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Executive Director Report



Marshall Doak
Executive Director
marshall@seweda.org

Stewardship, Transitions and Entrepreneurship

It is an interesting experience to join an organization that is undergoing change, transitioning from what has been, to becoming what the times demand. I can think of few other experiences that are as personally challenging or demanding than to deal with change, communicate the dynamics of what is happening to the organization and interested parties, and manage through the issues. The immediate concern is to survive, and then develop the personal and organizational skills needed in order to be successful in a changing environment. Somewhere along the way, as programs and focus develop, a sense of calm and reward replace the stress. It becomes evident that not only has the organization survived, but the developments are matched to the changing times. Goals, programs, and work plans all line up to accomplish the organization's mission. Everything becomes well again. The net result is that people are employed, communities are supported, and the private sector economy is strengthened.

Our current experience at SEWEDA is a mix of the favorable and disagreeable. State funding issues are a major concern, while the member support to SEWEDA is outstanding. We will continue to court support from our current members, add new members, and return top-quality service to our District as a result. In this manner, we emulate the businesses we work with in our region that have to deal with these issues on a daily basis.

Three words spring to mind as I reacquaint myself with life in Eastern Washington. They are: Stewardship, Transitions, and Entrepreneurship. In many ways, these words encompass the dynamics of what I see in our four-County region as well as any three words can.

(Continued)

Executive Director Report (cont.)

I've discussed transitions for organizations above, but the truth is that we are all in a constant state of transition. We deal with personal change, changes in society and finance, and changes in the market for our services and products as businesses every day. New skills are required, as the opportunities of today may not be opportunities for long. We are required to be planners, be proactive and energetic, be progressive in leading and supporting other's lead, and to build the conditions necessary for progress. There is no course of study, no blueprint available to copy; there is only a creative process of engaging in issues that affect people's lives in their communities. We work for success, and then keep a positive outlook for what is possible.

Stewardship is woven into the fabric of life in the SEWEDA District. Any area that celebrates its heritage as much as all of our cities, towns, and communities do understands stewardship very well. The notion that only through the careful stewardship of the resources we have been given will we progress forward does not need an explanation here. This outstanding characteristic is lacking in so many areas of the nation, but certainly helps define who and what the Inland Northwest is and represents. This stewardship concept is being shared with others outside the area, and I see many ways that this is happening from North Whitman County through West Columbia County. Stewardship is alive and well within SEWEDA, and the dedication of our staff in providing services through difficult times past, present, and future also speaks loudly to the practical art of stewardship.

Entrepreneurship is a fairly long word, and it encompasses many concepts. Several of these concepts are: individualism, programs, effort, risk and reward, forward-thinking, and growth. So many characteristics of entrepreneurship are imbedded within stewardship, and it can arguably be either a leader or a result of transitions and opportunity. At SEWEDA, it is our obligation and greatest joy to be supportive of entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs have traditionally been celebrated as leaders, having a vision for what can be. This directs and moves us forward as a society. Entrepreneurship is a cornerstone of business expansion and retention efforts that we engage in daily at SEWEDA.

There are many examples of entrepreneurial efforts and programs in SouthEast Washington, and individual efforts to support this extensive area are coalescing at this time. Just the process of coordinating and aligning support efforts with multiple interested parties is an entrepreneurial adventure in itself. More will be written in the future of entrepreneurial efforts within both the private and public sectors, as the active promotion of entrepreneurial endeavors can bring great rewards.

It is truly exciting to move back to Eastern Washington and be involved with the dynamic transitions that are occurring. SEWEDA is moving forward, building upon a foundation of stewardship, managing the transitions, and taking an entrepreneurial approach to community building within our District. We will celebrate our success through all of the individual positive results we support and lead throughout SouthEast Washington and the extended region.

Asotin County



Tina Davidson
Managing Director,
Asotin County
tina@seweda.org

SEWEDA Welcomes Industry Visitors to the Valley

This newsletter covers the Asotin County Managing Directors activity for September, October and November of 2011. With fall here and gone and winter upon us, we have been so busy these past few months; I'm excited to highlight what's been going on!

Asotin County (cont):

Snake River Export Boat Builders Program

We had the Boat Builders Export In-bound Trade Mission – the U.S. Commercial Service Trade Specialists were here in September! They came from **Spain, Germany, Belgium, and Turkey**. We had Angela Turrin (Madrid, Spain), Felix Happe (Frankfurt, Germany), Karel Vantomme (Brussels, Belgium) and Berrin Erturk (Izmir, Turkey).

On September 7th, 8th and 9th 2011 the four Specialists visited Clarkston and Lewiston to begin a business relationship with participants in the Boat Builders Export Program. The first two days were spent visiting the boat factories, seeing products being manufactured and networking with company management. The evening of the 8th, SEWEDA hosted a



community reception with the boat builders at the Quality Inn. On the third day they took a helicopter ride to see the valley, followed by a jet boat trip up the river to explore the incredible Hells Canyon and then that evening to the Lewiston Round Up. These specialists will return to their countries and promote the Boat Builders Export program. The in-bound trade mission was a major piece of the Snake River Boat Builders Export Program 2011,

combined with CE Mark consulting and certification, all geared toward exhibiting in the second annual Snake River Boats Pavilion at boot Dusseldorf, January, 2012 in Dusseldorf, Germany.

Industry Visitors to the Valley - Dinner Cruise

I also had the opportunity to partake in the Dinner Cruise with nine journalists from the US, Germany, China, and European magazines and TV. These journalists represent a broad spectrum of disciplines from site selectors to trade journals. They toured local businesses, along with the dinner cruise to Hells Canyon.

American Manufacturer Network – AMN

Things have been moving along with the AMN. AMN has its CCR certification, database and a website is being developed. Bateaux Strategies was selected as the consultant team for the AMN. A contract between CEDA and Bateaux Strategies was signed on the 15th of November, 2011. Nathan DeSpain an Americorps Volunteer was selected and his contract period is from October 17, 2011 to August 31, 2012. A program manager is in the process of being hired, and then an assistant will follow based on the quality of the manager. And we have manufacturers that are ready to start bidding on government contracts. The success of the organization is based off the success of the manufacturers increasing business opportunities while addressing Department of Defense procurement challenges. The AMN services and technical assistance will be fully operational on or before January 2012. For more information, visit the Clearwater Economic Development website: [AMN information page](#) or contact Dave Bonfield with Northwest Intermountain Manufacturers Association at: dbonfield@tds.net.



Twelve O'clock High Mini Leadership Series - Sponsored by SEWEDA and the Lewis Clark Valley Chamber - The Dynamics of Personal Leadership – Measurably Boosting Company Performance & Customer Satisfaction, presented by Robert Kolenda & Associates. This training made you think about what you, as a leader and manager, are doing on a daily basis. It helped challenge you to be aware of your style, approach, strengths, weaknesses and what impact you are having on your team and ultimately on your company's productivity, profits and growth. We had great attendance.

The following are **New Business Licenses** issued in Clarkston and we would just like to welcome them and wish them the best of luck:

Cathlin Berreth LMHC
TLC Homes LLC

Connected Wireless
Columbia State Bank

Val's at Evergreen Estates
LC Tax Solutions LLC

Columbia County



Claudia Nysoe
Managing Director,
Columbia County
Claudia@seweda.org

Dayton's Downtown Task Force



Dayton's Downtown Task Force recently was rewarded a \$25,000 grant from Sherwood Trust in Walla Walla to use in the planning of a historic corridor. The location includes waterfront on the Touchet River and 7 blocks on Commercial Street which is parallel with Dayton's Main Street. The corridor itself is already a tourist destination with the Historic Dayton Depot, historic Smith Hollow Schoolhouse, a bronze statue of Sacajawea, a new children's playground and a beautiful walking path. The architecture landscaping firm Dougherty Landscape Architects (DLA) from Eugene Oregon, was chosen from a long list of well qualified candidates to lead the plan. The team led a series of town hall style visioning and concept planning sessions with the community in October. The team is tasked with creating a long term design for the Commercial Street Corridor; a streetscape improvement plan that will include future projects, plantings, parking, art and marketing. This project is one more step in the process the community of Dayton has committed to in treasuring their history and preserving it for future generations.

Great news for Dayton! For years, the City of Dayton has been short on lodging, especially during the many community events. The community was recently given the news that a 50 room Best Western Plus Hotel will be built on Main Street and is slated to be finished in late 2012. The hotel will include an expanded conference area, a meeting room and kitchen area. Not only has Dayton needed more lodging but this will provide more employment opportunities for the community.



Alesia Ruchert
Managing Director,
Garfield County
alesia@seweda.org

Sights and Sounds of the Season Abound in Pomeroy

Not only does Pomeroy look festive and inviting as the holiday season gets fully underway, but that look goes deeper than just the twinkle of lights and sparkly Christmas ornamentation. At one of the more difficult economic times for the State of Washington, the business owners in Garfield County have a cheerful report for the season: business is good! High crop yields due to a wet spring coupled with better than average market prices for grain crop products have contributed to the economic outlook for this traditionally agricultural community. Increased wealth among the populace brings an increase in business for local retailers and service providers, which is the news of the hour for Pomeroy's business district. Recent Pomeroy Chamber of Commerce activities and initiatives to support local spending during the holidays have also made a difference for many gift retailers. Chamber's Old Fashioned Christmas event, which brought Santa to downtown for pictures, a movie and chili-feed, as well as the Annual Holiday Bazaar brought many Black Friday shoppers into town over the Thanksgiving weekend. The Annual "Twinkle Light" Sale on Dec. 8th offers after-hours shopping by the light of the Christmas decorations as a fun and unique experience for those still trying to finish their gift purchases.



Local spending initiatives are not the only drivers for the healthy economy in one of the State's smallest counties. Recent development and renovation projects have brought an infusion of new money and new workers into the county over the last 18 months. Some businesses have found it necessary to expand product lines and services to accommodate the needs of those associated with the projects which include Puget Sound Energy's Lower Snake River Wind Project and the development of the BPA substation in conjunction with the project. PF Express, a local convenience store & laundry-mat, had closed down the subshop portion of its operation in favor of make-ahead products that could be stored in the cooler, but found that many of the construction workers associated with the projects prefer fresh, portable food items to take out on the sight daily. Owner Leslie Schmidt responded in the short term by increasing the line of hot food in the deli case and is considering a reopening of the subshop. This would require hiring another full time employee, which was not cost-effective for her prior to the development projects. As well, most local retailers and service providers have become champions in diversification, adding new items or services as the market indicates. Meyers Hardware and Fine Gifts now has a "bling thing", adding popular oversized costume jewelry, embellished purses, eyewear, scarves and hats to its giftware section, which is located just across the aisle from the espresso stand. Plumbing parts may not appeal to a younger crowd but blingy things and fu-fu coffee do!

Even voter-supported initiatives did not detract from one local business's stability. The passing of I-1183 was a death sentence for many State liquor stores across the state, but because Victorian Rose and Collectibles, the business that houses the licensed liquor store in Pomeroy, is privately owned and no other retailer in the community is opting to sell hard alcohol, owner Vickie Shelton will be able to continue business as usual. In fact, she is assisting in the formation of a regional co-operative to assist other small dealers such as herself, weather the storm of the transition that will be coming in June as a result of the initiative.

As the State Legislature continues its Special Session in Olympia, many questions about budget cuts and taxes are raised around the table at the local kafe-katches and across the counter at the drug store. And in fact some of the decisions made in the Capital could undermine the current prosperity of a community comprised primarily of small business. Yet, the festive mood remains and the celebration of a season of blessings continues on Main Street Pomeroy, where most anyone is met with a heartfelt "Merry Christmas".



Whitman County



Dick Watters
Managing Director,
Whitman County
dick@seweda.org

Whitman County: Lowest Unemployment Rate in the State

Whitman County has the lowest unemployment rate in the State of Washington. Whitman's unemployment rate was 5.3 percent, a .6 point drop from September.

The net job gain in Whitman County in 2011 is 240 jobs. There were 740 private-sector positions created and 500 government jobs lost in the public sector. The result has been a gain of 240 so far in 2011. Jobs in retail, transportation, housing and utilities led the way. Ongoing expansion at Schweitzer Engineer Laboratories continues to lead the way. There are over 1800 employees at the Pullman site.



Major Private Employers

The top 10 major private employers in Whitman County are: Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Pullman Regional Hospital, Whitman Hospital and Medical Center, McGregor Company, Walmart, Safeway, Dissmore's, Decagon Devices Inc., Shopko and The Bookie.

Tom Kammerzell - Port Commissioner

Tom Kammerzell, Colfax, was elected to replace Don Cox as Commissioner for the Port of Whitman. Tom joins current Commissioners John Love and Dan Boone. Don Cox chose not to run for re-election. Tom defeated Al Sorenson from Pullman. Tom was raised in Colfax where has been a rancher and recently retired after 25 years with Colfax School District as a custodian. Tom has served on many volunteer committees in Colfax as well as the Whitman County Planning Commission. Tom will take office in January 2012. CONGRATS TOM!

Mayor's Roundtable



The Mayor's Roundtable was held on Thursday, September 22, 2011 at The Churchyard Inn in Uniontown. The topic was "How to Keep Rural Communities Alive". Presentations were made by Professors Kathleen Ryan and Ole Sleipness from WSU Interdisciplinary Design Institute and Andy Meyer, Special Projects Coordinator for the Association of Washington Cities on Washington's Small Cities Initiative. The next Mayor's Roundtable will be in January 2012 in Pullman.

SEWEDA Offices

Asotin Co: (509)751-9144
tina@seweda.org

Columbia Co: (509) 382-4825
Claudia@seweda.org

Garfield Co: (509) 843-1104
alesia@seweda.org

Whitman Co: (509) 595-1151
dick@seweda.org