



# County Connection

News from Washington Counties Risk Pool

Summer 2007

## New State Statute

# County Staffers Learning About Public Records Act Requirements in Latest Risk Pool Course

## Nearly 180 Attend First Three Sessions

Recent legislation has brought with it new requirements for public entities responding to requests for public records, and has lawmakers and Risk Pool leadership alike encouraging any public employee who receives such requests to be aware of what they need to do to comply with the law.

This change in statute has inspired many training courses, among them one being offered by WCRP.

Some 65 employees from four WCRP member counties turned out in Bellingham for the first of three initial sessions on *Understanding the Public Records Act 2007*. Two other Pool-sponsored classes are scheduled on Pasco and Olympia with another 110 or so registrants. More yet are being planned in the fall at various locations around the state.

John Justice, an attorney with the Tumwater firm Law, Lyman, Daniel, Kamerrer and Bogdanovich, taught a

similar session last year and is back to instruct again this year. He has handled many Public Records Act-related lawsuits at the trial court level and in the Court of Appeals.

A graduate of Gonzaga University Law School and a Washington State Bar Association (WSBA) member, John served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Tort Claims Division of the Attorney General's Office before entering private practice. He has defended many cities and counties in public records-related cases.

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**“ The courts will interpret this law broadly. The statute is clear: government agencies are required to release records unless there's an exemption. ”**

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In his presentation, John defines what a public record is, along with what actions the law requires of a public agency when a records request is received, including various deadlines, documentation and follow-through.

Also discussed are requests involving personnel-related information, what is required to be provided and what is exempt.

John's first session drew a slew of questions, such as:

- What if somebody requests a record you *should* have but can't find?
- What if a document in your files originated at another agency and was provided to yours under a

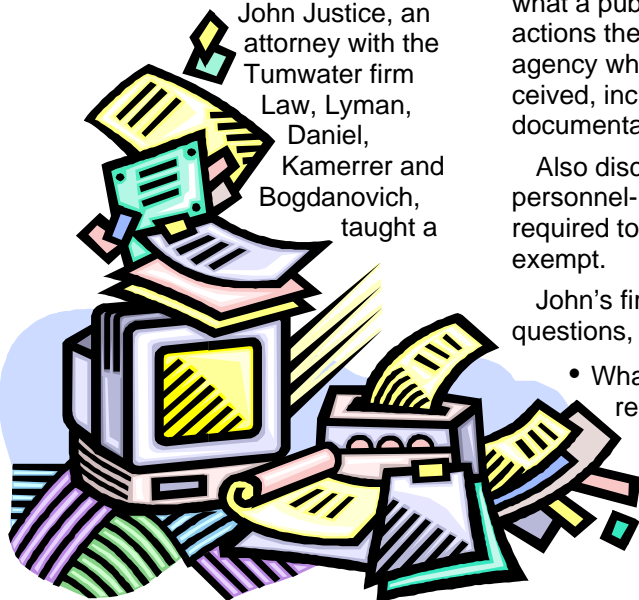
non-disclosure agreement?

- What if you get a request from an attorney for a large amount of records?
- When citizens come to the Treasurer's Office for copies of tax information, is a request form required?
- Can someone make a public records request without providing their name or a reason for wanting such records?
- What if somebody wants information in a different format than what the county has?
- What if the information requested includes a detailed description of an event resulting in the identification of a jail informant?

In addition to the class outline, the handout binder accompanying John's presentation includes the actual RCW 42.56 (Public Records Act), Office of the Attorney General's model rules, the related legislation itself, model public records-related policies from three WCRP member counties (*thanks to Clallam, Douglas and Jefferson county officials for supplying them*), and a request form already in use by one of those counties to process the requests it receives.

“The courts will interpret this law broadly,” John predicts. “The statute is clear: government agencies are required to release records unless there's an exemption.”

The three-hour course has been approved for general Continuing Legal Education credits through the WSBA for Pool county employees who are WSBA members.



# DIRECTORS PAGE

## Committee Seeks Nominations for 2007-2008

WCRP President **Steve Clem** asks the following of Member County Board Directors and Alternates:



Steve Clem

The Nominating Committee has been asked to begin formulating nominating recommendations for Executive Committee and WCRP officer candidates for the 2007-2008 fiscal year.

The Nominating Committee seeks your input for Executive Committee membership and WCRP officer nominations. Only Directors and Alternates are eligible to run for Executive

Committee membership, but only one from each member county. Only members of the Executive Committee are eligible to run for officer positions.

The current Executive Committee is comprised of 11 members, from the following counties: **Keith Goehner**, Chelan, **Toni Gilbert**, Clallam, **Steve Clem**, Douglas, **Neva Corkrum**, Franklin, **Rose Elway**, Grays Harbor, **Mike Shelton**, Island, **Mark Abernathy**, Kitsap, **Leon Long**, Spokane, **Diane Oberquell**, Thurston, **Jay Winter**, Walla Walla, and **Randy Watts**, Whatcom. **Steve Clem** is current WCRP President and **Keith Goehner** is WCRP Secretary/Treasurer.

Four Executive Committee member positions expire at the end of the Pool's fiscal year: those currently held by **Rose Elway**, **Neva**

**Corkrum**, **Leon Long** and **Jay Winter**, all four of whom have declared a desire to run for reelection. It has been our custom to nominate and elect the current Secretary/Treasurer as the incoming President.

The Risk Pool's continuing success is directly attributable to the efforts of our Members' elected officials and employees serving as Directors, Alternates, Executive Committee members and WCRP officers, in addition to the dedication of our very capable staff. Your input is important!

Contact Steve at [sclem@co.douglas.wa.us](mailto:sclem@co.douglas.wa.us) or (509) 745-8535, ext. 210, with your recommendation(s), including any personal interest, for nominations for Executive Committee positions and officers.

### Executive Committee

#### President

**Steven M. Clem**, Douglas County

#### Secretary/Treasurer

**Keith Goehner**, Chelan County

#### Committee Members

**Mark Abernathy**, Kitsap County  
**Rose Elway**, Grays Harbor County  
**Neva Corkrum**, Franklin County  
**Toni Gilbert**, Clallam County  
**Keith Goehner**, Chelan County  
**Leon Long**, Spokane County  
**Mike Shelton**, Island County  
**Diane Oberquell**, Thurston County  
**Jay Winter**, Walla Walla County

#### Risk Pool Staff

##### Administration

**Vyrle Hill**, Executive Director  
**Sue Colbo**, Auditing/Actg Officer

##### Claims

**Susan Looker**, Manager  
**Mike Cook**, Analyst  
**Candy Drews**, Analyst  
**Tammy Cahill**, Representative  
**Claire Thompson**, Assistant

##### Member Services

**David Goldsmith**, Manager  
**Jill Lowe**, Loss Control Coordinator

To access *County Connection's* e-version, available via email and Adobe Reader software, go to [www.wacounties.org/wcrp](http://www.wacounties.org/wcrp)

Help us save on postage by sending us your email address, to [kitty@wcrp.wa.gov](mailto:kitty@wcrp.wa.gov) or call (360) 292-4490. Got story/photo ideas? Please submit them to [kitty@wcrp.wa.gov](mailto:kitty@wcrp.wa.gov)



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**WASHINGTON COUNTIES  
RISK POOL**

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## PA Graces New Pool Building with Pics

Risk Pool headquarters, new last fall, are brighter, more colorful and much more pleasant thanks to **Randy Watts**, Whatcom County Chief Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney/longtime WCRP Board Member.



One of Randy's many majestic sunset pics

Watts, whose interest in nature photography has developed over the past six or so years along with a fondness for flying, served as the Risk Pool's President last year. As such, he was involved in helping secure the means to provide a smaller, more efficient building not far from WCRP's old office, a converted credit union for employees of the now-defunct Olympia brewery.

Where Randy goes, so does his digital Canon SLR and all the accessories a photographer loves. He is always scouting for shots, and when possible, brings his tripod along for night scenes. He envisions someday selling his work, which he has a talent for framing beautifully.



Randy Watts

One day, he arrived very early at the Pool office and surprised the staff with a truckload of framed prints that he donated to the Pool. He invites anyone who sees one they like to contact him for a copy. Time allowing, the 1975 Gonzaga Law School grad would like to get what he calls "landmark shots" in each of Washington's counties.

## Good Reminder: Manage Risk at Work and Home

Clark County Risk Manager **Mark Wilsdon** reminds us that it is wise to manage risk at home as well as on the job. Case in point: he and his wife built a home a few years back, and outfitted it with a GE Dishwasher.

Mark recently got word of a widespread recall due to fire potential in approximately 2.5 million GE units (bearing various brand names) sold. A liquid rinse-aid can leak from its dispenser onto the dishwasher's internal wiring which can cause an electrical short and over-

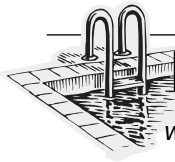
heating, posing a fire hazard to consumers.

No injuries have been reported, but nearly 200 reports of overheating and 56 of property damage have been received. For details, consult the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission website at [www.cpsc.gov/talk.html](http://www.cpsc.gov/talk.html), or GE's website [www.geappliances.com](http://www.geappliances.com)

Such a fire may affect any member county employee and possibly their productivity as well, Mark noted.

### The Pool's Mission

- To provide comprehensive and economical risk coverage,
- reduce the frequency and severity of losses, and
- decrease costs incurred in the managing and litigation of claims.



## Poolside

with Executive Director  
**Vyrle Hill**



Vyrle Hill

Wow, we're into the final third and nearing the home stretch of Pool Year 2007! There's much for all associated with the Risk Pool, present and past, to be proud of, yet more to look forward to as we look toward Pool Year 2008, WCRP's 20th year of operation!

**State Risk Management:** As many of you know, John Nicholson retired from his dual role of State Risk Manager and Local Government Self-Insurance (LGS) Program Administrator February 28. Tim Hays replaces him as the LGS Program Administrator. In his new role, Tim supports State Risk Manager Lucy Isaki with the approval and oversight of the joint self-insured local government property/liability programs and individual or joint self-insured local government employee health/welfare (medical) benefit programs.

Tim can be reached at the Office of Financial Management, Risk Management Division, General Admin. Bldg., Suite 300 (PO Box 41027), Olympia WA 98504-1027, phone (360) 902-7311, or e-mail at tim.hays@ofm.wa.gov

**Underwriting:** WCRP President **Steve Clem**, Executive Committee members **Mike Shelton** and **Mark Abernathy**, and Claims Manager **Susan Looker** traveled to New York/New Jersey with Willis' Mike Croke and Liz Miser and me in late April to meet with representatives of three companies about the upcoming liability program's reinsurance renewals.

Discussions seemed favorable but we won't know how much so until renewal quotes are presented at the Annual Meeting in late July. A similar meeting with prospective insurers of the Washington Counties Property Program held during the Public Risk Management Association (PRIMA) Annual Conference in Boston. WCRP Secretary/Treasurer **Keith Goehner** joined Mike Croke, Liz Miser and me for this meeting.

WCRP membership remains at 28 counties with Worker Hours totaling 30,746,700 (+ 2.5 percent from PY2007) and Licensed Vehicles totaling 8,014 (+ 2 percent). Twenty-five counties now participate in the

property insurance program with total reported property values (facilities, contents, vehicles and equipment) of nearly \$2.1 billion (+ 5.5 percent).

### **WCRP Summer Session/Annual**

**(Directors') Meeting:** The 2007 Summer Session meets July 24-27 at the Enzian Inn in Leavenworth. Though still subject to some refinement, plans so far include:

July 24-25: Arbinger Leadership Training. Suggested by **Jay Winter**, Walla Walla County Personnel/Risk Manager and WCRP Director, who has had several county employees attend, and supported by the Executive Committee, this thought-provoking instruction is designed to improve work performance.

Psychologist-instructor Dr. Chris Wallace will lead participants in abandoning destructive and often subconscious "self-deception" that can undermine performance on and off the job, and help them re-focus on skills that can improve individual and group performance. On Day 1, participants focus on results, individual growth, relationships, effective leadership, conflict resolution, team-building, accountability, cooperation and decision-making. On Day 2, they get to practice their new skills.

Study materials will be provided but must be ordered in advance. If you plan to enroll in this training, please contact **Kitty Bottemiller** ([kitty@wcrp.wa.gov](mailto:kitty@wcrp.wa.gov)) ASAP!

Social Gathering, July 25: Following class or your drive to Leavenworth, stop in and enjoy the company of others and light refreshments, from 4:30 to 7:30 p.m.

July 26: The morning is reserved for the Claims Administrators' and Risk Managers' Roundtable, starting at 8:45 a.m. Lunch will be provided at 12:30 p.m. The Board of Directors convenes at 1:30 p.m. to preview the Annual Meeting's agenda. The evening dinner social will be similar to last year's gathering at the Icicle Ridge Winery, beginning at 5:30 p.m.

The morning of July 27 is reserved for the Annual Meeting of the WCRP Board of Directors, convening at 9 a.m., including:

- Review/Approve Q3-2007 financial reports
- Election of four Executive Committee members and the WCRP Officers
- Review/Approve the PY2008 Joint Self-Insurance Liability Program document
- Review/Approve the independent actuaries' reports on loss rates with experience modifiers, and the deposit premiums ap-

portionment methodology

- Consider/Approve the liability program's reinsurance/excess insurance package, and the insurance/excess insurance package for the property program, and
- Review/Approve the PY2008 Operational Budget and Work Plan.

**Financial:** During the March 30th Spring Meeting, the Board of Directors amended the WCRP Underwriting Policy and increased the level of restricted reserves and net member equities combined that will be required before a surplus may be recognized. The actuarially estimated cumulative contingency margin, also referred to as "confidence factor," was increased from 85 to 98 percent. The actual confidence factor at midpoint of PY2007 (March 31st) is nearing 95 percent, based upon the Net Assets (Members' Equity) of more than \$5.5 million.

**Executive Director Contact:** Share your comments, suggestions and criticisms! Send to 2558 RW Johnson Rd SW, Suite 106, Tumwater WA 98512-6103, call (360) 292-4495, or fax (360) 292-4501.

## WCRP STAFF NEWS

### Member Services

These past few months have been a busy time on the road conducting field audits and presenting results of those completed. By the time you read this, we will have performed audits on 24 of the 28 member counties, with four left. Of the 24, 13 are complete and have been presented, six have been drafted with presentations pending, and five are in the drafting stage. We should easily have all the audits completed and presented well before the end of this fiscal year in September.

On the whole, member counties are complying with the spirit, if not the letter, of the Membership Compact and adopted WCRP policies. While all counties have good or reasonably good practices, some counties would benefit from reducing those practices into written form and formally adopting them. This written form will help bring consistency to the practice, especially when there is a turnover in personnel. The model Risk Management Policy recently distributed to the membership should be regarded as an excellent template from which to gauge existing policies and/or practices.

Staff News continued on Page 4



## STAFF NEWS *from page 3*

A composite of the audit results will form the basis for Loss Control to craft relevant training opportunities and/or to share policies/approaches among the membership.

**David Goldsmith**  
Member Services Manager

## Loss Control

Changes in the use of cell-phones while driving are coming. Gov. Greig recently signed two bills restricting use of cell-phones while driving. I thought it would be helpful to explain the changes and implementation dates.

*Engrossed House Bill 1214* takes effect January 1, 2008. This bill prohibits reading, writing or sending electronic messages while driving a motor vehicle.

*Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 5037* takes effect July 1, 2008. This bill prohibits the holding of a wireless communications device to the ear while driving.



While both offenses are considered a "secondary action" by law enforcement officers and therefore may only be cited if the driver has been detained for some other offense, the reasons for these rules are well substantiated. Holding a cell-phone and/or text messaging while driving constitute distracted driving and increase risk of an accident.

I imagine that most of you will address these changes by adding wording to your existing motor vehicle policy. The following wording is provided to get you started.

### Cell-Phone Use in Moving Motor Vehicles

Drivers of county-owned or -leased motor vehicles (and private vehicles while on county business) are prohibited from reading, writing or sending an electronic message and from holding a wireless communications device to the ear.

Exceptions to electronic messaging restrictions include:

- Reporting illegal activity
- Summoning medical/emergency help
- Preventing injury to a person/property,
- Relaying information between a transit or for-hire operator and that operator's dispatcher, in which the device is permanently affixed to the vehicle.

Exceptions to cell-phone use restrictions include:

- Operators of an authorized emergency motor vehicle, or a tow-truck responding to a disabled vehicle
- Driver of a moving motor vehicle using a wireless communications device in the hands-free mode
- Use of wireless devices to report illegal activity, to summon medical aid or other emergency assistance, or to prevent injury to a person or property, and
- A person using hearing aids.

*Note: "Hands-free" mode means the use of a wireless communication device with a speaker phone, headset or earpiece.*

While I'm not a text messenger, I do use my cell-phone while driving. My 16-year-old recently reminded me this was unsafe behavior and suggested that I stop using my cell-phone while driving. It looks like I'll be following the rules earlier than I expected!

**Jill Lowe**  
Loss Control Coordinator

## Claims Division

Per usual, the schedules of claims staff have been busy. We all have attended some type of training in the last quarter.

Claims Analyst **Mike Cook** attended the RIMS Conference in April and met claims administrators, risk managers and attorneys from the world over. "The problems we face are going on everywhere," Mike said. "Proper handling of a claim can in fact make or break any organization, no matter how large.

"The key is in finding a solution to the problem. This is what a good claims handler must do to help their organization. I attended many interesting classes, two of which stood out. The first was on basic claims handling. Each claim handler needs a system in place to follow. The claims handler must be able to look at each claim as if it was the first they have seen. The first question should be 'what do I need to do to resolve this claim?'

"One point emphasized was you only get one chance to make a first impression. How you treat the people involved will determine your success or failure in its handling. The second impressive class was one involving improving safety programs. The speakers put a chart showing a drop in claims and dollar exposure in organizations that made safety programs more than lip service."

**Candy Drews**, Claims Analyst, recently attended training on employment law:

"The hot topic at both sessions was the recent development of decisions from the circuit courts on "regarded as" disability claims. Here are some highlights.

A "disability" is defined by the ADA as: (A) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of an individual, (B) a record of such an impairment; or (C) being *regarded as* having such an impairment.

Employers are aware that discrimination against a disabled person is illegal and that a "reasonable accommodation" may be required to enable him/her to perform their job. They're also aware that treating a non-disabled person as disabled can also be illegal. The concern is whether employers are aware that regarding a person as disabled may trigger the same reasonable accommodation obligation as if that person was actually disabled.

An increasing number of courts have concluded that an "employer can be liable for failing to provide reasonable accommodation to employees 'regarded as' disabled although they are not actually disabled." If an adverse employment action is prompted by the thought that the employee has a substantial impairment, the employer could end up turning a non-discriminatory termination into an ADA violation.

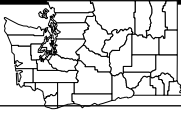
In *Sutton v. United Airlines, Inc.* 527 U.S. 471 (1999), the Supreme Court held that an employee may be "regarded as" disabled in one of two ways. "(1) a covered entity mistakenly believes that a person has a physical impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities, or (2) a covered entity mistakenly believes that an actual, non-limiting impairment substantially limits one or more major life activities." 527U.S. at 489.

The Supreme Court in *Sutton* further instructed that "In both cases, it is necessary that a covered entity entertain misperceptions about the individual – it must believe either that one has a sustaining impairment when, in fact, an impairment is not so limiting. Id.

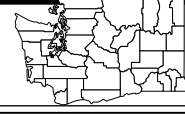
At this time there is a split of authority between the circuits regarding whether there is a duty for reasonable accommodations for "regarded as" individuals. Time will tell if the "regarded as" individuals will have the same right to reasonable accommodation as actual disabled individuals.

As always, please feel free to call us in the Claims Division with your comments and questions.

**Susan Looker**  
Claims Manager



# MEMBER NEWS



## Clark County

**Mark Wilsdon** is the County's new Risk Manager, replacing Ed Pavone, who retired in May. Mark and wife Doreen Kaye have lived in Vancouver for the last 27 years with two cats and no kids. Before that, they lived in Klamath Falls, Ore. A veteran of the Army, Army National Guard and Army Reserve for the last 29-plus years, Mark has been to Iraq twice, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, Europe, Japan and many other places. He is still Command Sgt. Major of a Two-Star Army Reserve Command with 12,500 Army Reserve Soldiers.



Mark Wilsdon

Over the last 20 years, he has worked in Commercial, Personal Lines, Inland Marine and some Ocean Marine Insurance, in addition to his own transportation business, Farmers Insurance Group, Grange Insurance Association, and the City of Portland, Ore. He has completed his BBA, MBA, CPCU, ARM and is a Certified Arbitration-Forum Arbitrator in Special, Subrogation, Property and Auto. Just prior to starting with the County, he was a Senior Risk Specialist and Senior Claims Analyst with the City of Portland.

"I have been thoroughly impressed with the quality and professionalism of the leadership and staff of the Pool," he said. He also lauds the quick response and working relationship the Pool has with Willis of Seattle.

Clark's Board of Commissioners appointed Mark to represent the County on the WCRP Board on June 5. **Bronson Potter**, Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney, will continue as Board Alternate.

## Columbia County

The County's Public Works Department was recognized in Evergreen Safety Council's April 2007 newsletter as a member of the Seattle-based organization.

## Grays Harbor County

**Joy Carossino** has joined the County's Emergency and Risk Management staff, replacing Sandi Duffey, who accepted a position in Grant County. Joy has been with Grays Harbor for almost five years, as a clerk/typist in Public Works. **Anne Sullivan** was her supervisor when she was **Paul Easter's** Adminis-



Joy Carossino

trative Assistant. Prior to county employment, Joy worked at home for 11 years doing data entry for Raonier NW Forest Resources and as a distributor for an herbal company. Before that, she was an office manager for Data Computer Services in Aberdeen, and in the accounting department for Grays Harbor Paper Company. She and husband Joe have two children, all of whom are bicyclists, campers and hikers. She has taken some insurance-related training online and looks forward to what training the future holds. She's always lived on Grays Harbor but enjoys exploring other places along the West Coast.

## Island County

**Jan Ford**, Executive Secretary in the County Commissioners' Office, retired May 31. As assistant to Commissioner Mike Shelton, longtime Pool Board and Executive Committee member, Jan has been a frequent help in making travel plans. She has been employed by the county for 30 years and worked with 17 different commissioners. She and her husband now look forward to traveling. Jan was replaced by **Ingrid Smith**, who has been with the County for several years.

The County was recognized in Evergreen Safety Council's April newsletter for 25 years of membership.

## Jefferson County

The Public Works Department is recognized in Evergreen Safety Council's April newsletter for five years of membership.

## Kitsap County

**Maureen Walker**, Risk Management Specialist in the Risk Management Division, retired June 6. She has been active as co-chair on WCRP's Risk Management Committee, which she called a "great inspiration and wonderful opportunity" to get acquainted with other members and to join forces on projects to help all member counties.

Her insurance career began in Texas, working for various brokerage firms over 10 years. This background led to managing the Risk Management and Insurance Department for two private international businesses in San Francisco, a paper-recycling business and a temp agency, then to work in the environmental, health and safety field for an electronic manufac-



Maureen Walker



Risk Pool photo  
WCRP President Steve Clem (right) bids farewell to Ed Pavone at the Spring Board Meeting. Ed retired as Clark County Risk Manager in May. The two are wearing "race helmets" in honor of Ed's favorite pastime, race car driving.

turing firm in California's Silicone Valley. She moved to Washington where she was employed for a furniture manufacturer in Kent. When it closed, she accepted the Risk Management Analyst position in Kitsap in 2002. She initially handled property and liability claims then shifted to the environmental, health and safety arena when **Mark Abernathy** became Risk Manager.

"Learning the ins and outs of county government has been both challenging and rewarding," Maureen said. "I will miss working with all the dedicated employees as well as the WCRP staff and the other WCRP county members."

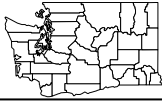
She has no concrete plans, except to spend most of the summer with her granddaughter, studying teaching English as a second (foreign) language, perhaps to teach overseas part time. Maureen's replacement has been hired but was not on board as of press time.

The County's Public Works Department recently renewed their Evergreen Safety Council membership for the sixth year.

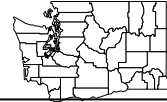
## Lewis County

Risk Manager **Harry Green**, a Toastmaster in the Chehalis-Centralia Toastmasters Club (The Mighty 1290) won club, area and division speech evaluation contests this spring and competed May 19 at the district level, where he performed well but did not place among the top three contestants of more than 60 clubs in Western Washington. Toastmasters International has helped nearly 4 million people learn and practice public speaking. It boasts 211,000 members in 10,500 clubs in 90

Member News continued on Page 6



# MEMBER NEWS



## MEMBER COUNTY NEWS

from Page 5

countries. Members usually meet weekly and practice prepared speeches and other roles as toastmasters, joke teller, timer, grammarian, speech evaluation and general evaluator, Harry noted.

### Pend Oreille County

**Don Ramsey** was recently promoted from Assistant County Engineer to County Engineer. He retains his duties as County Risk Manager and will track the financial aspect of claims, while **Tom Metzger**, Prosecuting Attorney/Coroner, has been designated as the County's Claims Administrator.

### Skamania County

Two staffers were recognized recently for 25 years of County service: **Marilyn Butler**, Administrative Services Director and WCRP Board Director, and **Don Clack**, Lead Worker, Buildings and Grounds. He received a 25-year plaque at the Board of Commissioners meeting May 22, and Marilyn received hers May 29. She has been employed in the Commissioners' Office since May 1982, beginning part time on special projects, and part time for Regional Planning. The Commissioners' Office position went full time in January 1987 as Staff Assistant, and evolved over the years to the current position, which involves work with the Pool and County duties encompassing budget, risk management, personnel and administrator to the BoCC.

Don joined the staff in May 1982 as a Maintenance Trainee. That fall he was hired as a Facility Maintenance Specialist. Four months later he assumed Animal Control Officer duties as well, through most of 1989. He was promoted in 1995 to Trade Specialist in Buildings and Grounds, and later that year, promoted to his current position.

In other County news, Skamania residents continue to experience the effects of a massive mudslide which began in the Stevenson area during heavy rains last winter. For details and photos of nature's forces, go to [rockcreekslide.com](http://rockcreekslide.com)

### Walla Walla County

**Tom Glover** has joined the County as new Community Development Director. He has a Master's degree in Urban and

Regional Planning from the University of Colorado, is a native of Spokane County and a graduate of Eastern Washington University.

Over the past 17 years, he has lived in Colorado, working in various aspects of public-sector planning from transportation and transit planning to development review. He made a transition from planning to municipal management when he accepted a job as Town Administrator of Mancos, Colo., in the Four Corners Region near Mesa Verde National Park, about seven years ago.

Working as an Administrator of a rural community of 1,200 where cattle drives, ruins of ancient civilizations, and high-priced second homes all impact the community, has given him a unique perspective on planning, cultural values and management.

"I am the point of contact between the Town Board and staff," Tom said. "And, because we have a small staff, during the course of a day I wear several different hats, depending on the situation. I am the Zoning Code Administrator, the Personnel Director, the Contract Manager, the Grant Writer, the Complaint Department, and occasionally, when/if needed, the Counselor. My work takes me to realms I never knew I would ever go: police management, water and sewer project development, personnel policy research, and park renovation...."

From the planning perspective, Mancos is facing pressure for growth and becoming a bedroom community for Durango, a city of 14,000, 26 mountainous miles away, where the median home price is around \$400,000 and average income is about twice that of Mancos.

Tom's involvement in the community has gone beyond his everyday oversight of the town. He has served on several boards and committees, and recently has been helping a group of local business owners develop a project to rehabilitate the downtown river corridor.

He also has been an active participant in the area's Farmer's Markets and spent free time developing a small hobby farm, bicycling the County's winding roads and highways, and avoiding the honey-do list.



*Risk Pool photo*  
Mary Davis, right, is pictured here with a FEMA co-worker in their temporary Lacey quarters in May. They and others occupied several floors of an old state building, sorting out results of local winter flooding and mudslides.

In addition to working for FEMA, Mary serves as a defensive driving instructor for WCRP. She retired as Grays Harbor County Risk Manager in 2005. Her last FEMA assignment involved preparing incident reports and informational summaries among many other duties.

Shortly after this photo was taken, Mary was reassigned to Alabama. She still calls Hoquiam home and looks forward to time off soon to see grandkids and other family.

## Sniff Your Way Home Safely

Having your car "smell wrong" can cause speeding, dozing, road rage and perhaps collisions, according to the RAC Foundation, a British independent body established to protect/promote interests of motorists. Scents to avoid:

- **Chamomile, Jasmine, and Lavender** - all used to treat insomnia, these can over-relax.
- The smell of **fast food wrappers, fresh bread or pastry** - can cause irritability and a preponderance to speed toward food.
- **Fresh-cut grass, pine woods or roadside flowers** - while relaxing some drivers, can send others into a nostalgic state where they fail to notice their speed.
- A mix of **leather seats and oil** - can potentially then unconsciously cause a driver to adopt risk-taking behavior of young drivers.

The right smell can help you stay more alert, focused and forgive others' mistakes. Try:

- **Peppermint or cinnamon** - improves concentration and makes you less irritable.
- **Lemon or coffee** - good for clear thinking and high concentration.
- **Sea ozone** - a blast of salt air can encourage deep breathing, relaxing the muscles, relieving stress and calming the mind.



# TRAINING & EVENTS

## Summer Conference in Leavenworth July 24-27

Leadership training, roundtable discussions, the annual Board of Directors Workshop/ Meeting and social activities are slated for WCRP's 19th annual Summer Conference the week of July 23 in Leavenworth.



Details were recently sent to Board Members, Risk Managers, Claims Administrators and other interested parties.

Questions? E-mail [kitty@wcrp.wa.gov](mailto:kitty@wcrp.wa.gov) or call (360) 292-4490.

## Members Take Part in WCRP Compact Training this Spring

Congrats to the following for successfully completing the *Intro to Property and Liability Insurance* course offered by the Risk Pool last May in Yakima:

**Cathy Mulhall**, Chelan County; **Drew Woods**, Columbia County; **Anne Sullivan**, Grays Harbor County; **Lorna Delaney**, Jefferson County; **Sally Copinger**, Kitsap County; **Harry Green**, Lewis County; **Todd Barr**, Mason County; **Andrew Lampe**, Okanogan County; **Bryan Harrison**, Pacific County; **Rhonda Ackerman**, **Steve Bartel** and **Angie Schoeffler**, Spokane County; **Randy Watts**, Whatcom County; **Larry Peterson**, Yakima County, and **Jill Lowe**, WCRP Loss Control Coordinator.

*Intro to Claims*: **Cindy Dietz**, Chelan County; **Ryan Verhulp**, Franklin County; **Paulette Young**, Lewis County; **Steve Bozarth** and **Nanette Kallunki**, Okanogan County; **Don Ramsey**, Pend Oreille County; **Cindy Erwin** and **Larry Peterson**, Yakima County, and **Tammy Cahill**, WCRP Claims Representative.

Completing this training, provided by the Insurance Institute of America, helps counties satisfy their WCRP Membership Compact requirements.

Thanks to WCRP Claims Manager **Susan Looker**, and Mike Croke and Liz Miser of Willis, for assisting with the course reviews and proctoring the exams.



Risk Pool photos

## Board Development

Above and left, Risk Pool Board Members participate in a lively exercise led by Lance Calisch of Olympia, a specialist in organizational development. The activity was part of WCRP's Spring Session in Stevenson in March.



## Driver Safety

**Chris Curtis**, Risk Analyst Trainer for Thurston County, right, leads a recent defensive driving course for employees as a sound risk management practice and to comply with the WCRP Membership Compact.



## Risk Pool's April Focus Training Keys in on Sexual Harassment-Related Issues

Sexual harassment-related liability cases that go to trial can be very unpredictable, says Mike Patterson, an attorney with Lee, Smart, Cook, Martin & Patterson of Seattle. Mike is a frequent Risk Pool instructional contributor and taught two *Focus* classes for WCRP member county employees in April, one in Moses Lake and one in Tacoma. Attendance totaled 70.

How to steer clear of huge jury verdicts: avoid them altogether by 1) having good written policies and practices in place that are objectively and thoroughly reviewed at least once a year by legal counsel, 2) implementing these policies and procedures objectively, and 3) offering training for county employees at all levels of job classifications.

"Everyone needs to understand these and know who to report (problems or concerns) to," he said. "It is important (for a county) to have a central repository for sexual-related complaints to help identify problems."

Some stats from Mike's class: nationally, a sexual harassment-related claim averages \$377,000; in the central United States, \$144,000; South, \$247,000; and on the West Coast (including California), \$876,000. (These figures do not count attorney fees.)

"These cases are expensive and unpredictable," Mike said. "The verdicts can get as high as \$4,000,000 and \$6,000,000."



Mike Patterson



# Jefferson's Historic Courthouse Gets A Makeover

## County Preserves Past, Prepares for Future

Jefferson County's historic, Victorian-style courthouse with its signature clock tower visible from miles around is being restored to its original grandeur and beyond.

Efforts by structural experts and funding from a preservation grant are making the multi-phase project, now nearing completion, possible.

Back in the late 1990s, routine inspections of the courthouse revealed that aging materials on this National Historic Landmark were deteriorating - not good news for the structure and its beloved 124-foot-high clock tower.

In 1998, investigations began, identifying the need for a structural retrofit.

Three years later, the Nisqually-based earthquake further shook the structure and a search for grant money to finance upgrades was launched. Public awareness and support grew as the project entered a "pre-design phase" three years later and the County's Public Works staff developed a team of qualified consultants to evaluate practical options for work on the tower and related structural hazards.

A year after that, a team of architects and engineers was selected to develop an option chosen from the project's previous phase. The tower's upper portion, primarily above the courthouse roofline and determined as the greatest hazard, was addressed. Planners believed that work could be done without having to evacuate the building, reducing cost and schedule delay. Staff would not have to move out.

In early 2006, the County published specifications, invited bids and a "notice to proceed" was issued in May. Construction began and continued through the fair-weather months. Unforeseen conditions were encountered and repaired or replaced as work progressed. Five floors in the tower itself were replaced.

The project also involved reinforcing the corner turrets and repairing/replacing sheet-metal façade elements as well as the high roof. Brick and stone masonry were rehabilitated, as well as the clockworks, bell, weight shafts and stairs.

The total project was budgeted at just over \$3 million, with construction amount-

ing to about two-thirds of that.

County leaders credit help from Historic Preservation Grant funds, which counties with designated historic landmarks are eligible to apply for.

Concrete was laid on the ground surrounding the courthouse to support and stabilize the necessary scaffolding, noted County Commissioner **Phil Johnson**, a contractor by trade. Now that most of the overhead work is finished, left behind are attractive pathways that are ADA compliant and help direct stormwater away from the building's foundation. They have been enhanced with appealing landscaping.

The tower has been reinforced with steel rebar and epoxy mortar for flexibility and strength. Johnson recalls. "You used to be able to stick a finger into the mortar to the second knuckle," Johnson recalls. "We used to vacate the building when the winds got to 80 miles an hour."

As the latest restoration project approaches completion, clockworks are being tested and adjusted for stable operation.

There is still substantial work to be done in anchoring the roof and restoring (primarily south-facing) windows to increase energy efficiency, Johnson said. "Word is that the state Legislature has reauthorized funding to preserve historic sites, so we're going for it (another request)."

The original courthouse was erected in 1892 and has been in restoration "most of my adult life," Johnson said. The tower's bronze bell alone weighs 3,500 pounds, and was shipped as ballast around the Horn, and installed with a pulley system complete with a white horse. Johnson isn't sure of the symbolism but thinks it is somehow fitting. "Sometime this year, we figured out, the bell will ring its millionth time." The clock chimes hourly.

Other fun courthouse facts:

- Willis Ritchie, the architect who designed the magnificent structure, was just 26 when he started the project and misrepresented his age at the time to get the commission.



Photo by Gordon Ramstrom, Public Works Architectural Projects Planner

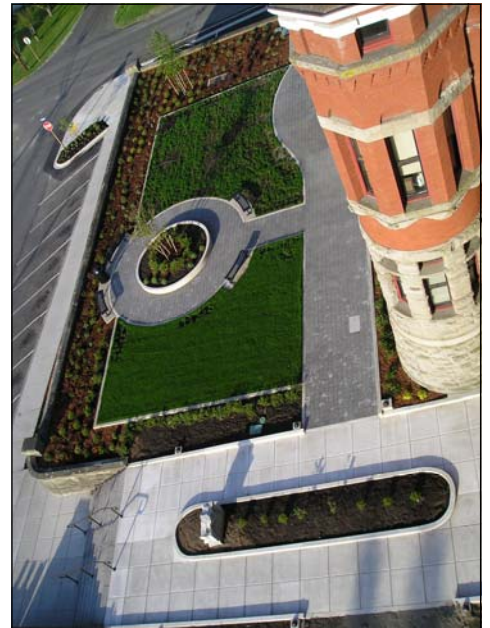


Photo by Loring Bemis, Central Services Facility Manager

Top photo: the work in progress; bottom, new landscaping and walkways frame the recently completed restoration.

"There is a lot of continuity to his design throughout, but some disconnects, too," Johnson marvels.

- The building was electrified in 1912. Prior to that, the winding of the clock's counterweights required the work of two men and a half-day's labor each week. The weights extend to the basement level.
- Some 4 million bricks were shipped from St. Louis to build the courthouse.
- The basement, which now houses the core of county government - commissioners' offices, staff and meeting chambers, administration and emergency departments - once accommodated the Sheriff's office and jail.