

## **Media Advisory – Sept. 15, 2008**

**Contact: Christopher Schwarzen**

Office: 425-388-3883

Email: Christopher.Schwarzen@snoco.org

### **Local organizations, county partner to promote tourism**

Ten organizations and events have qualified for funding recently approved by County Executive Aaron Reardon and the County Council to increase county tourism and promote overnight stays at local hotels and motels.

The local organizations will receive nearly \$100,000 from Snohomish County's Hotel/Motel Lodging Tax Fund.

"These cultural events and publications attract new visitors to our community and enrich all our lives," Reardon said.

The Snohomish County Lodging Tax Advisory Board reviewed applications and recommended a total of \$99,236 for projects. Organizations will provide another \$365,132 in matching funds.

"As chair of the advisory committee, it's a pleasure to award funding to so many worthy projects," said County Councilman Brian Sullivan. "The community truly benefits from the diverse scope of projects granted funds."

The Hotel/Motel Funds come from a rebate the county receives as part of the sales tax the state collects on overnight lodging in unincorporated areas of Snohomish County and in those cities that do not have their own lodging tax fund ordinances.

Funding is distributed twice a year.

Specific projects and groups receiving money are:

- Arts Council of Snohomish County for publicity of "Girls Night Out;"
- Community Transit to produce "Snohomish County by Bus: A Visitor's Guide;"
- Future of Flight for attractions advertising;
- Imagine Children's Museum for its Polar Party Days;
- Mukilteo Lighthouse Festival Association for its annual festival;
- Northwest Agriculture Business Center for advertising Snohomish County's Fall Farm Festival;
- Northwest Sports Association for its annual fastpitch softball tournament guide;
- Sky Valley Chamber of Commerce for its "Sky Valley Adventures" publication;
- Snohomish County Arts Commission for Web site maintenance;
- Village Theater for an expansion project.

According to the latest numbers published by the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development, tourism in Snohomish County accounted for \$823.4 million in visitor spending in 2006 and generated more than 9,260 jobs – almost a 6 percent increase over 2007. Typically, overnight visitors spend three times as much as single-day visitors.

Based on these figures, Snohomish County ranks third in Washington state in visitor spending.

###