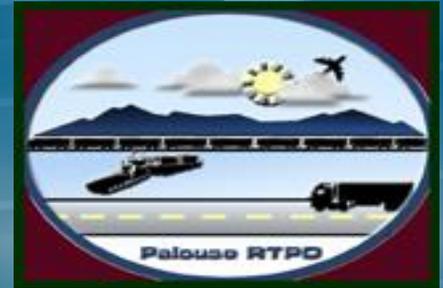


Astin County
Columbia County
Garfield County
Whitman County



Issue #16
April 2015

CONNECTIONS

Opportunities for Our Region Marshall Doak – Executive Director

For this newsletter, I want to highlight several opportunities available within our region that we are working upon to add capabilities and services to our constituent organizations and businesses. SEWEDA's organizational structure with our Managing Directors working within each County is particularly adept at uncovering local needs and looking to matching those with the resources available. We continue to work on our strategic outreach to the business communities within the region, and to developing and also assisting other organizations to develop the entrepreneurial talent we have. Our long-term goals of increasing the regional talent pool and the strength of our businesses remain the basic principles that guide our actions.

Washington Department of Commerce has asked us to run a pilot program for Community Sourced Capital – a community-based business finance program. Local investors who are willing to pool funds for a local business finance need will have the ability to participate in making a positive contribution to the businesses within each community. The new sayings might be "Shop Local, Finance Local" or some such tag. Our Managing Directors have the particulars of this program, and are working upon making the pilot project a success. The pilot project will take place in June, and we will be reporting the outcomes from the pilot at the next statewide gathering of economic development professionals. I believe this is recognition on a statewide level, that we have a set of programs which are being recognized as providing value to local business formation and development.

In partnership with WSU Extension and the WWCC/Avista ACE program in Clarkston, we are hosting the Rural Pathways to Prosperity Conference at the Walla Walla Community College Clarkston campus April 17. The featured speaker is Erik Pages, described as the best speaker for entrepreneurial development the Executive Director of Thurston EDC has heard. Registration can be made at: www.ruralprosperity.wsu.edu

Table of Contents

Executive Director Report	p.1
Asotin County	p.2
Columbia County	p.3
Garfield County	p.4
Whitman County	p.6
Palouse RTPD Letter	p.8
Acknowledgements	p.9
SEWEDA Board	p.10
RTPD Board	p.11

Report (cont.)

Finally, but not least, we have two great resources locally that are partners with SEWEDA for developing entrepreneurs and building the individual skills needed for continuing success of new ventures. The Palouse Knowledge Corridor – Francis Benjamin and Robin Ohlgren being central to the Corridor's success – has the Second Bootcamp upcoming this June 14 – 18, 2015. Three featured areas for entrepreneurs to participate in: animal and human health, technology, and value-added agriculture. This is an intense business model building and business development bootcamp, running from dawn to past dusk to fast-track entrepreneurs in their businesses. The Walla Walla Avista Center for Entrepreneurs is forming its third cohort, or class, for an early fall start to business model and plan development for the fortunate entrepreneur. Our SEWEDA team is investing heavily into these programs, so that the continued focus upon SE Washington as an area that supports local businesses and their development will continue on.

You may contact the PKC at: <http://www.palouseknowledgecorridor.com/> and click on the bootcamp dogtags for specific bootcamp information.

The Walla Walla Community College's Entrepreneur Program is available at: <https://www.facebook.com/ace.wvcc> 509-758-3339.

ASOTIN COUNTY

Brad Styner – Managing Director

In Asotin County, SEWEDA is involved in many programs supporting local entrepreneurs, students and manufacturers. Good economic development requires collaboration between local government, educators and businesses. SEWEDA is focused on providing the tools necessary to achieve this collaboration.

Avista Center for Entrepreneurs

SEWEDA is closely involved with the Avista Center for Entrepreneurs (ACE). ACE offers a program through Walla Walla Community College that focusses on all facets of starting and running a small business. In the last two years, over 20 students have completed the program that culminates with a business plan competition open to the public. This year approximately 50 people attended the event.

Turning Point Business Park

Last summer the Port of Clarkston completed the first phase of our new industrial park, Turning Point. SEWEDA is partnering with the Port of Clarkston in its effort to locate potential tenants in the 44 acre park. The park is located adjacent to Evans Road in Clarkston and contains an assortment of parcels ranging from 0.5 acres to 7.5 acres available for sale or lease.

Dream It, Do It

SEWEDA recently joined forces with the Clearwater Economic Development Association (CEDA) in the Dream It, Do It campaign. This is a nationally supported program that offers education and awareness to high school students and their parents regarding careers in manufacturing.

Today's manufacturing is about advanced technologies, state of the art facilities, and fast paced work environments. But most of all, manufacturing is about those people who like to see the product of a hard day's work.

ASOTIN COUNTY (cont.)

We plan on using this program in the local high schools and a various fairs in the region showing the benefits of careers in fields such as machinist, welders and engineering technicians.

Clarkston DECA Club

SEWEDA participated with the Clarkston DECA club during Global Entrepreneur Week on their business plan program for the local 4th Graders. All of the 4th graders from Clarkston learned the basics of running a business from the Clarkston DECA students and local business owners.

Clarkston High School Career Fair

Last month Clarkston High School hosted its first annual Career Fair. SEWEDA was among the over 30 exhibitors that spent the day talking with high schools students about careers in various fields and the education requirements necessary for these careers.

Succession Planning Workshop

SEWEDA sponsored a workshop on Succession Planning for small business owners. We recognize the importance of a successful transition between generations for the continued operation of small businesses. Arnie Hendricks, a renowned expert on succession planning presented to approximately 30 attendees at Walla Walla Community College's Clarkston Campus.

COLUMBIA COUNTY

Jennie Dickinson/Brad McMasters
Managing Director

Blue Mountain Station

The Port of Columbia's long-term development project is whirling and churning all kind of fun business start-up and expansion projects 3 months after its first anniversary!

Here's what's happening:

- All five food processing bays are full, with one business on the waiting list hoping to get in.
- Mary's Candies, a start-up business that began operations through the weekly Artisan Food Market, is now renting a bay and creating delicious confections.
- Aardvark Granola, whose owner attended the PKC's Entrepreneurial Bootcamp last summer, has relocated to a larger bay and is doubling her production space.
- Azure Mountain Botanicals, another weekly market vendor that produces soaps and other bath products, has "flown the coop" and opened a storefront in downtown Dayton.
- Landsong Ladies Gardens has taken over lease of the 16,000 square foot garden and will sell product in the market this summer and offer CSA shares to community members.
- Fifteen businesses showed up for a summer market vendor meeting, so the weekly markets will expand and house the summer farmer's market as well as Blue Mountain Station Co-op Market products.
- The Port received an \$81,000 grant from Pacific Power's Blue Sky program for the installation of solar panels on the roof of the Artisan Food Center. This will allow the Port to finish its application to LEED for silver certification as well as dramatically reduce energy costs in the building.

COLUMBIA COUNTY (Cont.)

Columbia Pulp

The Columbia Pulp project is in its final stages prior to construction. All permitting has been applied for or completed, straw contracts are in place, and the company has opened an office on Dayton's Main Street. Private equity has been secured, and work on the sale of solid waste bonds to fund the remainder of the project is in process. This is a complex undertaking that does not have a definitive end-date. \$150 million projects tend to be complicated!

Located near Starbuck in Columbia County, the plant will process wheat straw and alfalfa into pulp for paper products and packaging. 130 new jobs are expected to be created.

Tucannon River Wind Farm

Construction of the Tucannon River Wind Farm in Columbia County was completed in December of 2014. Twenty new jobs permanent jobs were created and the \$500 million investment will push Columbia County's tax base close to the \$1 billion mark. Renewable energy generation has provided fantastic economic benefits to our county, both during construction and ongoing operations in the form of jobs, increased retail activity, and expansion of the tax base which reduced residents' tax rates and provides additional revenue for local governments, fire districts, libraries, and schools.

GARFIELD COUNTY

Alesia Ruchert – Managing Director

Pomeroy Chamber's Annual Banquet Full of Heroes & Helping Hands

The 2015 Pomeroy Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Banquet was held Saturday, March 21st at the historic Spinner's Hall in Pomeroy, and was attended by 112 community members. The awards banquet honors recipients of the Citizen of the Year, Business of the Year and Lifetime Achievement awards. This year's winners were Robert Koller, Citizen of the Year for the creation and placement of the Veteran's Memorial Wall in Pioneer Plaza; Jim's Fertilizer, Business of the Year, as a small, local, privately owned and operated ag chemical service; and the Harold & Helen Shepherd Foundation for its continuing support of community development projects in Pomeroy & Garfield County. Robert Koller was presented with a Quilt of Valor by local seamstress and organization member, Alice Gwinn, for his military service, and commitment to recognizing and supporting local veterans.

The Silent Auction, an important fundraising element for the Chamber each year, sold 64 items which were donated by local businesses. Two raffle items were also sold, a Mariner's Ticket (v Astros) and Fan Gear basket donated by Puget Sound Energy, and a Stay & Play Package for 1 night's stay with food and beverages for 2, donated by Clearwater River Casino. As well, a fun Garfield County Trivia game and the ever-popular Heads or Tails game brought laughter and friendly competition to the evening. Local catering business, American Pride Meat & Catering, served prime rib dinner, and the Pomeroy Spinner's Community Organization, hosted beverages for the evening.

Chamber president and local business owner Tom Herres reported that every seat was filled and the Chamber enjoyed a success with this year's awards banquet. SEWEDA partners with the Pomeroy Chamber of Commerce on numerous marketing and business development initiatives throughout the year, and I was honored to serve as the game hostess at this year's event.

Pomeroy High School FBLA Chapter Sends 11 to State Business Leaders Conference

The PHS Future Business Leader's of America Chapter will be sending 11 student members to Spokane April 15th & 16th to compete in the Washington State FBLA Business Leadership Conference.

GARFIELD COUNTY (cont.)

Students competed at the regional Winter Conference in early February in order to qualify for the state event. The student members who are attending the state conference are:

Ally Bott (11th) - Business Presentation, Public Service Announcement, and Business Ethics

Spencer Craigie (10th) – Accounting 1, Computer Game and Simulation Programming, Introduction to Business

Kaitlynn Davis(9th) – Help Desk, Creed, Business Presentation

Devon Caruso (9th) – Parli Team, Public Service Announcement, Public Speaking

Emily Jentz(10th) – Computer Applications, Business Presentation, Public Service Announcement

Katelin Turner (12th) – Job Interview, Health Care Administration, Public Service Announcement

Thomas Zeliff(10th) – Computer Problem Solving, Spreadsheet Applications, Parli Team, Computer Applications

Ashton Halverson(9th) – Sales Presentation, Intro to Business Communication, Public Speaking 2

Cort LaMunyan(10th) – Public Service Announcement, Impromptu Speaking, Parli Team

Cheyenne Miller(12th) – Accounting 2, Business Presentation, Business Ethics

Bryan McGreevy(12th) – Client Services, Personal Finance, Parli Team

Advisor Amy Miller keeps a robust pace within the chapter in areas of community service and career development, with the Chapter hosting a Career Day for 7-12th graders each Spring and contributing to local community organizations such as the food bank. As well, the Chapter participated in Global Entrepreneur's Week activities in November.

As the Managing Director for SEWEDA in Garfield County, I have chosen to partner with the PHS Chapter in numerous events & initiatives, and have judged local, regional and state competitions that student members have attended. As well, I serve on the local CTE Advisory Board for Pomeroy High School, for which Amy Miller is the director. I believe these to be essential investments of time and resources for SEWEDA, as we seek avenues for retention of our young people and their talent. My hope is that by connecting them to the business community here, they will see the opportunity for new businesses and choose to make Pomeroy their home and career destination.

Pomeroy's Art Community Hosts Successful Monthly Art Walk/Pub Crawl

Downtown Pomeroy will once again be the social center for thirsty art enthusiasts as the Blue Mountain Artisan Guild and local dining establishments open their doors for the Art Walk/Pub Crawl on Thursday, April 9th. The event will begin at 5 pm at the Blue Mountain Artisan's Guild, which will be featuring work by local artist Jay Henry, and proceed east on Main Street to Madre's Cantina, Pomeroy Brew Pub and conclude at Tonia's Café & Lounge. Each month, a different participating business hosts the artist on the first Thursday. Due to holidays in April & July, the event will be held on the 2nd Thursday. Participants enjoy a lively social event that promotes art & culture as well as supports local businesses. Organizer and aspiring local artist Jamie Carothers, of Puget Sound Energy, feels this is an important addition to Pomeroy's civic activities and points to the broad age range of participants as evidence that Pomeroy's art scene is supported and appreciated.

As a member of the Pomeroy Historic Commission, I will be assisting with the event in August, as the commission plans to use the event to showcase historic photos & paintings of downtown Pomeroy, and then direct a "history walk", providing historic information on each of the buildings as we proceed up Main Street. That event will begin at Pomeroy City Hall, where iced tea and lemonade will be offered to participants. The art walk/pub crawl is free and open to the public.

Whitman County

Robin Ohlgren – Managing Director

Partners in a Resilient Economy for Whitman County: Creating a Dynamic Economic Ecosystem

Developing our local economy requires a collaborative approach and mutually shared agendas linked by local partnerships.

When asked why we need ALL these organizations doing economic development, I can sympathize: here in Whitman County in addition to SEWEDA, we have Palouse Knowledge Corridor, Port of Whitman, Washington State University, all the Cities, the County — even the Whitman County Library District — each doing some aspect of economic development.

But no single organization, however innovative or powerful, has ever built or sustained an economy alone.

The success and resiliency of our communities relies on a diverse network of services and opportunities with mutually reinforcing agendas that links businesses and communities to suppliers, capital sources, and each other. Think of the economy as a kind of ecosystem — a system that is full of assorted functions and stages, much like a natural ecosystem. Building and maintaining a robust economic ecosystem requires the dedication and shared efforts of many.

The old model of economic development — creating expensive business attraction programs — has proven inefficient in the global economy, especially in rural areas. We can grow our economy and keep our residents employed by inspiring and investing in homegrown ingenuity, encouraging the entrepreneurial spirit, and supporting our pool of existing businesses.

SEWEDA promotes economic vitality through programming at the community level. Through initiatives like the quarterly Mayors Roundtables, community conversations, small business training, grantwriting workshops and business showcases, we can help to re-enliven or create identities that can inspire residents and advise them of opportunities. By serving with the Palouse Scenic Byway, Palouse-Clearwater Food Coalition, downtown associations and community pride groups, and Inland Northwest Economic Alliance, we ensure that our business owners and entrepreneurs are heard, have representation, and are receiving the necessary services.

The **Palouse Knowledge Corridor** is aimed at fostering collaboration at the regional level. By leveraging the strengths of our two university towns, the PKC encourages sharing diminishing resources for mutual gains. PKC's commitment to entrepreneurial thinking is not only vital to the success of Main Street businesses, but also creates social awareness of entrepreneurship and the value it has within our communities. The signature *Be the Entrepreneur Bootcamp* is possible only through the cooperative effort and dedication from both universities, the chambers, cities, economic development agencies, counties, and businesses on each side of the Washington-Idaho border.

The **Port of Whitman** plays a key role in the region's infrastructure. In addition to developing and maintaining various transportation related amenities such as marine terminals, storage sites, airports and other direct transportation, they have the ability to develop lands for industrial and commercial needs, build telecommunications infrastructure and provide wholesale telecommunications services. A current partnership with the Port is to create a maker-space, a vital working environment for our numerous entrepreneurs in our communities.

Whitman County (cont.)

The focus of economic development for **Washington State University** is to develop talent, connect industry leaders to relevant fields of research, and commercialize research innovations. Their Carson College of Business, Harold Frank Entrepreneurship Center, Office of Commercialization, Extension Office, and emphasis on STEM education make WSU an important SEWEDA partner. Student-led programs like the Center for Civic Engagement and Rural Center for Design Initiatives create opportunities for students to work directly with community projects. These partnerships can save communities many thousands of dollars in design and implementation of projects while serving as a gateway for future community leadership roles for the students.

Over the past year, all of these organizations have partnered on grant proposals, participated in economic summits and roundtables, and readily shared expertise and resources to advance numerous projects.

On days that it feels like we are facing impossible odds and inadequate resources, it is a comfort knowing that the burden is shared and there exists joint approaches to problem solving through agreed upon actions. The collaborative culture we have created together is working. It is worthy of all of our community support.

Palouse RTPO Newsletter Article

Palouse RTPO has hired a new member on board, Mr. Shaun Darveshi. He will be working with us as a Transportation planner for the region. He has a master's in civil engineering, majored in Transportation engineering with varied experience in construction and as a consultant for public projects.

In addition, the policy Board for the RTPO allocated funds to three projects under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) in 2012. Awardees are:

-City of Pullman (\$151,996) for a pedestrian crossing on NE Grand Blvd (Construction scheduled for summer 2015);

-Columbia County (\$140,000) for improvements to the Eckler Mountain Snow Park (Project completed);

-City of Uniontown (\$64,272) for improvements along SR 195 at the North and South ends of town: This project does not have enough funds (Needed funds \$292,000) and RTPO is trying to look for new avenues to get a remaining funding to complete the project. Other options can be to construct this project in two phases as north and south sidewalks but no such decision is made as of yet. If neither works, the project will be put on hold and funds will be reallocated to other projects.

To eliminate the missed opportunities to apply for TAP projects as the previous year, RTPO will be issuing a call for projects and ensure that all officials for ports, counties, and cities are aware of this call. RTPO will also actively work with everyone to prepare these applications for TAP program funding eligible projects. Once applications are received proper scoring will be done to prioritize applications.

Recent completion of project includes Human Services Transportation Coordination Plan and the study will be incorporated with the RTP and WSDOT Human service plan. Additional recommended key issues are being looked at to implement these recommendation for the region.

Upcoming projects include updating a Regional Transportation Plan, and to complete Freight corridor study for the region in addition to few smaller projects for freight movement and road classifications.

The Palouse RTPO was recently reauthorized by Washington State DOT, and we're actively moving on with Transportation planning strategies for the region.

The Palouse Partners, a local agency formed by a professors at WSU, teaching transportation courses has been considered as the consultants to complete the Palouse Regional Freight Study for 2015. The first draft of the first phase of a study is due at mid July 2015, with the plan completion due by the second week of December. Meetings are being scheduled for each of the four Counties within the RTPO for early summer and early fall. The meetings are open to the public, and all interested people are welcome to attend. Please visit www.palousertpo.org for further information on events and projects.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge our principal partners for economic development and transportation planning, whose support has sustained SEWEDA and the Palouse RTPPO for the past years:

U.S. Department of Commerce,
US Department of Transportation,
Asotin County Commission
Garfield County Commission
Port of Clarkston
Port of Columbia
Port of Garfield
Port of Whitman County
Washington Department of Transportation
Columbia Bank
Washington State Department of Commerce
City of Dayton
City of Pullman
Walla Walla Community College Foundation
Frontier Communications

Economic Development Administration
Federal Highway Administration
Columbia County Commission
Whitman County Commission
Pacific Power
Puget Sound Energy
Avista Corporation
Columbia REA
Umpqua Bank
City of Clarkston
City of Colfax
City of Pomeroy

SEWEDA Board of Directors

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Brian Shinn – County Commissioner - Secretary
Janet Danley – Past President - Walla Walla Community College
Jim Martin – City of Clarkston - Public Works Director
Vicki Bonfield – City of Asotin – Mayor

Columbia County

Craig George – Mayor City of Dayton
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Bill Clemens – Vice President - Pacific Power & Light

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Wynne McCabe – County Commissioner
Donna Hunt – City Council
Mike Tatko – Treasurer - Avista

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Dean Kinzer – Board President - County Commissioner
Francis Benjamin – City of Pullman
Michael Gordon – Summit Realty
Tom Johnson – Service Master

Port Ex-Officio

Wanda Keefer - Port of Clarkston
Jennie Dickinson - Port of Columbia
Lora Brazell - Port of Garfield
Dan Boone - Port of Whitman

RTPO Board of Directors

To be determined on April 14, 2015 meeting