

Reaching out to 2nd District residents

COUNTY CORNER

By Sandra Romero



This is the beginning of an occasional column in the *Nisqually Valley News*.

What I have in mind is two-fold:

stimulating conversations on Thurston County policy issues and being an information outlet for what is happening at the Thurston County commissioner level.

Having served as your county commissioner for the past 20 months, I am proud of what we accomplished and hope to continue the dialog between the commissioner's office and folks who live here, especially in the Yelm area and the south part of the county.

For those of you who may not know me, I am commissioner for the Second District, which includes the east side of the county from the Nisqually Reach and Lacey down through Yelm and Rainier to the Lewis County border.

I am a veteran of 12 years of service in the state House of Representatives and a former Olympia City Council member.

In addition to my regular duties as a county commissioner, I represent the county on a number of boards, commissions and committees including:

Animal Services, the Transportation Policy Board, Intercity Transit, Nisqually River Council, Puget Sound Partnership, Salmon Recovery Council, Thurston Regional Planning Council and several others.

As you may know, the county is dealing with some major issues. One of the biggest is the county budget.

All of us were hit hard by the recession and the county's situation is no different. For the first time we cut more than 12 percent of our workforce and we continue to implement a hiring freeze. We did this because we understand decisions made today will impact our county's tomorrow.

Other big issues include the Shorelines Master Plan, impact fees, the demands on the law and justice system, transportation, the Critical Areas Ordinance, "green" economy related programs, transfer of development rights, Yelm Highway reconstruction, rural economic development and farmland preservation.

In addition to this column there are a number of other ways to find out more about county government.

I send out an electronic newsletter quarterly.

You can sign up to receive the newsletter by e-mailing paribel@co.thurston.wa.us

In addition to the newsletter, I hold monthly coffee meetings in my district. These meetings are an informal opportunity to meet with me and county staff.

I always provide the coffee.

The coffee meetings are normally on the fourth Monday of each month. The schedule is 9:30 a.m. at Rainier City Hall, 11 a.m. at Blue Bottle Espresso in Yelm and 2 p.m. at Olympic Crest Coffee in Lacey.

My office is always open. It is located at the Thurston County Courthouse 2000 Lakemidge Drive S.W. in Olympia.

You can also call me at 360-786-5747 or e-mail me at romeros@co.thurston.wa.us

Many county services and programs are available on our new and improved website, check it out at www.co.thurston.wa.us

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

■ Sandra Romero is a



Thurs. - Sun. (9:30 am - 5:30 pm)

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