

# FAIR

THE SHOW PLACE



# VIEWS

OF AGRICULTURE

October 2014

Supplement Issue

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



### NEED A REASON TO ATTEND 2014 CONVENTION?

### STATE FUNDING OF FAIRS ELIMINATED FROM WSDA BUDGET

There has never been a more crucial time in our history than what is before us as we head in to the 2015 Legislative Session.

All governmental departments within the state of Washington have been mandated to cut their current budget by 15% to help accommodate the court decision to increase funding of public education by \$1 billion dollars. The State Department of Agriculture has decided that eliminating the fair fund of \$4million dollars over the biennium would go a long ways in meeting their required goal of reducing their budget by that 15%.

You might be thinking that this is our annual (or biannual) cry of wolf about our state funding allocation. Let me assure you that has never

been the case and that up until this point, we have been successful in convincing our legislators of the importance of the fair fund for all of the right reasons: Youth, education, community service, etc.

We have never been faced with the challenge of having been eliminated from the budget of the very department from which we exist..... the Department of Agriculture.

During our WSFA convention this year October 23-25, 2014, at the Pasco Red Lion, we will be dedicating a great deal of time to provide direction, input, and strategy as to how we as individual fairs can best attempt to have our fair fund reinstated. This is a convention at which we all need to come together and show a united effort to save our funding.

Respectfully,

Rich Hartzell, President  
WSFA



## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE from Heather Hansen



When the legislative session begins in January, the Washington State legislature must write a new two-year budget. They face unique challenges this year because they are under a court order to provide more funding for education as well as treatment for the mentally ill and other non-discretionary programs. Each item in the budget will be scrutinized and must be justified. The Fair Fund will not escape this process. If funding for fairs is viewed as nice, but not necessary, it will be cut. The Governor directed all agencies to prepare a budget proposal showing a 15% cut in general fund money. The Department of Agriculture's budget proposal eliminates the Fair Fund. The department was also able to submit another budget proposal to the Governor based on previous year's budgets. That version included the Fair fund. The Governor must prepare his version of a budget before the legislative session begins. It is very likely the Governor's budget will not include that Fair Fund.

If we are to save the Fair Fund, it will take all hands on deck. Volunteers, parents, kids, service organization will all have to reach out to their legislators and let them know how important Fairs are. The largest recipient of the Fair Fund is the state 4-H Fair. To quote Paul Nimmo, "we should not cut educational activities to fund education."

Each fair must have at least one person identified to maintain relationships with your legislators. Every fair has three state legislators – one senator and two representatives. (If your county includes more than one legislative district, you may have multiple sets of legislators.)

The designated legislative person can be the manager, a board member, a volunteer or anyone else who is interested. The key is to find someone who will follow through, reach out and keep up two-way communication.

Make sure all three of your legislators understand how far your fair reaches. How many kids are involved? How many volunteers?

Communicating with legislators is a two way street. Ask for their ideas about how to best maintain the Fair Fund.

Step three is communicating back to the WSFA. I need to know what your legislators tell you so I can follow-up on ideas they may have.

In addition to the Fair Fund, we already know of two other bills that will affect fairs and potentially impose new expenses. Your involvement is critical!

*Heather Hansen*

WSFA Legislative Liaison



To help protect the Fair Fund, we need to show legislators how fairs benefit youth. One of the benefits of junior livestock sales is to help kids raise money for college. Numbers help tell the story.

Please provide WSFA with this information by emailing your answers to: [wastfair@comcast.net](mailto:wastfair@comcast.net)

1. Do you have a Junior Market Sale at your Fair?
2. What is the total amount of Money that is generated at your Junior Market Sale?

Name of Fair \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_