



FIVE COUNTY NEWS FROM 'R' VIEW

VOLUME VII NUMBER 1

JANUARY-MARCH, 2007

Director's Dialogue

I would like to welcome two newly-elected County Commissioners to the Association's Executive Committee. Lois Bulloch is serving another term in Iron County and has been assigned to the Steering Committee. Commissioner Bulloch is well-versed in local government issues and is a great supporter of regional programs. She was a driving force in the creation of the Iron County circuit rider planner program seven years ago.

Denny Drake will be representing the Washington County Commission. Commissioner Drake is coming from a long tenure as Mayor in Santa Clara. He has participated in public lands issues such as the Red Cliffs Desert Reserve, and has a great understanding of social service needs at the local level.

I look forward to working with these outstanding local officials. We will be introducing new mayor representatives at our 14 February Steering Committee meeting in Kanab.

Last month the Steering Committee approved vision and mission statements for the Association of Governments. I worked closely with my leadership team and staff to craft these statements. They reflect our roots in decades of cooperative policymaking at the regional level in southwestern Utah. This cooperation began decades before federal and state policies encouraged the creation of multi-county districts.

These statements will help guide Association staff and leaders to continue a tradition of effective and efficient program delivery. (Ken Sizemore)

Vision Statement

The Five County Association of Governments staff excels in facilitating the development and delivery of programs assigned by local officials to assure southwestern Utah remains a premier region in which to live, work and recreate.

Mission Statement

The Mission of the
Five County Association of Governments
is to
Plan, Prepare and Partner
with federal, state and local governments
to
strengthen the role of southwestern Utah local
officials in the execution of state and federal
programs at the local level.

Cashing in on the VITA Program Puts Money in the Pockets of Local Residents

The Five County Association of Governments is helping coordinate the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program again this year. Our AmeriCorps Vista staff, Dean Brooks, David Peterson, and Holly Vandre have all certified to assist with the tax preparation program. We are working in conjunction with free tax preparation sites in all of the five counties. Sites and contact information are listed below.

The VITA program was created to raise awareness of Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). The IRS estimates that up to \$80 million in available EITC money goes unclaimed each year. You may know someone who is eligible for Earned Income Tax Credit of up to \$4,500. Our staff prepared a tax return for a family in Kanab this week that had a tax refund greater than \$5,000.

The IRS has indicated that nearly all households with income of less than \$38,000 are eligible for the free income tax preparation. The VITA program completed 9,000 State and Federal returns last year in our state and helped Utah residents claim \$9.5 million in Earned Income Tax Credits.

This is a statewide effort which is supported in part by the United Way. In addition to assisting eligible households
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with free tax preparation, we are encouraging persons to become more financially literate and participate in the Utah Saves program (see www.utahsaves.org).

This is the second year the Five County Association Human Services unit has helped to coordinate this effort. We appreciate the support given by all the volunteers and Volunteer Centers in our area.

For more information contact one of the locations listed in the table below:

Location	Contact	Telephone #
Beaver County Beaver County Library	Mark	435-438-5373 or 211
Garfield County Volunteer Center Tropic Panguitch Escalante	Shauna	435-679-8737 or 211
Iron County SUU (Cedar City) Paiute Tribe	Jeff Maureen	435-586-5406 435-586-1112
Kane County Volunteer Center	Joretta	435-644-3696
Washington County Dixie State College Bs. Dept. Dixie Care & Share	Kevin Kara	211 Only 435-628-3661 or 211
Five County Association of Govts.	Dean	435-673-3548
USU Extension Office	Eric	435-634-5706

Staff Spotlights:



Kristen Clark is the new data specialist for Child Care Resource & Referral in Cedar City.

Kristen was born in San Diego, California and is still a 'sun and sand' girl at heart. However, she also loves the mountains and red rocks of southern Utah. She often said, Sand is sand...even if it's red."

Kristen attended Southern Utah University where she was active in many organizations on campus including SUU's Concert Choir, Engineering Club and SUUFACS. She also had the opportunity to perform with the university's premiere song and dance group, Acclamation. Kristen was a member of Acclamation for three years and traveled throughout the United States, England, Austria, Italy, Switzerland, Germany and the Bahamas. She was also an ambassador for the school and presented many speaking and performing engagements.

Kristen graduated magna cum laude from Southern Utah University with a BS degree in Human Nutrition and a minor in Music. Her course work also focused on early childhood development and nutrition of the infant and child.

After college, she went on to accept a position with Central Utah Public Health Department where she worked to coordinate the Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention Program for the six county area. She also had the opportunity to be a part of the Healthy Richfield Committee, teach WIC classes, speak to various community groups on healthy lifestyle choices, organize city events and work with youth through the 5-A-Day and Gold Medal Schools Program.

Kristen also has her personal training certificate and teaches aerobics part-time at Gold's Gym. She loves to be active and enjoys helping others achieve their healthy lifestyle goals.

Kristen's husband recently returned from Iraq with the 222nd – triple deuce. She is very excited to be back in Cedar City with him and looks forward to working with child care providers in the southern Utah area.



Kathy Gonzalez joined the Volunteer Center of Iron County staff as the RSVP Program Assistant in October 2006. Born in Puerto Rico, Kathy moved at age 9 with her family including two brothers and a sister, to Logan, Utah where she lived and attended school until she was

called to serve in the Pennsylvania, Philadelphia LDS Mission.

In August 2006, Kathy moved to Cedar City to work toward a Nursing degree at Southern Utah University. Her goal is to someday work in a hospital, specifically in the labor and delivery unit. In her spare time, Kathy enjoys spending time with her family, playing games and working on puzzles. She also enjoys reading and watching old movies.



Susan Long came to work for the Five County HEAT Office three years ago by way of Las Vegas (too hot), Oregon (too cold), and finally to sunny St. George, a place that is just right for Susan, her husband, J.R., and her dog, Mandy.

Susan is now the Supervisor for the HEAT Program in the five county area. She has developed a good rapport with the workers in each of the five counties and with the state program specialists. She is doing an excellent job monitoring the program in the five counties. She really enjoys the interaction with the clients she serves in the HEAT program. She feels that the program really does make a difference in many people's lives, particularly the elderly, those with small children, and those on fixed incomes.

Susan has made many new friends since moving to St. George. In addition to work, she loves to read, cook, and watch old movies. She has a son living in Arizona. She is a grandmother of three children, and she actually loves her daughter-in-law.

Susan hopes to work for the HEAT program for many years to come. If you know of someone who might be interested in applying for help with energy costs, please refer them to Susan in the Washington County office or the local HEAT offices in each of the five counties.



Tracy Garrett has been with the Five County Association of Governments since October 2005 serving as the director of the Volunteer Center of Iron County and as program coordinator for the three programs of the Senior Corps (RSVP, Senior

Companion and Foster Grandparent Programs) in Beaver, Iron and Garfield Counties.

A native of Las Vegas, Nevada, Tracy grew up in an Air Force family which provided her with lots of opportunities to see the world before settling in Cedar City in 1992. Tracy's interesting work history includes, in her young years, everything from bussing tables, selling shoes and piercing ears to typing contracts for studding horses. In her not-so-younger years, she did framing, teaching and worked as a customer assistant at craft stores and as a dental assistant, an Air Force Munitions System Specialist, and in automotive and household paint and glass sales. Most recently she has earned her living as a lab technician, engineer, and professional props master all of which prepared her for her current position at the Volunteer Center where she must tap

her rich resource of life experiences on a daily basis to meet the needs of the people and assignments of her job.

Tracy also enjoys having family nearby and is particularly proud of her favorite title of 'Aunt Tracy' to Britne, Garrett, Riley and Robbert, with whom she spends much of her spare time playing games and doing arts and crafts!

Second Annual Dixie Transportation Expo



The public is invited to stop in at the Expo to provide your concerns or ideas regarding the many current and future transportation projects in this area. If you use area roads and highways, walk, ride a bicycle or use public transit, your opinions and feedback are valued and needed.

Informative displays and updates on current, planned and potential transportation projects will be available to you. Representatives of the Utah Department of Transportation; City of St. George; Dixie Metropolitan Planning Organization; Hurricane City; Ivins City; Santa Clara City and Washington City will be on hand to answer questions and gather feedback from you.

The Expo will be held in the Dixie Center (in the ballroom); 1835 Convention Center Drive, St. George on Tuesday, February 6, 2007 between the hours of 11:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.

Transportation projects and information to be displayed include:

- *Bluff Street Corridor Study*
- *Southern Parkway and I-15 Interchange*
- *Brigham Road Roundabouts*
- *Brigham Road*
- *Red Hills Parkway Study*
- *Dixie Traffic Control Center*
- *St. George City Master Traffic & Transportation Study*
- *I-15 Improvements Milepost 0-10*
- *Hurricane SR9*
- *Telegraph Street Study*
- *Vision Dixie*
- *St. George Airport*
- *Dixie MPO Planning*
- *Safety / Police Department*
- *Snow Canyon Parkway*
- *SunTran*
- *System Design and Freight Movement*
- *St. George City Capital Projects: Mall Drive Bridge, Valley View Bridge, Mathis Bridge, Signals, etc.*
- *Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning*
- *Hurricane 600 North*
- *Santa Clara Streetscape*

Emergency Home Repair Program

The Emergency Home Repair Program is a grant available for up to \$2,500 to assist low income home buyers with single item home repairs that pose a threat to the health and safety of the occupants, or threaten the long time integrity of the dwelling.

The needed repair should require immediate attention and may include items such as a deteriorating or leaking roof, inoperable furnace or water heater replacement, leaky plumbing, faulty electrical, lack of sanitary facilities or other crisis related repairs that are directly connected to the dwelling.

The Emergency Home Repair Program is an equal opportunity program. For additional information call Danna Alvey at (435) 865-0195.

Please submit articles to Diane Lamoreaux via e-mail (dlamoreaux@fcaog.state.ut.us) or in writing to: P.O. Box 1550; St. George, Utah 84771-1550. For other information or services, please call (435) 673-3548 or visit our web site at: <http://www.fcaog.state.ut.us>

Steering Committee Meeting **Schedule:**

Wednesday, February 14, 2007, 1:00 p.m.
Kane County Courthouse, Commission Chambers
76 North Main Street; Kanab, UT

Wednesday, March 14, 2007, 1:00 p.m.
Beaver County Administration Building, Conference Room
105 East Center; Beaver, UT

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P.O. Box 1550
St. George, Utah 84771-1550