



OCRCP NEWS

July 2026

Championing Liberty, Inspiring Change!

2024-2026 Executive Board members:

Stacy Storm - Chair
Michael Blake - Vice Chair
Mary LaVelle - Secretary
Wayne Turner - Treasurer
Isaac Taylor - State Committeeman
Suzy Taylor - State Committeewoman
Trinity Stucker - 7th Legislative Dist.Cmt.
Ray Campbell - 7th Legislative Dist.Cmt.
Anthony Jenkins - 7th Legislative Dist.Cmt.
Kim Frey - Area 1 Chair
Kelly Knapp - Area 2 Chair
Nick Timm - Area 4 Chair
Yvette Hill - Area 5 Chair
Tina Holan - Area 6 Chair

Okanogan County Commissioners

Nick Timm, District 1
Andy Hover, District 2
Jon Neal, District 3
509.422.7100

Okanogan County Assessor

Larry Gilman
509.422.7190

Okanogan County Auditor

Cari Hall
509.422.7240

Okanogan County Coroner

Dave Rodriguez
509.422.7221

Okanogan District Court Judges

Charles D. Short
Byron J. Moore
509.422.7170

Okanogan County Prosecutor

Albert Lin
509.422.7280

Conversations with the Candidates

JULY 2026

Evenings at 6pm

Gene Davis Coroner
Jodie Barcus Sheriff

Tuesday
21

Trinity Stucker Commissioner
Giz Gonzalez Sheriff

Wednesday
22

Jon Neal Commissioner
Cindy Jensen Coroner

Tuesday
28

At the Coaches' Lounge in Twisp
115 METHOW VALLEY HWY STE A-1



*Please join the
Oroville, Wash. Chamber of Commerce for the*

OKANOGAN COUNTY CANDIDATE FORUM

**Wednesday, July 15th
6:00 - 8:00**

**American Legion Hodges #84
314 14th Avenue
Oroville, WA**



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.

All candidates running in Okanogan County and beyond are welcome.

Okanogan County Sheriff

Jodie Barcus
509.422.7200

Okanogan Superior Court Judges

Kathryn Burke
Rachel Hong

Okanogan County Treasurer

Pam Johnson
509.422.7180

7th Legislative District Representatives

Hunter Abell
360.786.7988

Andrew Engell
360.786.7908

7th Legislative District Senator

Shelly Short
360.786.7612

4th Congressional District Representative

Dan Newhouse
North District Office
509.433.7760

4th Congressional District Senators

Maria Cantwell
Spokane Office
509.353.2507

Patty Murray
Spokane Office
509.624.9515

Did You Know..... America's system of government developed in stages? Independence was declared in July 1776, the Articles of Confederation created the first national government in 1781, and the U.S. Constitution became the nation's governing document in 1789. During the 1790s, President George Washington and his administration established many traditions and practices that continue to shape the federal government today.

Join your Okanogan County Republican party leadership at the Central Committee Meeting and bring a conservative friend or neighbor.

July 23rd, Thursday

POTLUCK starts at 5:30 PM

Central Committee Meeting starts at 6:00 PM

Location: Okanogan County Commissioners
123 5th Ave N, Okanogan

August 27th, Thursday

Central Committee Meeting starts at 6:00 PM

Location: TBD Keep an eye on our socials!

Please visit [Calendar @ Okanogan County Republican Party](#) for more details.

WAGOP Completes Official Recommendations of Candidates for the State Supreme by Recommending Scott Edwards

Bellevue—The Washington State Republican Party (WAGOP) has completed its official recommendations of candidates for the State Supreme Court in advance of the August 4th primary by recommending Scott Edwards for Position 1 on the Court.

In a special meeting of the WAGOP State Committee held in early July, county chairs and state committee members from around Washington followed the Party's longstanding practice and met a two-thirds supermajority threshold in voting to recommend Edwards.

Edwards is a Seattle-based tax attorney with some 30 years of experience representing clients on state and local tax matters. He has tried multiple cases at the Washington Supreme Court, including cases that have challenged the constitutionality of Washington's state capital gains tax. He is a graduate of Princeton University (B.A., magna cum laude) and the University of Washington School of Law (J.D.).

He has served as a partner at several prominent Seattle-area law firms, while also teaching state and local tax law at the University of Washington School of Law.

Announcing the Party's recommendation of Edwards, WAGOP Chairman Jim Walsh said the following:

"Scott Edwards has strong supporters on the WAGOP State Committee. These supporters talk about his strong academic credentials and expertise on tax policy—something the State Supreme Court definitely needs. But I'm most impressed by what Edwards has said about his judicial philosophy, generally. He believes that judges should act as a check on legislative and executive overreach, maintaining the rule of law and separation of powers. This is critical, in a state that's been damaged repeatedly by overreaching governors and other elected officials. Edwards has also criticized the rotten practice of judges retiring early to allow the governor to appoint donors and political cronies to the bench—who then run as incumbents at the next election. Cheers to Scott Edwards for filing to run against one of those unelected 'incumbents'."

With the Edwards recommendation, WAGOP has completed its official recommendations ahead of next month's primary election. Those recommendations are:

- Position 1, Scott Edwards and Laura Christensen Colberg
- Position 3, Judge David Stevens
- Position 5, Judge Dave Larson
- Position 7, Todd Bloom

Okanogan County voters will select candidates for District Court and the Washington State Supreme Court, this election cycle. These courts handle cases ranging from local misdemeanors and civil disputes to felony trials and appellate review.

Washington Supreme Court

The 2026 Washington Supreme Court election is significant, with five of nine seats on the ballot at once. Because justices serve long terms, the results could shape state law for years, including issues involving taxation, pension disputes, and voter-approved initiatives.

Although judicial races are nonpartisan, outcomes are often influenced by voter turnout, fundraising, and endorsements. Supreme Court decisions ultimately affect counties like Okanogan through their impact on local courts, law enforcement policy, and state funding.

Judicial elections play an important role in shaping how laws are applied and how justice is administered in our communities. Voters are encouraged to review each candidate's experience, qualifications, and judicial philosophy before casting their ballot.

Following is a list of the contested court positions:

Okanogan County District Court**Judge Position 1**

- Byron Moore – retainjudgemoore@gmail.com
- Robert W. Grim – robertgrimforjudge@gmail.com

Judge Position 2

- Charles Short – cdshort@protonmail.com
- John Andrew Bangerter – Johnbangerterforjudge@gmail.com

District Court handles misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor criminal cases, traffic infractions, small claims, civil cases involving claims up to \$100,000, and protection orders.

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Contact OCRPcoms@gmail.com for more information or to participate in any of the events below!

July 15th – Candidate Forum/Oroville Legion 6pm

July 21st – Coaches Lounge

July 22nd – Coaches Lounge

July 23rd – Central Committee Meeting

July 28th – Coaches Lounge

August 4th — Primary Election

(...continued)

WA Supreme Court**Justice Position #01**

- Colleen Melody – hello@melodyforjustice.com
- Laura Christensen Colberg – info@laura4position1.com
- Scott Edwards – info@votescottedwards.com

Justice Position #03

- Jaime Michelle Hawk – info@judgehawk.com
- David Stevens – DavidforJustice@yahoo.com
- Mike Diaz – info@diazforjustice.com

Justice Position #04

- Ian Birk – info@ianbirk.com
- Sean O'Donnell – campaign@odonnellforjustice.com

(continued page 4...)

County & State Judicial Overview

WA Supreme Court

Justice Position #05

- Greg Miller – millerforjustice@gmail.com
- Theo Angelis – info@justiceangelis.com
- Dave Larson – campaign@larsonforjustice.com
- Sharonda Amamilo – electsharondaamamilo@gmail.com

Justice Position #07

- David R. Shelvey – david@davidshelvey.com
- Debra L. Stephens – debra@debrastephenslaw.com
- Karim A. Merchant – karim@win4wa.com
- Todd A. Bloom – electtodd bloom@gmail.com

Washington State's Supreme Court – the "court of last resort" – is asked to review more than a thousand cases each year. Most come from the State Court of Appeals, though cases can be appealed directly from Superior Court.

In the Supreme Court, no witnesses are called or other evidence taken. Rather, the Court hears only legal issues, and decides the case based on the factual record developed in the trial court.

“Based on 2012 election data from the Secretary of State, roughly a third of voters leave the judicial races blank. Another third vote based on whatever name sounds good. Which leaves only the last third—those are informed voters. That means that a judge can get elected to the court by only 11 to 15 percent of the registered voters.”

~ The Stranger

April 7, 2026



Conconully 4th of July events. Photo credit: OCRP PCOs

For the first time since the Washington State Supreme Court's beginning, five justice positions are on the 2026 ballot. Due to two resignations, one retirement and challengers of incumbents, positions 1,3,4,5, and 7 are open. Although the Supreme Court is supposed to be non-partisan, the current court is 100% liberal or progressive. All these openings create the unprecedented possibility of flipping our state's highest court toward judges who believe in law and order and common sense laws.

Since there are 16 candidates in all for the five open positions, this newsletter will deal only with the four positions 1, 3, 5, and 7 that will be on the August 4th Special ballot & the WA GOP recommended candidates. The top two vote-getters will advance to the General Election in November.

An excellent source of information on all positions and candidates is the Washington State Supreme Court Visualizer. It has links to all the candidates' websites with some of the information relayed below: <https://www.washingtonsupremecourt.org/>

The Incumbent in Position: Conflict of Interest on SB 6346



Justice Colleen Melody was chosen for **Position 1** by Governor Ferguson to fulfill the remaining two years of retiring Justice Yu's term. Justice Melody was one of the attorneys that served Ferguson when he was Attorney General. He praised her for her work suing the Federal government. According to an a November 24, 2025, KXL article, "She led or helped lead cases challenging the Trump administration on issues including the travel ban, birthright citizenship, the Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals program and immigration enforcement actions at local courthouses." She was part of his efforts to sue the Trump Administration 99 times during his first term, including the transgender military service ban. Justice Melody assumed Position 1 on January 1, 2026.

On April 23, 2026, Jason Rantz reported on SeattleRed that Justice Melody was recommended to Gov. Ferguson for this position by Noah Purcell, the Solicitor General who works for the Attorney General. Purcell is the person who emailed Senate Majority Leader Jamie Pederson, asking her to include an emergency clause in her income tax bill SB 6346, in order to prevent the referendum process by voters opposed to the bill. This man has endorsed Justice Melody in this election and has donated to her campaign. Rep. Jim Walsh, our WAGOP chair, is calling for her to recuse herself from deliberations on the income tax bill because of the conflict of interest.

Justice Melody's Two Challengers



Attorney Scott Edwards, who was born and raised in Alaska, graduated magna cum laude from Princeton then earned his law degree from the University of Washington Law School. He has had decades of experience. His specialty is taxes. Besides his practice as Partner with law firm Ballard Spahr in Seattle, he has taught state and local tax at the University of Washington School of Law for 20 years. He has provided community service through his church, the Boy Scouts, and the American Red Cross. He has received recognition for his excellence, including, Chambers USA (Tax—WA) 2020–2025; The Best Lawyers in America (Tax Law) 2012–2026; and Thomson Reuters "Washington Super Lawyer" (Tax) 2012–2024. Attorney Edwards says, "I am running for the Washington Supreme Court to bring independent judgment to every case—focused on the Washington State Constitution, the statutes, and the people we serve."

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Attorney Laura Christensen Colberg grew up in Wenatchee. She graduated summa cum laude from Seattle Pacific University then graduated from the University of Washington School of Law School. Her specialty is family law. In 1997, she began teaching her specialties to students preparing for the Bar Exam. She was honored by Rising Stars 2005-2008. In 2008, after 11 years in practice, she was appointed as Court Commissioner *pro tem* for Snohomish County Superior Court.

She defines wisdom as, “the willingness to sit with complexity, to resist the easy answer, to hear the second person before deciding the first one was right, or wrong.”

Attorney Colberg has no ties with any politicians: she will answer only to the people of Washington State. In her website she commits to “review thoroughly, listen carefully, research existing authority, weigh everything against the Washington State Constitution, and only then issue an opinion — explaining how she arrived at it.”

Judge David Stevens for Position 3

Justice Raquel Montoya-Lewis, who currently holds Position 3, is not seeking re-election. Three people will be contending for the open seat: Judge Mike Diaz, Washington State Court of Appeals; Judge David Stevens, Mason County Superior Court Judge; and Judge Jaime Hawk, King County Superior Court.

Governor Inslee appointed Judges Diaz and Hawk to their current positions.



Judge David Stevens: In November of 2023, the voters of Mason County elected Judge Stevens to the Mason County Superior Court in a landslide. He defeated the incumbent who had been appointed by then-Governor Inslee. In 2024, he was re-elected. WAGOP recommends him for Position 3.

Judge Stevens states in his website that he is “concerned that governors have appointed the vast majority of Washington State Superior Court Judges, State Appellate Court Judges, and Washington State Supreme Court Justices,. . . Gubernatorial appointment leads to ideological rulings and judicial overreach.”

His comments on the Supreme Court are vital to understanding what is at stake in this election:

“The Supreme Court is a constitutional court, not a policy-making body. Its role is to interpret and apply the law as written and not on evolving societal standards or ideology. Courts should not replace the role of voters or the legislature. Judicial restraint and independence are essential to maintaining credibility and trust.

I believe that the State Supreme Court currently believes that through its regulation of the Washington State Bar Association it can pursue policy-making procedures and usurp the legislature.”

On the matter of law and order, his observations on his website are worth listing here:

“Law and Order means equal justice under the law. The current Washington Supreme Court believes that judges should evaluate the selection of jurors based on Race. I believe that is wrong.

The current Supreme Court has limited the ability of trial judges to issue warrants when criminal defendants do not show up to court. I believe that this experience in the courtroom matters when liberty and public safety are at stake.

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Judges must apply the law fairly and consistently, not based on ideology. I believe that the Washington State Constitution should be interpreted based on its text and original meaning and not on evolving societal standards.”

The experience of Judge Stevens, who is Hispanic on his mother’s side, includes enlistment in the Navy. After honorable discharge, he went to the University of Washington and received a Bachelor of Race and Ethnic Relations. From there he worked for HUD as Federal Civil Rights Investigator in Seattle, hired under the Outstanding Scholar Program. He went on to enroll in the University of Washington School of Law where he was awarded the Mary Ellen King Scholarship for showing exceptional promise in litigation. He was the first member of his family to go to college.

After graduation he became the Chief Public Defender for the Colville Confederated Tribes, Senior Deputy Prosecutor for Mason County, a Special Assistant U.S. Attorney in Eastern California, and served as International Prosecutor in Kosovo and Justice Advisor in Afganistan. And now, he is running for Washington State Supreme Court Position 3.

Judge Dave Larson for Position 5

After Justice Barbara Madsen retired, Governor Ferguson appointed Seattle litigator Theo Angelis to Position 5. He assumed the bench on April 4, 2026. Prior to this appointment, Justice Angelis had no judicial experience.



Judge Dave Larson: In contrast, challenger Judge Larson has 18 years experience as a judge and 23 years as a trial lawyer – a total of 41 years of experience. Throughout those years, he has kept two guiding principles: “Love the freedom of others as much as, if not more than, your own.” And “It is more important to do right than to be right.”

Judge Stevens grew up in Tacoma in a loving, hard-working, blue-collar family with strong values of kindness, fairness, and resilience. He put himself through University of Puget Sound working at all kinds of part-time jobs, graduating with a degree in Public Administration. He earned his Law Degree from Seattle University School of Law night school while working days full-time for the Pierce County Prosecutor’s office and a private law firm.

Over 23 years of law practice, he served as a trial lawyer, in-house trial counsel, private firm practice, owner of his own law firm, and Of Counsel for a large law firm. He was rated by his peers as a “pre-eminent lawyer” and “most upstanding lawyer”.

His interest in passing on good values and beliefs to the younger generation lead him to run for the Federal Way School Board. In 2008, while he was serving as School Board President in Federal Way, the court asked Attorney Larson if he would become the Federal Way Municipal Court Judge. He agreed, was appointed, initiated much-needed change, and was re-elected to the position by the voters four times. He did that for 18 years.

Critics say that Judge Larson’s Municipal Court experience does not prepare him for the Supreme Court, but he points to his 23 years of law practice dealing with all kinds of court cases. He believes that he is as prepared for this position as anyone running. The grounding in a community has given him a deep connection with the reasons Constitutional laws are so vital.

The many ways Judge Larson helped youth in Federal Way are an inspiration. As School Board President, he initiated Civics education, promoted careers in the trades, founded and convened YMCA High School Mock Trial Competitions,

(continued page 8…)

supported the STEM program by helping initiate the FIRST Robotics program, worked with the City Arts Commission to hold a student art contest with liberty and justice themes.

Other Community Service: City Human Services Commission, first chair of Federal Way's Board of Ethics, Homelessness Task Force, coach for Little League and Federal Way Hawks, Kiwanis, Aktion Club of Federal Way, Advancing Leadership, Puget Sound Honor Flight, Air Search and Rescue Management Team, Civil Air Patrol. In 1996, he helped save the Seahawks! In 2022, Federal Way voted him the Best City Leader.

His desire to inspire a love of liberty and justice for all went beyond Federal Way. He created "How Freedom Works" and traveled throughout the state teaching the fundamentals that make freedom possible. It also addresses why we are politically dysfunctional today.

It is easy to see why our WAGOP has endorsed Judge Dave Hanson for Position 5.

Todd Bloom for Position 7

Chief Justice Debra Stephens was appointed to Position 7 by then-Governor Christine Gregoire and assumed her duties on January 1,, 2008.



Challenger Todd Bloom: Tax attorney, financial-planning professional, military veteran, and WSBA Board of Governors member. He is a sole practitioner with over two decades of experience in providing professional services to private and publicly-held companies, families, executives, and private business owners. Bloom's prior experience includes over a decade as a tax attorney and senior manager in Big Four accounting, as well as in-house counsel. He has represented clients before the IRS and state taxing/regulatory authorities.

Bloom served in the U.S. Navy for over 20 years. He was a Naval Reserve officer (1997–2002) before being recalled to active duty after 9/11. He served continuously from 2002 to 2013. He deployed after 9/11 in support of military and counter-terrorism operations and exercises in the Persian Gulf, the Pacific, Southeast Asia, and South America during shipboard and expeditionary tours. He remained in the reserves until his retirement as a Lieutenant Commander in 2018.

Bloom earned his B.A. from Simpson College. He received M.B.A. and J.D. degrees from Tulane University in Louisiana, an M.A. from the Naval War College, an LL.M. from the University of Washington, and a diploma from the College of Naval Command and Staff. Originally from the Midwest, Cmdr. and Mrs. Bloom and their two sons came to the Pacific Northwest from New Orleans, Louisiana, where he was first admitted to the bar. He is a certified CPA and a Chartered CFA.

He currently serves as the District 6 Governor for the Washington State Bar Association. He assumed that office in 2023, and his three-year term expires September 2026.

Bloom ran for Congress in 2016 and 2022 as a Republican. He also ran for Supreme Court in 2020.

Over the years, besides the extended military service, his community service has included adjunct instructor at UW Tacoma for MBA students studying Finance, grading CFA exams, Client Protection Fund, Parish Finance Council, and long-time (Gallon Club) blood donor.

Todd Bloom's training and experience reveal a disciplined, technically trained tax lawyer and veteran who would bring financial and regulatory expertise to the Court.

BALLOT MEASURE TEXT (copied from www.VoteWA.gov)

Okanogan County Proposition No. 1 Levy for Maintaining County Services and Public Facilities. The Board of Okanogan County Commissioners adopted Resolution 48-2026 concerning a proposition for maintaining county services and public facilities. This proposition, if approved, would authorize the County to increase its regular property tax levy above the 1% limit factor, to a rate of \$1.15 per \$1000 assessed value for collection in 2027 and authorize use of the 2027 levy amount as the base for computing levies in subsequent years, as set forth in Resolution 48-2026. Should this proposition be approved?

- Yes
- No

MEETING TO EXPLAIN LEVY LID-LIFT

On July 1, Andy Hover, County Commissioner for District 2, made a presentation explaining the Property Tax Levy that will be on the August 4 ballot. The event, which was held in the Methow Community Club in Methow, was convened by the Methow Valley Democrats. There were about 50-60 people in all. Isaac Taylor came with a lot of good questions.

Commissioner Hover started the presentation by explaining one reason for the levy lid-lift being on this year's ballot. That is that, in 2001, Tim Eyman promoted property tax limitation through Initiative 747 (I-747), which was passed by Washington voters. Previously, State law had allowed local governments to raise property tax collections by 6% per year without voter approval. Eyman's initiative amended State law to permanently cap annual increases in regular property tax levies by local governments and taxing districts to 1%, unless voters approve a larger increase.

ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

That restriction has run head long into the economic conditions brought on in part by the pandemic in 2020, especially the "hyper-inflation of goods and services and wage increases."

What does the General Fund does pay for? Commissioner Hover listed the following: Assessor, Auditor, Board of Equalization, Civil Service, County Clerk, County Commissioners, Coroner, District Court, Elections, Fairgrounds, Jail, Juvenile Department, Maintenance, Planning, Prosecutor, Public Defense, Sheriff, Superior Court, Treasury, WSU Extension. Other things paid for by the General Fund are Non-departmental expenses that are attributed to all departments such as Insurance, Central Service, Computer Licenses, IT Department, and other expenses.

What have you done so far to save money? The Commissioner said that since the County is a service and most of the expense is personnel, one of the ways to cut cost quickly is cutting people. For instance, Treasury, Auditor, and Assessor's offices all have an empty position that they have not filled. Empty positions in the Sheriff's office and Jail are more difficult because the law requires a certain amount of personnel based on number of inmates.

What wage increases have been given? Commissioner Hover explained some of the issues that restrict how the County can adjust wages. The new minimum wage, for instance, obligates them to pay \$17 an hour for people with no skills. (continued page 10...)

If they are asking for personnel with an AA or 4-year-degree for a job that entails more risk, such as dealing with the public, they have to pay more. Furthermore, Labor and Industries requires that they pay Exempt Employees a yearly salary of \$96,000 in 2027.

Commissioner Hover shared the Commission's hesitation to curtail employee wages, citing Washington State statistics as to what constitutes a living wage: \$36 per hour for 2 adults and \$39 for 2 adults and one child.

What happens if the levy lid-lift does not pass? Property taxes are not the only source of funding for current County expenses. The County also relies on local, State and Federal funds. The County would need \$2.3 million more from these other sources in order to balance the budget without eating into reserve accounts.

The Federal Government gives PILT (Payment In Lieu of Taxes) for tax-exempt Federal lands, such as National Forests, Bureau of Land Management, and National Parks. The Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) pays PILT to local taxing districts on parcels purchased for wildlife habitat and recreation. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) pays PILT to eligible counties for State-owned natural resources and conservation lands.

Another source is Secure Rural Schools (SRS) that provides money for schools and roads and is based on timber production. SRS does not provide funding to the general fund but to the road department. However, if SRS money is not provided to the County, PILT payments could increase.

The County Commissioners are dealing with inflation across many areas. For example: Maintenance has gone from \$573,000 to \$878,000; Insurance from \$400,000 to \$1,100,000; Public Defense from \$1,019,000 to \$1,978,000; Jail Labor from \$2,900,000 to \$4,200,000; plus many more areas.

The costs are outstripping the revenues, so they are projecting that there will be a \$2,300,000 deficit. They do have a \$12,000,000 appropriation from the Federal Government, but they had planned to use the interest to do capital projects and maintenance to County facilities.

If PILT or the State do not pay more for the things they are requiring the County to do, the County Commissioners will have to triage. They are looking at cutting the fairground back to just maintaining the grounds, and some personnel hours to 36 hours a week. That could mean a 4-day week for getting car tabs, plus delays in title changes, permits, and inspections.

What other revenue sources are there? A portion of the local sales tax goes to the County General Fund. We get an average of \$4.6 million a year from sales tax. Also, County Assistance comes from the State based on per capita revenue from sales tax, unincorporated population, and amount of local government assistance.

What does your total property tax cover? From your total property tax bill, the County gets about 23%. That is roughly split between the General Fund and Roads. About 50% of your property tax goes to State and local schools, The rest is distributed to fire districts, hospital/EMS services and city or library districts.

PROPOSED PROPERTY TAX INCREASE

The current Okanogan County Base Levy is \$0.88-\$1.00 per \$1,000 of assessed value. Adding in school, fire, and hospital levies, plus different taxing districts and specific city limits, the property tax rates currently vary between \$7.00 and \$10.00 per thousand. The levy lid-lift would increase that by \$0.15-\$0.27 per \$1,000 of assessed value.

Commissioner Hover explained that our property taxes could increase in another way. If the budget is drawn up to collect \$6,000,000, but some of the houses burn down; the other property owners have to make up the difference until new houses are constructed.

Have property taxes ever been reduced due to failed levies? When the EMS district in Tonasket failed to pass their levy, people did see a decrease in their tax payments. Since this is a levy lid-lift, people would not see their taxes decrease if it failed. In general, levies are drawn up to say that the increase will be 1-year permanent.

Have the County Commissioners looked into economic development? Roni Holder-Diefenbach of the Economic Alliance is exploring that, but there can be no industry in the Methow Valley because of the restrictions on water usage related to salmon recovery. It would have to take place in Bridgeport, Brewster, and/or the Okanogan Valley.

Thanks are in order to Commissioner Hover for taking the time to address the reasons for the levy lid-lift and the steps they have taken to deal with this unwelcome and complicated subject.

PLEASE VOTE!

*~ It's not just an election.
It is your & your family's
future. ~*

