OR, and Dean Logan, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk for Los Angeles County, CA. Panel members gave their perspective on the effect of ten years of change, and shared their predictions on the future of elections in the United States.

The second general session was a discussion on minority language and outreach efforts. Panel members included Bruce Adelson, CEO of the Rozovsky Group, Inc. and former US Department of Justice Civil Rights Division Senior Attorney, Dean Logan, Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk for Los Angeles County, CA, Cristina Labra, Minority Language Coordinator for Washington Secretary of State Sam Reed, Sandy McConnell, Elections Operations Program Manager for King County Elections, and Tammy Patrick, Federal Compliance Officer for the Maricopa County Elections Department.

The final general session of the day was a panel on HAVA Funding Sustainability. Panel members included Lori Guerrero, HAVA Coordinator for Washington Secretary of State Sam Reed, Alive Jarboe, Assistant Registrar of Voters for Sacramento County, CA, and Steve Trout, Director of Elections for Oregon Secretary of State Kate Brown.

Washington Secretary of State Sam Reed also presented certifications for several Washington State elections officials, and presented two awards:

Legislative Committee Schedules and Agendas:

<http://www.leg.wa.gov/legislature/pages/calendar.aspx>

Bill Information: www.leg.wa.gov

Voter Outreach Award: Sherril Huff of King County. King County Elections was recognized for their 2010 public education campaign, an effort that served the entire Puget Sound region. King County was also recognized for their splendid job of revamping their written materials and signage to simplify the information, prioritize the message, and make the material easier to understand.

Elections Employee of the Year Award: Stuart Holmes of Benton County. Stuart has been very proactive at improving ballot materials, has brought a hands-on experience to big-picture discussions, and brings a positive and helpful contagious attitude to training events.

Secretary Reed previously awarded the 2011 Auditor of the Year Award to Whatcom County Auditor Shirley Forslof at the 2011 Auditors' Annual Conference in Port Angeles.

Wednesday's events hosted a number of breakout sessions, featuring a series of notable panel members, covering subjects such as 2012 redistricting, HAVA Compliance, Minority Language and Outreach, Performance Indexing/Benchmarking, The Minnesota Recount – A Campaign Perspective, OR/WA Late Registration Round Table Discussions, Making Elections Fun, UOCAVA Update, Voting Accessibility Success Stories, and a keynote address from Stuart Elway titled "Please, Dear God, Tell Me It Isn't 2012 Already!"

Coroners and Medical Examiners Meet in Bellingham

June 5 thru June 8 the Coroners and Medical Examiners met in Bellingham, Washington for a rigorous four days of training and meetings. Sunday night, they had a "meet and greet" with food service on the outside patio at the Best Western Bellingham Hotel. This was preceded by ABMDI Testing earlier in the day.

Monday morning found the group with a light morning breakfast, followed by two hours of Investigative Tools and NCIC presented by Cynthia Johnston, Management and Program Analyst with the FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division of Clarksburg, West Virginia. She currently is serving as the expert responsible for planning and managing NCIC policy development and technical enhancements. Johnston's credentials show 19 years of experience with biometric identification, criminal history processing, as well as internet crime analysis. She has been a member of various task forces dedicated to solving missing persons cases and identifying human remains.

Johnston was very informative in presenting progress and programs that the FBI has currently available and in operation.

The next two hours were filled with a presentation by Jill Arwine of the Washington State Patrol Latent Print Laboratory. Her presentation came replete with "hands on samples," and a fascinating presentation on fingerprints and palm prints, and the various nuances involved in both. Arwine's credentials are also impressive, with over 29 years of experience both in finger print and latent print analysis, and in securing usable prints from deceased individuals to aid in their identification. Her experience and knowledge of her topics kept everyone at rapt attention during her presentation.

At this juncture, it should be noted that the Coroners and Medical Examiners utilize their meetings to enhance their knowledge and keep accreditation and utilize ongoing training for themselves and staff persons. Each session requires a sign in sheet both at the start and the end of the day. These are rigorous training classes with expert individuals making the presentations.

After lunch, more training was presented by Jo Anne Marzowski of the Washington State Patrol Crime Laboratory. Marzowski's forte is in packaging and safeguarding evidence and personal property. Her resume includes 16 years of experience in trace evidence recovery, hair, tape, paint and polymer analysis, footwear and tire impressions, fracture match, clothing examination, damage assessment, bloodstain pattern interpretation, trajectories, and crime scene reconstruction.

The last session Monday was the topic of Toxicology Procedures, Forms and Trends, presented by Brian Capron of the Washington State Patrol Toxicology Laboratory. Capron has over 15 years of experience with him, both as a senior level toxicologist and supervisor, and vast experience in court testimony relevant to toxicology in cases.

After breakfast on Tuesday, the entire day's training was presented by Mr. Steve Perry of the Washington Criminal Justice Training Commission. Perry has over 35 years of public safety experience, dealing with property room management, crime scene investigations, latent fingerprint analysis and emergency communications.

Perry started off with the basic chain of evidence safeguards and then moved into the more complex area of protecting the sanctity of the actual chain of evidence. He followed that with two hours of Crime scene investigation protocols. Members felt that the topics presented by Perry were of such importance that the entire day was dedicated to his specific areas of expertise.

That evening, the dinner cruise followed which allowed participants relax after the rigorous all day training.

Wednesday morning found the group again in training, this time presented by Mr. Brad Peck of the Columbia Consulting Group. Peck's twenty-five years of experience provided valuable insights into dealing with the media, especially at those times when people might find themselves under extremely stressful or crisis situations.

The training sessions adjourned Wednesday at noon so that participants could make their way back home to their respective counties.

Treasurers Take Over Wenatchee

The Washington State Association of County Treasurers (WSACT) met in Wenatchee June 13-17 for their annual Treasurers' Conference. The conference was held at the Confluence Technology Center, a \$12 million partnership between the North Central Educational Service District, the Port of Chelan County, the Chelan County PUD and Wenatchee Valley College.

While in Wenatchee, the Treasurers spent a day reviewing the 2011 legislative sessions and began to set the stage for their 2012 legislative priorities. After considerable review, the Treasurers adopted a list of 2012 legislative priorities that will treat taxpayers more equitably, assist Treasurers in balancing their duties with decreasing resources, and streamline processes for seniors. For more information on the Treasurers' 2012 legislative priorities, please contact Lewis County Treasurer Rose Bowman or any other member of the WSACT Legislative Committee.

On Tuesday, Treasurers heard from a nationally followed economist Dr. Bill Conerly, learning his perspective of the economy, where it's been, and when it will "feel good again." Treasurers also heard from Dr. Carolyn Long, a WSU Vancouver Associate Professor, on organizational strategies to live within budgets during tough economic times. Tuesday afternoon brought a variety of topics, including a lunch speaker who discussed the journey of David Thompson's historic route mapping and exploring the Columbia River two hundred years ago. Treasurers were also treated to work sessions on eliminating undeliverable mail, ACH tax payments, and purchase cards.

Tuesday evening held a reception at the Town Toyota Center, a Public Facilities District project near downtown Wenatchee. Treasurers enjoyed a sun-filled evening, topped off with Chelan County Treasurer Dave Griffiths' own version of "Minute to Win It." Treasurers and vendors were partnered up to perform timed challenges, including 'Extreme Hanky Panky,' 'Get Forked,' 'Hut Hut Hike!,' and the infamous 'Junk in the Trunk.'

Washington State Treasurer Jim McIntire briefed Treasurers on Wednesday morning of recent developments and projects in the State Treasurer's Office. Marc Greenough, a municipal law and public finance attorney with Foster Pepper PLLC, followed with a work session on Issues and Disclosures with bonds.

Thursday brought a work session on investment strategy by Deanna Woodring, an investment advisor with Davidson Fixed Income Management. Treasurers and Deputy Treasurers then held round table discussions and business meetings to discuss the business of their association. Thursday's business was capped with a presentation on social networking by Lawrence Cramer with Application Dynamics, Inc., an international web development, eCommerce and social networking company.

The WSACT Annual Banquet was a fun-filled Murder Mystery event, held on Thursday evening at the Wenatchee Community Center. Treasurers were given the rare opportunity to see Grant County Treasurer Darryl Pheasant's acting talents, as a memorable character in the evening's mystique. In addition to solving the evening's mystery and identifying the murder(s), Treasurers also inaugurated their new officers and thanked their outgoing officers for their wonderful service.

Friday morning concluded with another business meeting, with final adoption of the 2012 WSACT legislative agenda, and discussion of future WSACT conferences, among other business of the association.

The new WSACT Officers are as follows:

President –	Linda Fisher, Lincoln County Treasurer
Vice President –	Dani Burton, Klickitat County Treasurer
Treasurer -	Scott Matheson, King County Treasury Manager
Secretary -	Sue Harnasch, Stevens County Treasurer
NW District-	Katie Jungquist, Skagit County Treasurer
SE District -	Ilene Thomson, Yakima County Treasurer

WACO Spotlight

Wahkiakum County Auditor Diane Tischer

I grew up in Wahkiakum County and have lived on Puget Island (in the middle of the Columbia River) all but four years of my life. June 17th was my 36th year with the Auditor's office - 21 of those years as Auditor. Where does the time go? It seems like just yesterday we were processing motor vehicle licenses once a year and there were no boat licenses. People have asked me when I'm retiring --- do I look old?! When I started my career I had a ten-year plan and that plan just keeps going. I'm enjoying the good and bad of the ride.

My office has gone through many changes over the years. In the 1990's there was money to fund most everything to 2008 with cut backs and losing staff. The office is still closed to the public three hours a day (of course we are working through those hours). We are open Monday through Friday to the public from 10:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. and then from 2:00 p.m. until closing at 4:00 p.m. so we can try to keep up with the work that losing 1 ½ people has caused. I dislike closing to the public but if we weren't I'm sure my staff would have left me. My office has five full time employees (including myself) and one part time. I feel very fortunate to have long time staff and we work well together.

Right now we're double timing it with New World to get our new financial package for the County in place to go live October 1st. What was I thinking?! Ten months and we're going live - you have to live on the edge sometime.

Wahkiakum County is a beautiful place. If you haven't visited before stop in and enjoy.

Training & Upcoming Events

Archives Announces Upcoming Training

Washington State Archives is pleased to announce additional free half day training sessions on Records Management. We will be adding more dates as they finalize, including sessions in Central and Eastern Washington.

The following sessions are now available:

Basics of Public Records Management is for those new to records management or for seasoned veterans as a refresher course. This workshop will cover legal requirements for local government agencies, records retention and disposition, essential records, inventories, and more! Sessions are from 9:00 to noon.

July 14 – Port Angeles

July 28 – Mt. Vernon

September 15 - Lakewood

Electronic Records Management covers public agencies' responsibilities for the preservation and management of electronic public records per Chapter 40.14 RCW and Chapter 434-662 WAC, as well as discussion of day-to-day strategies for managing electronic public records including email, websites, and social media. Sessions are from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

July 14 – Port Angeles

July 28 – Mt. Vernon

September 15 - Lakewood

Public Records and Public Disclosure – For a few sessions we are pleased to host Tim Ford, Assistant Attorney General from the Attorney General's Office, who will present on the topic of public records and public disclosure. There are additional sessions being planned including venues in Central and Eastern Washington.

To register, please go to our online registration page:

<http://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/recordsmanagement/trainingsignup.aspx>