

# FAIR



# VIEWS

## THE SHOW PLACE

## OF AGRICULTURE

February 2018

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## Washington State Fairs Association

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### President's Message

As the calendar year came to a close, we look back with pride at our accomplishments in 2017, and we look forward with excitement at what lies ahead for Washington State Fairs Association in the New Year.

First, every year, the Legislature meets to engage in the process of public decision making. Their objective is to reach a consensus on a wide range of issues affecting everyone in the State of Washington. The Legislative process of the Washington State Fairs Association Legislative Day is scheduled for Thursday, February 22, 2018. Heather Hanson, WSFA Lobbyist, has scheduled Conference room ABC near the front entrance of the Cherberg Building on February 22, at 8:00 A.M. There will be an orientation, materials to pick up,

and a question and answer session.

Washington State Fairs Association – Board members Tom Muchoney, Vice President and John Morrison, Past President, already have been working in Olympia testifying before Legislative committees, communicating the organization views and positions on a number of the bills. Legislators receive a great deal of technical information from their staff, state agency and professional lobbyists, yet, they also look for professional expertise and personal feedback from organizations like ours.

Second, there are a number of bills on the agenda concerning agricultural fairs, youth shows, fair employee overtime, Mobile food units, animal cruelty, and it goes on! The two “High Priority Bills” we are watching closely are: HB 2725 and SB 6368 – Updating laws concerning agricultural fairs, youth shows, and exhibitions are Department of Agriculture bills. They update the statute and bring old language in line with current practices.

HB 2765 and SB 6386 – Ensuring the funding of fairs allows the Fair Fund to grow for the first time in twenty years! These bills are based on a recently passed law in California that diverts the state portion of sales tax generated on Fairgrounds to the Fair Fund. Right now, the Fair Fund comes out of the general fund, so we are swapping general funds dollars for general fund dollars, and we are also tying the Fair Fund to rural economic development. The bill includes a floor and a ceiling, so the Fair Fund cannot decrease but it can increase. No taxes are increased.

Third, we need your help! It would be great to see a huge turnout at this year's Legislative Day. It's not too early to make your appointments to visit with your Legislators on February 22, 2018. Legislators need to hear from you! They need to know how important fairs are to the communities and to youth programs! If you are unable to attend, write letters to your legislators and to the governor including letters from your Fair, local 4-H and FFA supporters, concerned citizens and your County Commissioners. Getting to know your Legislators does makes a difference in the Legislative process.

Fourth, Legislators have ended a standoff over the States Capital Budget. As I'm writing this article, the Capital Budget was passed and has been signed by Governor Inslee. What does that mean? Well, Fairs have received funds through the Capital Budget each biennium for health and safety upgrades to fairgrounds. The funds are awarded through a competitive grant process managed by the Washington State Department of Agriculture (WSDA). (See more information on Health and Safety Grants on Page 4 of this newsletter)

This year's Management Team Meeting and State Wide Super School, will be held at the Enumclaw Expo Center Home of the King County Fair. March 30 and 31, 2018.

Terry R. Atchison

WSFA President, Walla Walla Fair and Frontier Days





## Legislative News

The 2018 legislative session could go down in history as one of the most influential for Washington's agricultural fairs, but it's not going to be easy. Two sets of bills have been introduced dealing with the fair fund.

### House bill 2725 and Senate bill 6368

update the law governing how the fair fund is managed. These bills

- modify the purpose of agricultural fairs to include the promotion of rural economic development;
- clarify the percentage of funds distributed by WSDA to the fairs;
- clarify the criteria considered in distributing funding to fairs; and
- delete obsolete language.

Both bills have passed their initial committee and are moving through the process.

### House bill 2765 and Senate bill 6386 are titled, ensuring the funding of fairs.

The Fair Fund has not increased since 1998. That year it was set in law at \$2 million per year. Prior to that time, it had fluctuated according to revenue from horse racing. In recent prior years, it has been nearly \$3 million per year.

Fairs support rural economic development by giving small businesses an opportunity to showcase their wares. In addition, numerous artists and entertainers get their start at fairs. The more fairs do to support and encourage small businesses, the more revenue would be generated for the fund.

The current source of revenue for the Fair Fund is a transfer from the general fund. The bills would divert sales tax revenue generated on fairgrounds from the general fund to the Fair Fund, replacing the existing transfer. If more revenue is generated than the existing \$2 million, the Fair Fund would increase.

Fairs contribute to economic vitality by providing an opportunity for small businesses to reach a larger customer base, providing a venue for local entertainment businesses, creating numerous seasonal jobs, playing a vital role in fund-raising for nonprofit organizations and providing a venue for community and cultural events.

**These bills will not move unless legislators hear from their constituents. Encourage everyone connected to your fair – from volunteers to entertainers – to call or email their legislators and ask for support for House bill 2765 and Senate bill 6386.**

## WSFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018

### PRESIDENT

#### Terry Atchison 2011 - 2018

Position #5  
Walla Walla Fair & Frontier Days  
149 Thunder Ridge Drive,  
Walla Walla, WA 99362  
Phone: 509-529-8386  
Cell: 509-520-4276  
[terryatchison@msn.com](mailto:terryatchison@msn.com)

#### Erin Gurtel 2015 - 2019

Position #6  
Spokane Interstate Fair  
404 N. Havana, Suite 1  
Spokane Valley, WA 99202  
Work: 509-477-2785  
Cell: 509-994-6734  
[egurtel@spokanecounty.org](mailto:egurtel@spokanecounty.org)

### VICE PRESIDENT

#### Tom Muchoney 2013 - 2021

Position #2  
Evergreen State Fair  
13225 S. Machias Rd.  
Snohomish, WA 98290  
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Email: [tmuchoney@comcast.net](mailto:tmuchoney@comcast.net)

#### Mickey Webb 2015 - 2019

Position #7  
Grant County Fair  
3953 Airway Drive NE  
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Fax: 509-766-7940  
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### IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT

#### John Morrison 2011 - 2018

Position #1  
Clark County Fair  
17402 NE Delfel Road  
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Cell: 360-921-4346  
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[JohnM@cceventcenter.org](mailto:JohnM@cceventcenter.org)

#### Roylene Crawford 2017 - 2020

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### WSFA SERVICE MEMBER DIRECTOR

#### Penny Nelson 2011 - 2019

Hazel's Diner  
3305 W. Birchfield  
Yakima, WA 98901  
Phone: 509-961-9107  
[cornodglady@netscape.com](mailto:cornodglady@netscape.com)

### DIRECTORS

#### Tom Gwin 2013 - 2021

Position #3  
Washington State 4-H Fair  
2606 W. Pioneer  
Puyallup, WA 98371  
Office Phone: 253-445-4630  
Cell: 360-581-0177  
[tgwin@techline.com](mailto:tgwin@techline.com)

### WSFA Executive Secretary

#### Gale Sobolesky, CFE

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#### Sue McIntire 2016 - 2020

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PO Box 242  
Port Townsend, WA 98368  
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Work: 360-385-1013  
Cell: 360-301-0747  
[jeffcofairgrounds@olympen.com](mailto:jeffcofairgrounds@olympen.com)

### WSFA Government Affairs

#### Heather Hansen

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Olympia, WA 98501  
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If you don't know who your legislators are, find them here: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder>  
Find their contact information here: [House Member Roster](#)

*Heather Hansen*  
WSFA Government Affairs



## *Service Member Message . . .*

Hello Guys and Gals, With Spring fast approaching, well someday! The board has been busy already trying to make this a great year.

Last year convention was one of the best we've had in a long time and it was from a lot of hard work from the board and Gale keeping us running right. At our meeting during convention we made Liz Gregory our second in command! Welcome aboard! I look forward to talking more with you about changes we could make to help all the Service Members.

This year we've already been talking about the trade show and ways to get them to come see us. We had a discussion of putting small carnival games in back and maybe spinning a wheel to get a door prizes. Games would of course, give out small prizes as well. We're also thinking of a raffle or game where they visit each of your booths to get whatever they need for the games. Maybe a few of us could go together and host cookies and coffee service for the trade show as well. It would be great to get some input from the Service Members.

Fair Boards and Managers I hope to see more of you turn out for Speed Dating. It's the Service Members way of introducing themselves and telling you about themselves. So, make a note to drop by and talk to us.

I hope to see many of you this summer. My prayers are with all of you and may the season be bright.

Always,

*Penny Nelson*

WSFA Service Director  
Hazel's Diner

## *NEWS from Department of Agriculture*



### **Health and Safety Grants**

#### ***Legislature Approves \$2 Million for Health and Safety Grants***

The Legislature approved a state capital budget for the 2019 biennium that provides WSDA with \$2 million for health and safety projects at the state's agricultural fairs. The Department of Agriculture will mail grant applications in early February, which have a due date of April 16, 2018. The Fairs Commission will review all projects and will provide to the Director a recommendation of which to approve. Capital improvement grants may be used for reimbursement of health and safety improvements such as upgrading fire safety systems, installing hand-washing stations, and upgrading animal facilities and bathrooms. Teresa Norman, Fairs Program Coordinator for the Department of Agriculture, encourages fairs, if possible, to prioritize those projects that will be able to be completed by June 30, 2019. WSDA would be required to ask for a re-appropriation of funds for projects not completed by that date. Teresa also points out that some projects, especially those that require substantial digging or affect structures greater than 45 years old, may require consultation with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, which might add time to the process. During the previous biennium, WSDA distributed funding for 52 projects at fairgrounds across the state. If you have questions, please contact Teresa at [tnorman@agr.wa.gov](mailto:tnorman@agr.wa.gov).

*Teresa Norman*

Fairs and Commodity Commissions Programs  
Washington State Department of Agriculture  
PO Box 42560  
Olympia, WA 98504  
360-902-2043



## **WSFA Legislative Day** **Thursday, February 22, 2018**

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The Washington State Fairs Association **Legislative Day** at the Capitol will be Thursday, February 22, 2018. This year will be more interesting than ever because we have Fair bills to support.

**HB 2725 and SB 6368** - Updating laws concerning agricultural fairs, youth shows, and exhibitions are Department of Agriculture bills. They update the statute and bring the language in line with current practices.

**HB 2765 and SB 6386** - Ensuring the funding of fairs allow the Fair fund to grow for the first time in twenty years! These bills are based on a recently passed law in California that diverts the state portion of sales tax generated on Fairgrounds to the Fair fund. Right now, the Fair Fund comes out of the general fund, so we are swapping general fund dollars for general fund dollars, but we are also tying the Fair Fund to rural economic development. The bill includes a floor and a ceiling, so the Fair fund cannot decrease but it can increase. No taxes are increased.

Legislators need to hear from you. They need to know how important fairs are to communities and to youth programs. They need to hear about the economic development that fairs make possible. Attending Legislative day gives you the opportunity to meet with legislators in person and explain the importance of the Fair Fund. No one can communicate better with your legislators than you, their constituent.

It would be great to see a huge turnout this year. **Service members are welcome, too. Who better to talk about rural economic development than those of you who earn your living at fairs?**

**Please make your appointments now to visit with your Legislators on February 22<sup>nd</sup>.** Schedules fill up quickly so the sooner you request, the more likely you are to get an appointment.

If you are not sure who your legislators are, find out here: <http://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder>.

The easiest way to request an appointment is via email. Find email addresses here:

<http://app.leg.wa.gov/MemberEmail/Default.aspx?Chamber=H>

If your legislative district has more than one fair, please coordinate appointments and go together. After making your appointments, please send to Gale at [wastfair@comcast.net](mailto:wastfair@comcast.net) so we can chart all the contacts.

### **Thursday, February 22:**

At 8:00 AM we will meet in Conference Room ABC near the front entrance of the Cherberg Building. We will go over the Fair bills answer questions and prepare for legislative appointments. At 9:00 AM, depart for meetings with Legislators. The Cherberg building is on the lower left corner of the map.

[State Capitol Campus Parking Information](#)

[Capitol Campus Map](#)

Complete the registration from below and email back to Gale at [wastfair@comcast.net](mailto:wastfair@comcast.net).

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## WSFA Legislative Day

**Thursday, February 22, 2018**

WSFA Legislative Day at the Capitol Registration Form

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Fair: \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_ Number of People Attending from your Fair

What Legislative District are your Fairgrounds in? \_\_\_\_\_

Questions call: The WSFA Office at (360) 269-9971

For legislative questions call Heather Hansen at (360) 705-2040.

Please return form to: WSFA, P.O. Box 945, Conway, WA 98238 or email to: [wastfair@comcast.net](mailto:wastfair@comcast.net).

**Reminder: If your legislative district has more than one fair, please coordinate appointments and go together. After making your appointment, please contact us so we can chart all the contacts.** This will help us plan the day. **Please send your legislative appointment schedule to [wastfair@comcast.net](mailto:wastfair@comcast.net).**  
**Complete this registration form and email back to [wastfair@comcast.net](mailto:wastfair@comcast.net).**