



FIVE COUNTY NEWS FROM 'R' VIEW



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Director's Dialogue

American electoral processes result in regular turn over of policy makers at all levels of government. Newly-elected officials bring new perspectives and fresh approaches to governing. They soon find that the institutional memory and experience of long-tenured officials is vital in effective implementation of public policy.

Southern Utah has been fortunate to benefit from experienced leaders who have provided stability and a long-term perspective when approaching regional policies and priorities. The Steering Committee recently honored two such individuals.



Commissioner Ramsay congratulating Commissioner Johnson

Chad Johnson has served as a Beaver County commissioner for more than 32 years. He began his service with the Five County Association of Governments in 1982. He is well-versed in workforce development issues, public lands management, and community infrastructure improvement processes. Fellow commissioners and other officials value his pragmatic and sensible approach in regional cooperation. His wealth of

experience and perspective can never be replaced. We wish Chad all the best as he moves on with the next chapter of his life.

Alan Adams spent most of 2012 doing double-duty. He was elected to the Parowan City Council in 2011, and is just finishing up a term on the Iron County School Board. He has faithfully served with the Five County Association of Governments for more than 15 years. His background in agriculture and passion for quality educational opportunities



Alan Adams receiving recognition plaque

provided a valuable perspective as regional policies were discussed and established. We look forward to working with Alan in his city duties.

Congressional staff in southern Utah provide a vital link to federal programs and policies. Their regular reports are a key part of Association of Governments agendas. Two long-time staff are retiring at the end of the year, and were also honored at the November Steering Committee meeting. **Marreen Casper** has worked for Senator Hatch for more than 8 years. **Mike Empey** has served on Congressman Matheson's staff for more than 9 years. We sincerely appreciate the hours of devoted service to southern Utah residents and officials that both have given over the past decade, and wish them well as they embark on new ways to serve.

Volunteer Network Programs Update



The Volunteer Center has been super busy the last few months. In October our programs participated in the United Way Day of Caring Campaign with extremely successful projects.

The first project was a Homeless Outreach Day held at the St. George Library. Over 50 blankets were distributed, along with clothing, hats and scarves. We provided resources and assistance with housing, food stamps, Medicaid/Medicare and free phone applications. Then Staheli's catered a wonderful meal to over 90 homeless individuals. We also gave away 200 handmade hats.

Our second project was the Alzheimer Memory Day. Our volunteers put together 70 boxes filled with activities, items and goodies for families to use with their loved ones suffering from Dementia or Alzheimers. We had a fun sing-a-long, frosted cookies and trained caregivers!

The last project was for Dixie Sun elementary children. The Volunteer Center teamed up with Hairitage Beauty School to provide 151 free haircuts to students during a seven hour day. It was crazy! Our volunteers had put together 650 backpacks filled with school supplies which were distributed to needy students all over Washington County.



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The Volunteer Center is in the peak of annual enrollment for the Medicare season. The Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) volunteers had a record month in October for client contacts. We assisted 371 clients in 2 weeks! We still have 6 weeks to go before enrollment closes so it should be a busy season. We have also reached out to all 13 Senior Centers for Medicare presentations and have seen well attended events this year. In October, the SHIIP volunteers from Washington County hosted the first annual Senior Fraud Summit. The information was in depth and interesting from our state representatives who spoke.

Volunteer Now!



The Southern Utah Asset Building Coalition provides free tax preparation services to low-and moderate-income households throughout the five county area.

Volunteers are trained and certified by the Internal Revenue Service and work with taxpayers to ensure they receive all of the credits to which they are entitled. Serving

at a Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site is a rewarding opportunity that offers a unique way to strengthen your community. Please help to make this VITA season the best ever.

To volunteer go to <http://www.utahtaxhelp.org> and click on Volunteer or call 435-674-5757 and ask for Tom Everett.

Child Care Resource & Referral, Western Region - Announces 31 New Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential Holders

The CDA National Credentialing Program's purpose is to enhance the quality of child care by defining, evaluating and recognizing the competence of child care providers. The CDA Competency Standards, which define the skills needed by providers in specific child care settings, serve as a means for measuring the overall performance of caregivers. This nationally recognized credential allows providers the opportunity to showcase their training and their skill as a professional in their field and also to advance in their career choice.

Over the past year, Child Care Resource & Referral, Western Region has had the opportunity of helping 31 child care providers in the Western Region obtain their CDA Credential. These providers include the following individuals:

Aislinn Bettridge	Alicia Payne
Amber Chandara	Annette Ericksen
Bonnie Melancon	Candice Nielson
Carlene Hanson	Cheryl Terry
Cristen Muro	Dawn Patterson
Debra Cahoon	Desiree Brush
Francie Mickelson	Gay Newby
Gina Garcia	Jennifer Pipes
Jillian Halverson	Juli Arnoldsen
Kristen Johnson	Lauri Steiner
Marsha Millett	MaryBeth Harding
Rahnnny Cowles	Randi Strehau
Sara Dinkheller	Stephanie Harmer
Tammy McKelleb	Tania Madrigal
Tina Clark	Toni Gubler
Valerie Neeley	

The choice to work with infants and young children is one of the most important career decisions that one can make. An early childhood teacher or caregiver is a special person in children's lives as they master skills, develop friendships, grow in independence and move to new levels of thinking and understanding about themselves and the world. It is an exciting and challenging responsibility to setup a supportive learning environment for a group of young children, develop a relationship with each one and meet their needs as individuals and as a group. Children's learning experiences during this period in their lives can increase their self-confidence and readiness for elementary school and for life.

The number of infants through 5-year-old children in group programs has multiplied dramatically in recent years. There has been an increase in public school kindergartens, pre-kindergartens, Head Start programs, day care and many other privately and publically funded settings. Families place great trust in the staff of these programs, for it is the daily performance of the caregiver that determines the quality of the children's experiences. The Child Development Associate (CDA) Competency Standards and Assessment System support quality early childhood programs by providing standards for training, evaluation, and recognition of teachers and caregivers based on their ability to meet the unique needs of this age group.

Congratulations to these amazing providers for their continued efforts to improve their programs for the children of southern Utah!

Staff Spotlights



**Jennifer Benson, Cedar City
HEAT Office**

Jennifer is the new receptionist for the Home Energy Assistance Target (HEAT) program in Cedar City. She is a long-term resident of Cedar City, where she has lived since 1987.

Jennifer is the mother of three daughters, the oldest of which is attending college in Nebraska.

She enjoys reading and horseback riding. She is working on finishing up her bachelor's degree at

SUU where she will receive her BIS in Agriculture with an emphasis in Equine Science and a minor in psychology.

The Volunteer Center of Washington County welcomes Tom Everett as their new part time Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) and Senior Health Insurance Information Program (SHIIP) coordinator. Tom has been a volunteer the past four years with the Medicare program and has now agreed to take on a leadership role with SHIIP and VITA. This move is well timed for the Medicare season!



**Tom Everett, VITA/SHIP
Coordinator**

Tom loves to hike and four wheel all over the Five County region and makes a killer peach pie.

Excerpts from an October 1, 2012 Letter Received at the Weatherization Office

"I wanted to send a letter of appreciation for all your assistance in obtaining services from both H.E.A.T. and Weatherization.

The recent installation of the windows and doors has made a HUGE impact on the whole atmosphere of our home. The morning after the completion of the installations all FIVE of us woke happy, well rested, and very grateful for the windows and doors. There was a consistent temperature throughout the house. The kids kept repeating their joy in every room entered about how wonderful the temperature was; they didn't need to turn a heater on nor wrap up in multiple blankets.

The second thing we noticed was how quiet it was in the house. Prior to the new windows we could hear the traffic on the highway and even noise on the East side of the highway. We can barely hear our own animals in our backyard now.

The third pleasant surprise was after we realized with the new windows there was no breeze blowing through and though the sun was beating down, the temperature by touch was not scalding hot. For the first time since we moved here in 2005, we are able to leave our sliding master bedroom doors

uncovered. This has provided us with the view which was one of the reasons we moved here. The beautiful mountain view of Pine Valley and morning sunrises and the span of stars at night has brought us peace.

The installation of windows and doors has impacted our family way beyond electric expenses. It has improved our rest through the night, peace through the beauty, controlled temperature, decrease on indoor dust, and with all these combined we have all become a happier, healthier family.

We would have never imagined that new windows could impact a whole family improving both our physical and mental health. The song that states, "You don't know what you've got until it's gone" is so true! But we really don't miss the noise, breeze and dust, we just appreciate so much more that they are gone now that we know what we had.

Again, thank you so much. It has been amazing and is something we had no faith in ever having enough money to buy for ourselves. It has given us hope that we can have dreams come true. We appreciate all you have done and your continued patience throughout this journey."

Individuals, families, the elderly and the disabled who earn no more than 125 percent of current federal poverty income level are eligible for help from the Weatherization Assistance Program. Priority is given to the elderly and disabled, households with high-energy consumption, emergency situations, and homes with preschool-age children. Participating households nationally are averaging a savings of nearly 33 percent on energy consumption or approximately \$388 a year in Utah. Average total of all Weatherization costs per home was \$4,981 in 2010.

For more information, contact the Weatherization offices at 1-888-503-5321.

Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan Update

The Five County AOG Transportation program staff is currently working on an update of the Coordinated Human Service Transportation Plan (CHSTP). The CHSTP plan assesses the needs and gaps in transportation services for people with limited mobility, including seniors, people with disabilities, and people with low incomes. The updated plan will build upon the work performed in 2007 with a stronger focus on regional needs.

There are thousands of people in this region who rely upon alternative transportation systems such as the Senior Citizen Center dial-a-ride or public transportation. This plan will coordinate activities and projects to maximize the level of service to citizens with limited mobility options. Staff is currently identifying all available transportation services in the region, which will be vital to the next step in the process: identifying needs and gaps in service.

Recently, volunteers and Five County AOG staff dispersed an onboard survey on SunTran buses to gather information to be included in the Regional Transportation Plan. Staff has scheduled focus group meetings at various Senior Citizen Centers in the region to hear from citizens about the transportation needs in the community and is working to involve the community in other ways in the coming months. Times and locations for focus group discussions are listed on the back page.

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Transportation Focus Group Meetings

Cedar City Senior Citizen Center - 489 E. 200 S.	December 4, 2012 12:00 p.m.
Parowan Senior Citizen Center - 685 N. 300 E.	December 5, 2012 12:00 p.m.
Beaver Senior Citizen Center - 81 East Center	December 5, 2012 4:00 p.m.
Hurricane Senior Citizen Center - 95 N. 300 W.	December 6, 2012 12:00 p.m.
St. George Senior Citizen Center - 245 N. 200 W.	December 7, 2012 11:30 a.m.
Panguitch Senior Citizen Center - 67 N. 40 W.	December 11, 2012 12:30 p.m.
Milford Senior Citizen Center - 415 N. 100 W.	December 11, 2012 4:00 p.m.
Kanab Senior Citizen Center - 56 W. 450 N.	December 12, 2012 12:00 p.m.

Please submit articles to Diane Lamoreaux via e-mail to (dlamoreaux@fivecounty.utah.gov) 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 website at: <http://www.fivecounty.utah.gov>

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Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!