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Executive Director Report



Duane Wollmuth
Executive Director
duane@seweda.org

Tourism: One of Southeast Washington’s Most Vital Industries

In 2008, SEWEDA’s staff and board of directors completed the most recent full Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in partial fulfillment of the scope of work for the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). The intent of the CEDS is to identify economic development issues and potential solutions. One of the solutions (or goals) identified through the CEDS process was “to foster the development of visitor trade (or tourism) throughout the region.”

Tourism is a major economic engine for the State of Washington. According to an economic impact study conducted by Dean Runyan and Associates (2010) for the Washington State Department of Tourism, tourism in Washington generated \$14.2 billion of revenue and 147,600 jobs. In 2009, tourism was the fourth largest industry in Washington State. Spending by visitors generates sales in lodging, food services, recreational, transportation, and retail businesses- the “travel industry.” These sales support jobs for Washington residents and contribute tax revenue to local and state governments. Travel spending accounted for almost \$1 billion in local and state tax revenue in 2009. Visitors from outside of Washington (residents of other states or countries) generated \$235 of tax revenue for each Washington household.

In Southeast Washington, tourism is a vital component of our local economies. With our rich natural, historical, and cultural resources, we have abundant opportunities to entertain visitors. Our post-secondary educational institutions draw thousands of visitors for sporting events, campus visits, and other activities. Natural attractions, such as Hells Canyon, draw countless outdoor enthusiasts. And, other man-made destinations and events, such as Ski Bluewood and the Garfield County Road Rally, attract both local and distant visitors. In 2008, state and local tax receipts from tourism in our four county region totaled \$6,500,000. And, a total of 1,390 jobs were created by tourism. While tourism has been a significant driver of economic success in Washington in recent years and holds great promise as we recover from the recent catastrophic economic downturn, two noteworthy trends threaten the continued positive impact of tourism in Washington State. First, competition for the tourist dollar is getting tough. Nationally all fifty states, and most countries and provinces around the (Continued)

Executive Director Report (cont.)

world, count on tourism to bolster their economies. Within the U.S., the average state tourism budget in FY 07/08 was \$17.4 million. In comparison, Washington State's \$7 million budget ranked 41st in the country. Second, the Washington State Department of Tourism budget was slashed by nearly 75% during the 2010 legislative session. With a new total annual budget of less than \$1.8 million, Washington State now likely ranks no better than 48th in the U.S. among state tourism budgets.

For us to get the most out of our tourism resources, we must implement what I call the three “Cs,” or tools of economic development. First, we must **(c)ollaborate**. Advertising and promotional dollars are limited. Anytime we can advertise multiple attractions or events, and share the cost of the ad, let's do it. We (i.e., SEWEDA) have recently collaborated with the area Chambers of Commerce and the Hells Canyon Visitors Bureau to create an Agricultural Tourism brochure to promote our farm related tourist sites throughout the region. This collaboration will save us all some expense, yet it will benefit us all by having all of these sites advertised. Second, we must **(c)ommunicate**. Communicate our attractions and events not only through advertising, but through public relations and word-of-mouth. We have some of Washington's (and the country's) greatest tourist attractions, both natural and man-made. Hells Canyon, for example, is a one-of-a-kind natural wonder. Let's talk about these resources and take pride in what we have. Finally, let's be **(c)reative**. We can create events or attractions that are unique. A good example of creativeness is the St. John's Sprint Jet Boat Races. With the next race taking place on June 19th, the races have generally attracted 3,000 -5,000 spectators and created an event that gets the whole town involved. The family oriented event will have two races this year, with tickets priced at \$12-\$15. More information can be found at

http://www.google.com/search?q=st+john+sprint+boat&hl=en&rlz=1T4SUNA_enUS263US264&prmd=v&source=univ&tbs=vid:1&tbo=u&ei=MI7xS9iVCpLSsQPE1oTCBq&sa=X&oi=video_result_group&ct=title&resnum=4&ved=0CDYQqwQwAw.

Or, we can attract existing events, such as the Wild West Road Rally, which takes place in late summer in Pomeroy. The Rally attracts participants from around the northwest and brings much needed revenues to Pomeroy and nearby Clarkston.

In this issue, the Managing Directors write of some of the tourist events and attractions in their respective counties. Let's help each other out and pass the word.

Asotin County



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



Hells Canyon North America's Deepest River Gorge

Fun in the sun is a way of life here in the Clarkston Valley, offering hundreds of sun-filled days and providing visitors year-round outdoor recreational opportunities. We are known as, and are most famous for, being the portal to Hells Canyon, North America's deepest river gorge. Yes, it's truly deeper than the Grand Canyon – by over 3,000 feet! Hells Canyon is a name given to the section of the mighty Snake River which stretches from Hells Canyon Dam northward for 75 miles to the Washington-Oregon border.

Wild and rugged with many rapids, the canyon is primarily accessible today by jet boat and inflatable rafts. Outfitters and tour guides will point out the canyon's Indian petroglyphs, a myriad of wildlife, abandoned mines, boat wreck sites and homesteads. You can find some of the greatest fishing for salmon, steelhead, small mouth bass, trout and sturgeon. The canyon has a healthy number of North America's largest fresh water fish, the great white sturgeon, which can reach lengths up to eight feet.

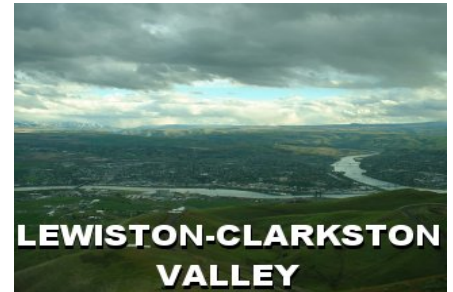
Enjoy a scenic tour of the Canyon via jet boat, raft, helicopter or a fishing charter. History buffs, hikers, anglers and lovers of the rugged outdoors have several ways to visit Hells Canyon. Day trips, or overnight stays in rustic lodges, compliment the ever popular float trips. (Continued)

Asotin County (cont.)

River activities on the lower Snake River are endless and include waterskiing, sailing, white-water rafting, hunting, fishing, swimming, hiking and camping. Or, you can bike or stroll along the 26 miles on the Clearwater and Snake National Recreation Trail. Hells Canyon tourism, directly and indirectly generates 1,023 jobs and revenues of \$29.7 million in Asotin County alone.

Snake River Boat Builders Export Program

With its' roots deeply planted in the Snake River's Hells Canyon river recreational activities, the welded aluminum boat building industry can trace its' beginnings to the Lewis Clark Valley. Now directly accounting for over several hundred jobs in the Valley, the industry represents one of Southeast Washington's most recognized "cluster industries." With a number of vendor and support jobs also owing their existence to the core boat building industry, the upside for this industry in the LC Valley is significant.



SEWEDA recently teamed up with the Clearwater Economic Development Association (CEDA) and a number of other economic development interests in the Valley to energize the Snake River Boat Builders Export Program. This program, initiated by CEDA and based on a \$50,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Agricultural, required a \$21,500 match to move forward. Utilizing match contributions from both Lewiston and Clarkston entities, including a lead contribution from SEWEDA, the program is fully funded and on the fast track to success. Economic projections and industry experts show that the success of this program can lead to over 20 new direct boat building jobs and 15 indirect jobs, with total additional earnings in the Valley of \$1.3 million.

The primary goal of the export program is to assist LC Valley boat builders in establishing international sales in the European Union (EU). Coordinated by Janet Bauermeister, Director of the U.S. Commercial Service, Department of Commerce and P'Chelle International, a Kennewick based marketing consultant firm headed by Gary White, the program has four principal components. One is a visit in early June, 2010, by Klaus Emil Schneiders, Editor of Skipper magazine, Germany's leading boat manufacturing publication. Schneiders intends to include a lead article on the LC Valley's boat building industry, including coverage of each of the valley boat builders who plan on participating in Germany's leading boat show in January, 2011.

The second component is establishing CE certification for the boat builders to sell into the EU. CE certification is similar to the Underwriter's Laboratories (UL) certification in the United States. Establishing the CE certification will require research, training, and extensive paperwork.

The third component of the export program will be the visit of ten to fifteen German wholesale distributors in November to the LC Valley. These wholesalers will be extending a trip they'll be making to a major boat show in late October in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida. Accompanied by representatives of the U.S. Commercial Service based in Germany, this visit will provide a firsthand look at our local boat building industry and an opportunity for these distributors to meet with the builders themselves.

The final component of the export program will be participation by local boat builders in the Dusseldorf, Germany boat show in January, 2011, one of the largest European boat shows. Attended by over 230,000 boat enthusiasts from over 60 countries, the Dusseldorf show draws attendees from throughout Europe.



Columbia County



Lisa Ronnberg
Managing Director,
Columbia County
lisa@seweda.org

Welcome to Columbia County

Tourism plays an important role in the economic development of Columbia County, with the cities of Dayton and Starbuck Washington.

There is frequently discussion on the value of tourism in economic development, but with a destination rich environment such as ours with an attractive inventory of tourist activities, I believe we are past the debate. We enjoy the support of community stakeholders, and local government in their appreciation of tourism's economic development potential. Visitors return year after year to enjoy the recreation, historic preservation, and community events we are well known for.

Informal survey results indicate that Dayton's historic preservation was the primary reason for visiting Columbia County for almost 40% of visitors followed closely by recreation and community events (from the Chamber of Commerce). The majority of the visitors are from Washington State, but many come from neighboring states as well. International visits have changed from the majority originating from Japan and Germany, to England being the leader followed by Australia. Without exception they all had made purchases while visiting. Hotel/motel tax coming to Columbia County affords the opportunity to advertise in regional and national publications, and the distribution of over 500 visitors' packages.

The Snake River forms the northern county boundary, and afford, excellent fishing and boating. Heading south through rolling wheat fields and into the Blue Mountains with some of the finest summer and winter recreation around. Dayton is also home to 116 homes and businesses on the National Register of Historic Places. So those enjoying historic preservation are always return visitors.



On the northern boundary, Lyons Ferry Marina has moorage and docking facilities as well as RV and camping spaces. The grocery and restaurant provide full services for visitors. An excellent selection of tackle is available in Starbuck and the Touchet and Tucannon Rivers offer excellent camping and sport fishing, as do the Tucannon Lakes near Camp Wooten.

Camping, hiking, biking, and horseback riding activities are available in the Blue Mountains during the summer. During the winter season, ski and snowboard enthusiasts enjoy Ski Bluewood resort, which has the second highest base elevation in Washington State. Bluewood is known for clear skies and dry powder with an average snowfall of more than 300 inches annually.

Dayton is also well known for their community events. "Dayton Days" will be celebrating their 92nd anniversary on May 29th – 31st with traditional activities of rodeo, horse racing, and a parade on Main Street, and the Touchet River Run race celebrating its 26th year on Monday, Memorial Day, with a 1.4 and a 3.89 mile course along the Touchet River.

Columbia County (cont.)

All Wheels Weekend car show is Fathers Day Weekend every year and this year celebrates “Sweet 16”. This is a perfect weekend for dads and families. You can celebrate with a Friday Night cruise, fireworks display, and live band. The Show & Shine on Saturday, hosting up to 400 cars, and always popular Demo Derby Saturday night.



Men’s “drag” races are always a hit and the visiting celebrity this year is almost “Cher.” Food and craft vendors line the streets during this fun weekend and Main Street Shopping is excellent. Several wine tasting events will also be available throughout the weekend featuring wines of the Walla Walla Valley.

So if you are only going to take one vacation this year, no matter the season, come explore historic Dayton, you’ll love the choices.

Garfield County



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

**WINE, STEIN & SHINE
To Kick-Off Pioneer Day
Tumbleweed Festival
In Pomeroy June 11TH**

The signature event for Pomeroy’s Tumbleweed Festival, a tasting event for regional wines and micro-brews, will include a new component this year: a car show. The Wine, Stein & Shine will be held Friday, June 11th beginning at noon with the car show on 7th & Columbia, then moving into the tasting from 5:00 until 10:00 p.m. Vintners from Wenatchee to Clarkston and brewers from Clarkston to Waitsburg will be pouring product at Pomeroy’s Spinner’s Hall, 7th & Columbia. Tasting tickets are \$10 for 3 pours, and will be available at the door as well as at various merchants in downtown Pomeroy prior to the event. The Blue Mountain Artisans Guild will hold an Art Walk and Sale during the tasting which will feature area artists and their work. The historic Seeley Theatre will be open for viewing, and the restoration committee will be offering Walla Walla Sweet Tacos as a fundraiser for the project. Also, the Lost Highway Museum, a collection of vintage neon signs and Americana memorabilia will be open during the car show and tasting event, and is located next door to the theatre. (Continued)



Garfield County (cont):

The Festival will continue through Saturday, June 12th, which is also Garfield County's long celebrated Pioneer Day, starting with the Dash for Cash Fun Run at 8:00 a.m. on Arlington Street at the Crystal Springs Golf Course (Pomeroy's municipal course). Entry fee is \$15 with a t-shirt, \$5 with no t-shirt and kids 12 and under are free. Entry forms are available in downtown Pomeroy businesses. Prizes will be awarded to the top finishers by age group. The annual Pioneer Day parade will begin on Main Street and 9th at 10 a.m. street vendors and local merchants will be having sidewalk sales throughout the day, and a Food Court will be open for lunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Spinner's Maple Hall. The annual Pioneer Day Program will be held at 1 p.m. and both the Garfield County Museum and the Eastern Washington Agriculture Museum on the Garfield County Courthouse will be open throughout the day Friday and Saturday. A variety of class reunions will be holding various activities throughout the weekend, and the annual Tumbleweed Golf Tournament will be held at the Crystal Springs Golf Course on Sunday, June 13th. For more information on the golf tournament, call the club house at 843-1197.

Pomeroy's Pioneer Day/Tumbleweed Festival offers something for every age and interest level. For more information on the weekend's lineup of events, contact the Pomeroy Chamber of Commerce at 509-843-5110 or go to www.pomeroychamberofcommerce.com

Whitman County



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



Washington State University Business Plan Competition

With 52 teams competing, the WSU College of Business awarded \$100,000 to winners of the 2010 Business Plan Competition held on April 23-24. With a panel of 75 judges reviewing entries in four categories, including a high school division sponsored by SEWEDA, applicants were required to submit a detailed business plan and make a 15 minute presentation followed by a question and answer period with the judges. Judges based their evaluations on: quality of the team; quality of the concept; quality of the written plan; quality of the presentation; and whether they would invest in the idea.

The 2010 competition award winners were:

Open Division: Sponsored by the Port of Whitman

1st Place receiving \$10,000, **MathFire**. Matt and Char Fluster, Pullman, Wa

2nd Place receiving \$5,000, **Glory Garments International**. Diana Reed, Pullman, Wa.

High School Division: Sponsored by SEWEDA, WSU and Avista.

1st Place Receiving \$2000, **Laser Tag**, Kiran Brar, Pullman HS

1st Place Receiving \$2000, **Roller Skating**, Emily Rose Rodgers & Amber Sage, Pullman HS

2nd Place Receiving \$2000, **WhatEver Clothing**, Kaleen & Marita Jacobs, Asotin HS

3rd Place Receiving \$1000, **Bonne Sante**, Stephanie Ankrah & Aurora Shively, Pullman HS

3rd Place Receiving \$1000, **Personal Training**, Shawn Ankney & Max Heect, Asotin HS

3rd Place Receiving \$1000, **Alkai Dessert House**, Jordan Enos & Liz Green, Sammamish HS

Whitman County (cont.)

Whitman County Blue Ribbon Advisory Task Force

The Task Force awarded the town of **Lamont** \$52,000 to construct a building that will house a rural library and office space for county deputies. **Oakesdale** was awarded \$27,500 to finish the remodel of their business incubator space above the library. The funding was from the county's .09 economic development grant funds.

Summer Events

Visit the following Whitman County towns for exciting community events:

- Palouse:** June 5th - 6th Annual Spring BBQ & Hotrod Gathering
July 9, 10 & 11- Art Walk
July 31st - 5th Annual Bluegrass Festival
August 7th - Palouse Community Yard Sale
- Rosalia:** June 5th - Battle Days
July 31st - Motorcycle Roundup
- St. John:** June 19th and August 28th - Sprint Boat Racing
- Tekoa:** July 17th - Slippery Gulch Days
- Johnson:** July 4th - Annual Parade and Pancake Breakfast
- Albion:** July 4th - Annual Parade and Barbeque in the Park
- Uniontown:** August 20th & 21st - Annual Flea Market, Antiques and Yard Sale
- Pullman:** July 4th - Annual Fireworks Display, Music & More: Sunnyside Park
August 20th & 21st - National Lentil Festival

Golf Courses Are Open And Ready To Play: call for tee times!

- Colfax Golf & Country Club:** (509) 397-2122; 9 holes, par 35
St. John Golf & Country Club: (509) 648-3259; 9 holes, par 35
Tekoa Golf & Country Club: (509) 284-5607; 9 holes, par 35
Palouse Ridge Golf Club @ Washington State University: (509) 335-4342; 18 holes, par 72

Biking The Palouse

Bill Chipman Palouse Trail: The trail is for non-motorized use and extends eight miles from Pullman to Moscow. Connect with **Paradise Pathway** and travel through Moscow to the eastside where the trail joins the **Latah Trail**, 12 miles to Troy. All the trails are smooth, paved paths that have beautiful views and surrounded by colorful plants and flowers. There are rest stops on the trails.

New Businesses

Rosalia - Smith Country Store, **Colfax** - Wheatland Lanes, **Oakesdale** - First Wind, **Pullman** - Car Concepts

SEWEDA Offices

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

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

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

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