

the Courthouse Journal

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Washington Association of County Officials
Washington State Association of Counties

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Governor's Race Still in Limbo

The recount goes on in the closest gubernatorial race in history (12/16/04), between Dino Rossi (R) and Christine Gregoire (D). With 35 of 39 counties having completed the hand recount, the four largest counties, which comprise nearly 60 percent of the votes – King, Snohomish, Pierce and Spokane – hope to have the job completed in the next few days. The November 2 General Election was so close (Rossi by 261 votes) that it triggered an automatic machine recount. The Democratic party then anted up enough money to pay for a statewide hand recount. Many twists and turns have the whole nation looking to see what may happen next.

With 40 percent of the hand recount in, Rossi's previous 42-vote lead from the machine count has grown to 121 votes. However, at issue are 573 previously rejected ballots in King County, a Democratic stronghold, which may tip the vote in favor of Gregoire. The King County canvassing board met yesterday, and by a 2-1 vote, decided that those ballots will be prepared for inclusion in the hand recount. Signatures will be

checked and the ballots will go back before the canvassing board. The county has said that those were ballots erroneously disqualified because those voters' signatures were not entered into the election computer system for comparison with signatures on the ballot envelopes.

In addition, 245 additional King County votes will be looked at by the canvassing board where the voter intent is in question, and a decision has not yet been made on 22 votes found this week in the bottom of election-equipment bins. This makes a total of 840 ballots which could bring a turn-around in the gubernatorial race.

Republicans are considering going to court over the previously rejected ballots. Earlier this week, the State Supreme Court rejected a Democratic lawsuit. The main thrust of that suit was asking for an order requiring every county canvassing board to reconsider thousands of ballots rejected in the first two counts.

The inauguration for governor is slated for January 12.



Statewide Criminal Justice Report Available

The Washington State Department of Community Trade and Economic Development (CTED) is now distributing copies of "Criminal

The Courthouse Journal

Published weekly (during Legislative Session) and Bi-weekly (other than Session) by the Washington Association of County Officials (WACO) and the Washington State Association of Counties (WSAC).

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

Direct inquiries and correspondence to *The Courthouse Journal*, 206 Tenth Ave SE, Olympia, WA 98501-1131 or www.wacounties.org.

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CPO PROGRAM

Julie Kaufman,
Certified Public Official Coordinator

Justice in Washington State," a comprehensive description of the current structure and operation of the criminal justice system.

This document may be of assistance to county policymakers seeking to understand the decentralized organization and operation of criminal justice services in Washington state. Hard copies and CDs may be requested from CTED's Safe and Drug Free Communities unit at 360-725-3038.

Developed and written as a project of the Washington State Byrne Grant Advisory Committee, the report provides a foundation for implementing the statewide Byrne Grant strategy to assess drug and violent crime problems in the state; analyze effectiveness of current efforts and develop strategies to address violent and drug crime problems; and provide Byrne funding recommendations for programs that reduce violence and drug-related crimes. The state Byrne committee advises CTED and the Legislature on how to spend annual federal Byrne grants.

* * * * *

*By Ken Armstrong
Seattle Times staff reporter*

A 3-year-old girl's death might have been prevented if a Pierce County courtroom had been available for a proceeding to terminate her mother's parental rights. The mother wound up killing the girl and is now in prison.

The death of Zy'Nyia Nobles in 2000 is but one example provided in a report to be released today that says the state's justice system is "suffering a long and slow strangulation" and desperately needs more money from Washington's

Legislature.

"Justice in Jeopardy: The Court Funding Crisis in Washington State," the work of a judiciary task force, says funding in Washington falls \$204 million a year short of what is needed to ensure justice ---; to avoid repeated postponements and speedy-trial violations, to allow public defenders in criminal cases to do the kind of work demanded by law, and to provide legal aid in civil cases.

The funding deficit is particularly serious when it comes to public defense. Washington's counties and cities pay slightly more than a third of what is needed to ensure that public defenders don't get buried by crushing caseloads and a lack of investigative and expert help, the report concludes.

To begin reducing the shortfall in the trial courts, the state judiciary's policy-making body plans to ask the state to spend an additional \$32 million a year to support judicial salaries, juror fees, public defense and legal aid for the poor, among other items.

"We're out there beating the bushes and trying to get all the support that we can for this," said state Supreme Court Chief Justice Gerry Alexander, who plans to make the proposed legislation the centerpiece of his State of the Judiciary address to lawmakers next month.

Inadequately funded courts make it difficult for businesses to collect from debtors, for injured people to recover damages before being bankrupted by medical bills, and for families to reach resolution in disputes involving the care of children, the report says.

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

"We believe the justice system has been chronically underfunded. That has incredibly negative ramifications for society as a whole," said Ron Ward, a task-force member and president of the Washington State Bar Association. "This is a gargantuan problem. It's been years in the making. So whatever comes of this in the way of a solution will have to be a multiyear process."

The report is the work of a court-funding task force created two years ago by the Board for Judicial Administration, the judicial system's policy-making body. More than 100 people contributed to the report, including judges, administrators, state legislators and representatives of local government.

The task force attributes the precarious condition of the state's courts to three decades' worth of ignored pleas for the state to contribute more financially.

In Washington, the state pays only 10.8 percent of the costs for trial-court operations and indigent defense, the report says. Counties and cities foot the rest. Washington ranks 50th nationally when it comes to the percentage of judicial and legal services paid for by the state, according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics.

In April, The Seattle Times published a series, "The Empty Promise of an Equal Defense," that showed how many Washington counties, pressed for money, have resorted to fixed-fee public-defense contracts that often save money at the expense of good lawyering.

In Grant County, one public defender handled 413 felony cases last year, eclipsing the limit of 150 cases recommended by the Washington State Bar Association. A Cowlitz County public defender's caseload was 6 1/2; times the

recommended standard.

The series showed how such heavy caseloads have undermined confidence in the courts, leading to new trials for some inmates and lingering doubts about the guilt of others.

The Board for Judicial Administration plans to ask legislators to take several steps to improve the quality of public defense, including:

- Having the state contribute \$12.5 million annually to trial-level public defense;
- Creating two positions within the state's Office of Public Defense for employees to advise local governments on the use of such contracts;
- Having the state pay for lawyers for indigent parents threatened with losing their children based upon allegations of abuse or neglect.

The board also plans to propose legislation to improve trial-court operations in general, such as having the state pay half the cost of jury fees and half the cost of district courts' judge salaries.

The judiciary's appeal for financial help comes at a difficult time for the state economically.

"It's not an unworkable number," Wayne Blair, the task force's chairman, said of the request for \$32 million. "But given the deficit, it's a difficult number. The thought was, let's take it legislative session by legislative session, and let's go in with something reasonable."

Rep. Helen Sommers, D-Seattle, is chairwoman of the powerful House Appropriations Committee. The state's projected deficit for 2005 is \$1.6 billion, she said, so finding tens of millions of dollars "would be a significant challenge." But, she said, the judiciary makes a "strong case"

for the money. "We'll have to rank these in terms of importance," she said of the judiciary's list of needs.

In order to erase the entire shortfall of \$204 million, the state would likely need to raise taxes, the report says.

One possibility suggested by the task force was to increase, by one-quarter of 1 percent, the business-and-occupation tax paid by businesses not subject to the retail sales tax. Another proposal was to raise property taxes statewide by 10 cents per \$1,000 of assessed value, which is \$10 per \$100,000 or \$25 a year for a \$250,000 home.

State Sen. Adam Kline, D-Seattle, was a member of the task force and will chair the Senate's Judiciary Committee next session. "A case can be made that we've neglected our courts in the same way we've neglected our roads," he said, adding that "\$32 million is a small price to be paid."

(Ken Armstrong: 206-464-3730 or karmstrong@seattletimes.com)

Governor Locke Presents State's First Regional Salmon Recovery Plan to Federal Government

Gov. Gary Locke, together with the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board (LCFRB) and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), yesterday presented the federal government with the first locally developed regional salmon recovery plan for Washington state.

Five counties spearheaded the plan, which was developed in partnership by with state and tribal governments; community leaders and non-profit groups. Five other regional salmon recovery plans are expected to be submitted to the federal government within the next seven months.

"This is definitely a historic event," Locke said. "This plan is an extraordinary achievement - a product of those who live and work near these watersheds. This is the right way to do salmon recovery."

"In every area of the state, we've gotten people together to talk about the future of our salmon, and we've responded with funding and resources to turn their vision into reality," Locke said. "Today, every watershed with salmon has at least one citizens' volunteer group working to restore and enhance salmon habitats."

"We have made a lot of progress in salmon recovery during the past few years," Locke continued. "We have returned more than 300,000-acre feet of water to streams where salmon need it, removed more than 1480 barriers and opened more than 1600 miles of habitat to salmon for spawning and rearing. We have funded more than 480 projects to restore and protect salmon habitat

and have completed more than 560 water quality cleanup plans."

Bob Lohn, Northwest regional director of NOAA Fisheries, said the plan would be proposed as a federal rule in spring 2005. The plan is aimed at restoring five species of salmon as well as other fish to healthy, harvestable levels during the next 25 years. It encompasses areas on the lower Columbia River as well as 18 major and a number of lesser tributary basins in Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Skamania, Wahkiakum, and portions of Pacific and Klickitat counties in Southwest Washington.

The Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board's approach integrates several different planning efforts - including Endangered Species Act recovery planning, Northwest Power and Conservation Council sub-basin planning, and state salmon recovery and watershed planning-into a single regional plan. The plan's goals are to restore the region's salmon to healthy, harvestable levels. It also addresses other fish and wildlife that are important to the region as well as providing a foundation for healthy watersheds for people.

"From the outset, the board has focused on preparing a recovery plan that works for both people and the fish of the region," said Jeff Breckel, executive director of the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board. "This plan belongs to the agencies, local governments, tribes, scientists, organizations, fishermen, landowners and citizens who joined with us to meld science and community values into a blueprint for recovery."

Commissioner Nielsen Ready to Talk Turkey, er Democracy

Outgoing San Juan County Commissioner Darcie Nielsen has accepted a position with the National Democratic Institute (NDI) based in Turkey. Nielsen was elected to the Board of County Commissioners in 1996 and re-elected in 2000. Prior to elected office she was a 15-year land use planning professional in local government, with focus on growth management and comprehensive planning, transportation, economic development, open space and conservation, and citizen involvement strategies.

NDI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that was founded in 1983 to strengthen and expand democracy worldwide. Headquartered in Washington, D.C., and with over 50 field offices on four continents, NDI has conducted democratic development programs in more than 100 countries around the world. Calling on a global network of paid and volunteer experts, NDI provides practical assistance to civic and political leaders in the following thematic areas: legislative strengthening and democratic governance, citizen participation, elections and political processes, political-party development, security-sector reform and women's empowerment.

NDI has been working in Turkey since 1996 to promote openness and accountability in the political process along with development of a strong dynamic civil society. Nielsen will be opening a new NDI program in Turkey in partnership with Atilim University that would educate elected local executives and legislators about their duties and

Environment, Land Use and Resources (continued)

responsibilities according to democratic principles of good governance and conduct a pilot project in six cities to establish mechanisms for soliciting and incorporating citizen involvement in public policy decisions at the local level.

After January 1, 2005, you can contact Darcie at darciensjc@yahoo.com. She plans to send occasional Turkey-grams to WSAC about her adventures in democracy building abroad, which we will include in future issues of *The Courthouse Journal*.

Growth Management Workgroup Update

The Growth Management Workgroup is still trying to reach an agreement on best available science (BAS) definition and an updated schedule. It was agreed that the Group would proceed to craft a bill to clarify the use and implementation of BAS, without lessening the law's requirement: 1) provide for opportunity to balance BAS with other elements of the Act; 2) define the word "include"; 3) provide for local government deviations and defense of those decisions; and 4) address issue of BAS applicability to physical settings.

WSAC staff presented an update option the Group is considering and will make a decision on in early January. The proposal would allow counties of a certain size to request a deferral of seven years from having to update their critical area ordinance and comprehensive plan if certain conditions are met. For the rest of the counties, we are trying to provide other options for more time and flexibility.

1. Non-fully planning counties to be granted an update deferral (must update at least every 14 years, or every other update required), if they have an adopted CAO that includes BAS.

CTED would determine that a jurisdiction requesting a deferral meets the criteria.

2. Fully planning counties eligible are for deferral if:

- a. Total population of less than 50,000 with a growth rate less than 17% (Columbia, Garfield, Ferry, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Douglas, and Jefferson)
- b. CAO must be compliant with BAS, or deferral not granted for this requirement. CTED would determine that a jurisdiction requesting a deferral meets the criteria
- c. Must have valid comp plan and development regulations

Unresolved issue: how UGA expansion(s) would impact potential deferrals.

3. Other non-buildable land counties would, through a public process, adopt an ordinance that spells out their own schedule of what elements and when they will update them. All of them would need to be done within the 10 years.

4. Buildable lands counties option:

- a. Annually update capital facility plans
- b. Once every five years, concurrent with buildable lands reports, update the land use element, transportation element, and housing element.
- c. Once every ten years, update

critical areas and resource land rules with respect to best available science. Update the rural element and the utilities element.

Public Health and Human Services

Groundbreaking Takes Place for Clark County's Center for Community Health

Clark County's Center for Community Health, now under construction at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs campus in Vancouver, is scheduled to open December 2005. This unique project is the first of its kind in the nation.

The \$38 million, four-story facility will house Clark County's Department of Community Services and Health Department, several non-profit service providers, the administrative offices of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs and a crisis coordination center.

Partners will be working together to share resources and capacity to enhance social and health services for eligible veterans and other citizens.

Clark County sold bonds to finance construction of the building. The bonds will be paid by the tenants' 30-year leases. The U.S. Dept. of Veterans Affairs is leasing 6.2 acres of land to the county in exchange for office space.

The county has raised approximately \$7.4 million from local and federal sources leaving a funding gap of \$8 million. The county and nonprofit providers are seeking to bridge the gap through state and federal appropriations and other grants.

There are similarities in the populations served by all of the partners. An example of collaborative care will be the public health department's access to mental health and substance abuse treatment services for the health department's clients. Conversely, individuals served by mental health and substance abuse programs will

often need health services like immunizations, clinic exams, maternal and child health visits.

"This project has been more than six years in the planning and required an act of Congress," said Michael Piper, Director, Clark County Department of Community Services. "It is very gratifying to see the building under construction knowing the number of community, state and federal partners that have been involved from the start."

The center will be equipped to better evaluate individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse issues while directing them to better long-term care.

Crisis coordination center services will be provided to all residents of Clark County who are brought to the center or arrive on a voluntary basis.

Services to be provided include crisis stabilization, assessment, short term treatment, medically monitored detoxification and discharge planning.

For more information about the project, please contact Geoff Knapp, public affairs, Clark County Department of Community Services at (360) 397-2130 or by E-mail at: geoff.knapp@clark.wa.gov.



Shown in the photo are (L-R) Bill Alkire, Legislative and Policy Office Director, Governor's Executive Policy Office; Betty Sue Morris, Chair, Board of Clark County Commissioners; U.S. Senator Patty Murray; U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell; Congressman Brian Baird. All spoke at the Center for Community Health's groundbreaking ceremony last August.

Transportation and Public Works

New Transportation Funding Discussion Kicks into High Gear

This week the Transportation Commission discussed a new transportation revenue package for counties, cities, transit and the state. WSDOT has developed a tool to demonstrate the array of investment choices and funding strategies. Counties, cities, and transit requested the Commission include in their recommendation new revenue requests and investment choices.

The Transportation Working Group (TWG), a coalition of business and civic leaders, met this week and endorsed a statewide package of transportation improvements to build on the momentum from the '03 nickel package. They will urge the Legislature to adopt funding measures that will raise, including bond proceeds, funds sufficient to deliver projects statewide. They recommend raising approximately \$8 billion over the next ten years.

Within the region, the TWG recommends that the Legislature and the Puget Sound area place the highest priority on replacing the Alaskan Way Viaduct/Seawall and the SR-520 Bridge including approaches. Both have reached the practical end of their useful life. A failure of either would lead to catastrophic impacts on the state's economic viability.

They recommend that WSDOT plan for and the Legislature fund a major traffic mitigation program associated with each of these preservation projects. Construction will significantly reduce the carrying capacity of these vital corridors. Improving the capacity of alternate corridors, such as I-405, SR-167, and diverting trips onto modes other

than single-occupancy vehicles will be essential to maintaining economic viability. To that end, they suggest that a portion of a potential state revenue package be from non-18th amendment restricted sources such that they can be used for transit and non-road modes.

They urge WSDOT and other transportation agencies to coordinate planning and accelerate the implementation of traffic mitigation programs prior to construction of the Viaduct and SR-520. This should include corridor improvements on I-405, SR-167 and I-5 in central Puget Sound.

Preservation of highways of statewide significance has traditionally been a state responsibility. They believe that the Viaduct (SR-99) and the SR-520 projects and the associated mitigation programs appropriately fall primarily within the state's role. However, the TWG accepts that the region must shoulder a significant portion as well. They suggest that the state fund no less than the replacement cost for the current vehicle carrying capacity of the Viaduct and the SR-520 Bridge. If capacity improvements are desired, they urge that they be planned for and financing put in place now, not at a higher cost later.

The members of the TWG would support tax increases to raise the necessary funds, including adoption of a ten-cent gas tax boost phased in over two years. Other taxes which could be used to achieve the \$8 billion could include: license fee increases and weight fee increases. They endorse dedicating a portion of the new state revenues for city and county road programs.

They urge the Legislature to authorize user fees, such as tolling on major preservation projects such as the Viaduct, SR-520 and High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes on SR-167, to provide supplementary regional revenues. Public private partnerships, tax increment financing and local improvement districts should be considered as alternate methods of financing.

Association News

2005 WACO COMMITTEES

Appointed November 2004

LEGISLATIVE

Jim Nagle, Walla Walla Co. Prosecutor, Chair
Greg Zempel, Kittitas Co. Prosecutor, vice-chair
& liaison to Tri-Association
Dave Cook, Yakima County Assessor
Jack Westerman, Jefferson Co. Assessor
Kim Wyman, Thurston County Auditor
Pat McCarthy, Pierce County Auditor
Pam Daniels, Snohomish County Clerk
Rena Hollis, Skamania County Clerk
Greg Sandstrom, Kitsap County Coroner
Dan Blasdel, Franklin County Coroner
Russ Hauge, Kitsap County Prosecutor
Larry Taylor, Benton County Sheriff
Rose Bowman, Lewis County Treasurer
Ron Strabbing, Grays Harbor County Treasurer
Steve Whybark, Mason County Sheriff
Garry Lucas, Clark County Sheriff
Gary Edwards, Thurston County Sheriff

2005 BUDGET

Mary Dodge, Immediate Past President, Chair
Tom Fallquist, President
Dan Blasdel, President-Elect
Rick Bart, Vice President
Mark Leander, Secretary Treasurer
Greg Zempel, Past President

CERTIFIED PUBLIC OFFICIAL PROGRAM (CPO)

Al Brotche, Mason County Auditor
Dave Peterson, Kitsap County Clerk

PERSONNEL

Siri Woods, Chelan County Clerk, Chair
Dean Takko, Cowlitz County Assessor
Bob Terwilliger, Snohomish Co. Auditor
Jerry Jasman, Grant County Coroner
Rick Bart, Snohomish County Sheriff
Randy Gaylord, San Juan County Prosecutor
Mark Leander, Skagit County Assessor

ARCHIVES OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Bob Terwilliger, Snohomish Co. Auditor, Chair
Evelyn Arnold, Chelan County Auditor
Karen Flynn, Kitsap County Auditor
Siri Woods, Chelan County Clerk

Mike Killian, Franklin County Clerk
Dianne Dorey, Lewis County Assessor
Judy Ainslie, Cowlitz Co. Treasurer
Tracy Shawa, Pacific County Assessor
Dan LaRoche, Douglas County Sheriff
Jim Nagle, Walla Walla Co. Prosecutor
Judy Arnold, Thurston County Coroner
Martha Reed, Mason County Coroner

TRAVEL

Barb Cory, Whatcom County Treasurer, Chair
Judy Arnold, Thurston County Coroner
Greg Zempel, Kittitas County Prosecutor
Richard Lathim, Franklin County Sheriff
Ron Strabbing, Grays Harbor County Treasurer

CERTIFICATION/EDUCATION

Kenneth Kunes, Grant Co. Clerk, Chair
Linda Fisher, Lincoln County Treasurer
Barb Wagner, Benton County Assessor
Shelly Johnston, Lincoln County Auditor
Peggy Robbins, Okanogan County Auditor
Tim Davidson, Cowlitz Co. Dep. Coroner
Greg Zempel, Kittitas County Prosecutor
Mike Hawley, Island County Sheriff

BYLAWS CHANGES, ELECTION ISSUES

H. Steward Menefee, Grays Harbor Co. Prosecutor, Chair
Barb Cory, Whatcom Co. Treasurer
Mike Harum, Chelan County Sheriff
Betty Gould, Thurston County Clerk, Chair

AWARD SELECTION

Donna Eldridge, Jefferson County Auditor, Chair
Kim Eaton, Yakima County Clerk
Greg Sandstrom, Kitsap County Coroner
Steve Tucker, Spokane County Prosecutor
Dan LaRoche, Douglas County Sheriff
Kathy Turnbull, San Juan County Treasurer

NOMINATING

(Committee to be appointed in summer 2005.)

***Note:** The WACO President is an ex-officio member of every committee.

Boards and Commissions

WSAC Will Have Vacancy on State Board of Health

Councilmember Carolyn Edmonds has decided to step down from her position representing WSAC on the State Board of Health effective January 1, 2005. Councilmember Edmonds has been a tireless advocate for good public health services and her service on the State Board of Health has been greatly appreciated.

The State Board of Health provides a forum for citizen and interested party input into public health and health policy in the State of Washington. The State Board of Health was established in the State Constitution. The Board is charged with promulgating health related rules and regulations and publishes "The Health of Washington" on a regularly prescribed basis.

In addition to these responsibilities, the State Board of Health also develops an annual work plan that involves more in-depth work in a variety of health related areas. The State Board has also developed policy positions and advocated those positions with the State Legislature. The State Board is a participant in the Public Health Improvement Partnership which also includes the State Department of Health, the Washington State Association of Local Public Health Officials (WSALPHO), the University of Washington NW Center for Public Health Practice, and the Washington Health Foundation.

The State Board of Health is comprised of 10 members and meets the 2nd Wednesday of the month approximately 7 times per year. For more information about the State Board of Health go to their web site:

www.doh.wa.gov/sboh.

The position that Councilmember Edmonds fills belongs to the counties with requirements that the person filling the position be a commissioner or councilmember and serve on a local Board of Health.

The Governor's process requires that WSAC submit several names to him for his consideration – this is a Governor appointment. If you are interested in serving as the WSAC representative to the State Board of Health, please send or e-mail a letter of interest to WSAC along with a completed application. If you need a copy of the application, please contact Vicki Kirkpatrick, WSAC staff, at 360-753-1886 or vkirkpatrick@wacounties.org.

Timber Counties Elect New Members to the Board of Natural Resources and the Board of Directors of the National Forest Counties and Schools Coalition

At the December 3, 2004 WSAC Timber Counties meeting, the member counties held an election to replace Commissioner Glen Huntingford, Jefferson County, on the Board of Natural Resources. The Board of Natural Resources provides policy direction to the Department of Natural Resources on management of trust lands. **Ted Anderson, Skagit County Commissioner**, is the Board member elect. Commissioner Anderson was selected from a field of highly qualified candidates which included Dan Cothren, Wahkiakum County Commissioner, and Mike Doherty, Clallam County Commissioner. Commissioner Anderson will join the Board of Natural Resources at their January 4 meeting.

Commissioner Al McKee, Skamania County, was unanimously nominated as WSAC's member for the Board of Directors of the National Forest Counties and Schools Coalition (NFCSC). This NFCSC position was also held by Commissioner Huntingford. The Board of Directors will consider Commissioner McKee's nomination at their next meeting. NFCSC was formed to assist in the passage of the "Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000" (P.L. 106-393). The Coalition is currently working toward the re-authorization of the act which sunsets in 2006.

The WSAC Timber Counties also increased their assessment contribution to the WSAC Timber Program by \$10,000 for 2005. These new funds will be used to support activities related to the re-authorization of P.L. 106-393, including travel expenses for Commissioners participating in informational visits with members of Congress.

Courthouse Ramblings



The Grays Harbor County Commissioners invite you to join them as they honor **Dennis Morrisette**, Grays Harbor County Commissioner (2001 - 2004) on Monday, December 20 at 3:30 p.m. The reception will be held in the Commissioner's Meeting Room, Administration Building, 100 W. Broadway, Montesano.

The Grant County Commissioners invite you to please join them as they honor **Tim Snead**, Grant County Commissioner (1993 - 2004) on Friday, December 17, 2 to 4 p.m. This will be held in the Commissioner's Hearing Room, Grant County Courthouse, Ephrata. *"The world is round and the place which may seem like the end may also be the beginning."*

The Mason County Commissioners invite you to please join them as they host a farewell reception for Commissioner **Herb Baze** and Commissioner **Wes Johnson** on Tuesday, December 28 from 3 to 4:30 p.m. This will be held in the Commission Chambers, 411 North 5th Street, Shelton.

Columbia County Road Shop Superintendent, **Gary Heinrich**, has announced that he will retire December 31, 2004.

Gary was hired by the County Road Department in August 1956 as a mechanic helper and has been the Shop Superintendent since the mid 1970's. We wish Gary the very best

in his future endeavors and our grateful thanks for his more than 48 years of service to Columbia County.

WACO's thoughts and prayers go out to Chelan County Assessor, **Russ Griffith** who suffered a concussion recently as a result of a bad fall. Please keep Russ in your prayers and drop him a few lines of support.

According to Pacific County Assessor **Bruce Walker**, last Saturday's Aberdeen Daily World newspaper said that there were only 2 candidates for the legislative position vacated by Brian Hatfield. The article stated this was due to the fact that "Dean Takko, Cowlitz County Assessor intimidates prospective candidates". Bruce was curious if Dean "The Intimidator" (Earnhardt) Takko had a big # 3 on the side of his county car??



Calendar of Events

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Location</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Information</i>
For your convenience training and workshops are bolded.			
<u>DECEMBER 2004</u>			
Washington STATE	Resolutions – Last day to file for 2/8/05 special election.	December 23	http://www.vote.wa.gov/calendar/
CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY	WA Counties Bldg CLOSED	December 24	(360) 753-1886
NEW YEARS HOLIDAY	WA Counties Bldg CLOSED	December 31	(360) 753-1886
<u>JANUARY 2005</u>			
Washington STATE	Legislature Convenes	January 10	http://www.leg.wa.gov/wsladm/calendar.cfm
Washington Association of County Officials Board of Trustees' Meeting	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	January 12-13	(360) 753-7319
WACO/WSAC Joint Officers' Meeting	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	January 13	(360) 753-7319
WSAC Rural Issues Sub-committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	January 13	(360) 753-1886
Urban County Caucus	Mercato Ristorante', Olympia	January 13	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	January 14	(360) 753-1886
Assn of County Human Services	Olympia	January 19 - 20	(360) 753-1886
Washington State Association of County Auditors' (WSACA) Licensing Meeting	Comfort Inn, Tumwater	January 18-19	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Association of County Auditors' Legislative Meeting	Comfort Inn and WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	January 19-20	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Association of County Treasurers' Legislative Meeting	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	January 24-25	(360) 753-7319
WSAC Rural Issues Sub-committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	January 27	(360) 753-1886
Urban County Caucus	Mercato Ristorante', Olympia	January 27	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	January 28	(360) 753-1886
<u>FEBRUARY 2005</u>			
Washington State Association of County Assessors' Legislative Meeting	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	February 1-3	(360) 740-1392
WSAC Board of Directors Meeting	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	February 10	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Rally Day	TBD, Olympia	February 10	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	February 11	(360) 753-1886

Calendar of Events (continued)

<i>MARCH 2005</i>			
WSAC Rural Issues Sub-committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	March 3	(360) 753-1886
Urban County Caucus	Mercato Ristorante', Olympia	March 3	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	March 4	(360) 753-1886
National Association of Counties' (NACo) Annual Legislative Conference	Marriot Wardman Park Hotel, Washington, DC	March 4 - 8	www.naco.org
'Your Path to the Marketplace'	Pend Oreille County	Mar. 5 – Apr. 16	(509) 447-2401
WA Association of Coroners and Medical Examiners' (WACME) Medicolegal Training	WA State Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Bldg, Lacey	March 7-11	(360) 753-7319
Washington State Association of County Auditors' Recording Conference	Red Lion Hotel, Wenatchee	March 15-16	(360) 753-7319
Assn of County Human Services	Skamania County	March 16 - 18	(360) 753-1886
WCAA Annual Conference – Winter	Enzian Inn, Leavenworth	March 23 – 25	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Rural Issues Sub-committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	March 24	(360) 753-1886
Urban County Caucus	Mercato Ristorante', Olympia	March 24	(360) 753-1886
WSAC Legislative Steering Committee	WA Counties Bldg, Olympia	March 25	(360) 753-1886

WACO/WSAC Greetings

*The WACO and WSAC Staff
wish each of you and wonderful holiday.
We look forward to serving you in 2005!*

