



# County Connection

News from the Washington Counties Risk Pool

May - August 2015



## POOL NEWS

### **Summer Conference and Annual (Board of Directors') Meeting Report**



*Member County attendees, staff and others enjoyed a fun evening of baseball watching local favorites, The Walla Walla Sweets. Next time you talk to Senior Claims Analyst Mike Cook, ask him about his spectacular dive for a foul ball.*

By all accounts, the Summer Conference and Annual Meeting of the Washington Counties Risk Pool was a great success; from Wednesday night's baseball game to the banquet at Three Rivers, from the Risk Management/Claims Administration Roundtable to the Board meeting and the decisions regarding coverage, program structure, and pricing.

Always enlightening is the Risk Management/Claims Administration Roundtable, where the member counties have an opportunity to talk about issues and losses; management techniques and successes (or not so successful outcomes). Dominating the discussion were issues concerning jail liability and cyber breaches. In all, 32 separate topics were broached. The Roundtable allows counties to learn from each other, and to begin thinking about issues which may not be immediately at their door step, but might be in the future.

The Annual Meeting is also a time to recognize the good work we do, and to say thank you to those who have provided service to the organization over the years. A highlight of the award luncheon is the presentation of the Dragon Awards. Recognition goes to the counties with the best combined loss record (frequency and severity per million worker hours).

- Golden Dragon (1st place): Okanogan County
- Silver Dragon Award (2nd place): Columbia County
- Bronze Dragon Award (3rd place): Kittitas County
- Copper Dragon Award (4th place): Adams County

Congratulations to these award winners, and to all member counties for embracing risk management at the local level; it is through your combined efforts that the Pool continues to prosper.

The business of the Pool is the responsibility of the Board of Directors, its executive committee and officers. Elected to the executive committee for



*The Walla Walla Sweets Onion and the Mariner Moose made an appearance at the baseball game. Thanks to Tammy Sullenger from Clallam County for the photo!*

Continued on page 2

# POOL NEWS

three-year terms were Steve Clem (Douglas County), Bob Koch (Franklin County) and Lisa Young (Kittitas County). Jill Johnson (Island County) was elected to fill a previously vacated executive committee position. Two officers were elected for Py2016: Keith Goehner (Chelan County) as Vice President / President-Elect, and Drew Woods (Columbia County) as Secretary/Treasurer, with Lisa Young (Kittitas County) moving onto the office of President. Congratulations to all of these individuals as they take on the leadership roles of the Pool on behalf of the Board of Directors.

As the Pool's net position continues to grow, albeit at a slower pace, the Finance Committee has taken on the task, in conjunction with the actuary, to review and update the Pool's Target Fund Balance. Once completed, the updated range will allow the Finance Committee to begin looking at actions to recommend in the event that the net position deviates from the targeted range. Along the same lines, the Investment Committee is actively engaged with Chandler Asset Management to administer the membership's resources to maximize investment returns.

The Pool is only as strong as its Member Counties, their representatives, and those who provide services or are employed by the organization. Thank you all for your contributions to the continued success of the Washington Counties Risk Pool.



## ***Executive Director Search***

The Washington Counties Risk Pool (WCRP) is seeking a new Executive Director. Founded in 1988, WCRP is an association created to provide to member counties programs of joint self-insurance, joint purchasing of insurance and joint contracting for or hiring of personnel to provide risk management, claims handling and administrative services. WCRP's principal office is located in Tumwater, only 10 minutes south of Washington's capital, Olympia. This is the ideal opportunity for a self-motivated leader with strong executive skills and upper level administrative experience looking to work with a cohesive board of directors and dedicated staff at a fiscally strong and well-managed organization in one of the most beautiful regions in the Pacific Northwest!

For a complete job description and to apply online, please visit the Prothman Company at <http://www.prothman.com/> and click on "Current Searches." For questions, please call 206-368-0050. Qualified applicants are strongly encouraged to apply by **September 27, 2015** (first review, open until filled).

### ***SAVE THE DATES!***

*WSAC County Leaders Conference (Nov. 17-19, 2015)*

*PLUS*

*WCRP Roundtable and Board Meeting (Nov. 19-20, 2015)*

*Skamania Lodge, Stevenson, WA*



**David Goldsmith**, Member Specialty Services

# MEMBER SERVICES



## ***Road Show 2015***

Executive Director Vyrle Hill and I completed our last Member County visitation in early August. We were both struck by how attentive the memberships' legislative authorities are to the breadth of liability faced in doing the public's business; from jails to land use, personnel to road design, and everything in between. The concept of Enterprise Risk Management certainly applies to the decentralized nature of the county government organizational structure. Through all of the organizational impediments, risk management is generally being emphasized across the full spectrum of county activities.

Everyone likes a good success story, and it is difficult to top the success that WCRP has experienced over the past ten years, going from a negative net position to a positive net position that is designed to withstand the most challenging of financial circumstances. This occurred with a lot of work and focus at all levels, from the Board and Executive Committee to Staff, Consultants, and the Membership. Each has played a vital role in the success that WCRP has experienced. Given the current solid financial and organizational foundation, the future bodes well for the Pool to continue to provide its important role in serving the risk transfer and prevention needs of its membership.

## ***PIMS to be Replaced***

At the annual meeting of the WCRP, the Board of Directors approved the acquisition of a replacement product for the current Property Inventory Management System. The replacement application, Asset Management Platform ("AMP"), is a tool designed to function beyond the creation of statements of values for insuring purposes; it is designed to truly assist with managing properties at the county level. The selection of this replacement is intended to provide the membership with not only a more user-friendly tool to manage properties for insuring purposes, but a value added tool for the membership to manage their equipment fleets, owned and leased properties, utilities, contents, etc. The planned fall/winter implementation should have the system fully functioning by the initial Py2017 renewal efforts.

Included with this acquisition is a series of hands-on workshops and training sessions open to all who may be involved in managing a county's property to ensure that the full value of this application is utilized. Look for the implementation schedule this fall, and begin thinking how this tool can serve your jurisdiction in managing its properties.

*There's lots of good stuff on the WCRP website. Check it out at: [www.wcrp.info](http://www.wcrp.info)*



**Jill Lowe, Loss Control Coordinator**

# LOSS CONTROL NEWS

## ***Enterprise Risk Management***

The Public Risk Management Association (PRIMA) is considered one of the preeminent “go to” organizations for public risk managers. Lisa Young of Kittitas County (incoming WCRP President) and I participated in a three-part Enterprise Risk Management (ERM) workshop this summer. The ERM workshops were developed and hosted by PRIMA and RIMS (Risk and Insurance Management Society).

Enterprise Risk Management is described as taking traditional risk management to a higher level because it assesses risk throughout an organization, considering both threats and opportunities. Our goal was to learn the fundamentals of ERM and report to the WCRP Board on how ERM might be implemented at the Pool and County level. In general, ERM is:

- Risk management that has moved beyond the traditional insurance (risk transfer), loss interventions and management of claims.
- Risk management decisions that are made with consideration of the organization’s mission and/or core values.
- Risk management decisions that ensure the organization has a current and comprehensive understanding of its risks in relation to its objectives, and that the risks it takes are within its risk attitude/criteria.

Is Enterprise Risk Management just the latest trend that will disappear like TQM? We don’t suspect so. Stay tuned.

WCRP’s classes and webinars do not have a registration fee for member counties’ attendees! For more information or to register for a class, see the WCRP webpage at [www.wcrp.info](http://www.wcrp.info) and click on the Training tab. Class descriptions can be found under the More Information link. Registration is quick and easy, just click on the registration link and fill out a short form.



# COUNTY NEWS



Risk Pool Alternate Director David Alvarez received a Volunteer of the Year award in May from the Clallam-Jefferson Pro Bono Lawyers for his services as a pro bono lawyer. David helped people at three free legal clinics offered by the bar, organized an event to support East Jefferson Habitat for Humanity, and assisted with the bylaws for his church. He has belonged to the Jefferson County Bar Association since 2005. (From [pt.leader.com](http://pt.leader.com); June 10, 2015)

Royce Buckingham with Whatcom County is not only a Civil Prosecutor, he is also a published author. He has written several novels for middle grade and young adult readers, and his ghost story, *The Dead Boys*, was a Junior Library Guild selection and won the 2014 Washington State Sasquatch Book Award. His latest novel for adult readers is an adventure thriller about a prosecuting attorney fighting for survival in the Alaskan wilderness.





## WCRP BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT Featuring Lisa Ayers



### WCRP Officers/Executive Committee

Py 2015 President  
Andrew Woods, Columbia County  
Py 2015 Vice President  
Lisa Young, Kittitas County  
Py 2015 Secretary/Treasurer  
Keith Goehner, Chelan County  
Other Members  
Clyde Carpenter, Cowlitz County  
Thad Duvall, Douglas County  
Robert E. Koch, Franklin County  
Jill Johnson, Island County  
David Alvarez, Jefferson County  
Lisa Ayers, Pacific County  
Steve Bartel, Spokane County  
Tammy Devlin, Thurston County

### Risk Pool Staff

#### Administration

Vyrle Hill, Executive Director  
Sue Colbo, Accounting Officer  
Stacey Spears, Administrative Asst.  
Trish Todd, Office Assistant

#### Claims

Susan Looker, Manager  
Mike Cook, Senior Analyst  
Joe Campeau, Senior Analyst  
Holly Fierro, Analyst  
Lisa McMeekin, Representative  
Sally King, Assistant

#### Member Services

David Goldsmith, Specialty Services  
Jill Lowe, Loss Control

To receive this newsletter by email,  
or if you have a story or photos to  
share, contact us:  
[trish@wcrp.wa.gov](mailto:trish@wcrp.wa.gov)

Published by



WASHINGTON  
COUNTIES  
RISK POOL

Created by Counties for Counties

[www.wcrp.info](http://www.wcrp.info)

*Official Work title:* Pacific County Commissioner

*Number of Years working for the County:* I served six years as a Management and Fiscal Analyst and am in my fifth year as a commissioner.

*What drew you to your current career?* I worked for the County Commissioners and appreciated the potential for positive change that went with the office. I felt that I could step up the representation and improve the livability of our communities.

*Description of Family:* Married for 34 years. We have two daughters and five grandchildren.

*How did you meet your husband?* We met in 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Our school lockers were assigned in alphabetical order by last name. His was the last "A", and mine was the first "B".

*Where did you grow up?* My early years were in California. When I was 15, my family moved to Woodland, WA.

*Where do you live:* We live on 30 acres in what some would call, "the middle of nowhere", and we love it.

*What do you like to do when you aren't working for the county?* I enjoy construction projects, gardening, riding quads, and music.

*Have you taken any major trips during the last five years?* The last trip we took was our fifth trip to Disneyworld. With or without kids or grandkids, we always have fun. You know they say "it's the happiest place on earth".

*Do you have pets or farm animals?* We've had cows and horses, but now we're down to two dogs and one cat.

*Would you be willing to share an embarrassing moment?* My husband and I eloped. The plan was to be married in a chapel on the Navy base in San Diego. I made my wedding dress, he wore his dress blues, we got the license, scheduled the chapel, and even hired a photographer. When we got to the chapel, the chaplain asked where our witnesses were. We didn't think about witnesses and two were required. The chaplain left the room and was gone a good 10 minutes. When he came back, he had a janitor holding a mop, in tow. With the witnesses in place (the photographer and the janitor), the wedding proceeded.

