

Washington State National Adoption Day 2009



Celebrating National Adoption Day in Cowlitz County are (from left) mother Shea-Lynn Tenison, Macy and Alyssa Tenison (who were adopted into the family on this day), father Sean Tenison holding daughter Khaela Tenison. Behind them are social worker Kurt Phillips, left, and grandmother Sue Tenison holding Myleigh Grimes. (Photo by Bill Wagner, The Daily News)

A final report of the Washington State National Adoption Day Steering Committee

Washington State National Adoption Day 2009

At a Glance

A record 209 children were adopted during 17 separate events hosted by 19 courts and Children's Administration offices. This compares to 189 adopted in 2008, 166 in 2007, 139 in 2006 and 51 in 2005.

Two new courts joined the effort for 2009 — Island and Okanogan.

Despite the economic crises faced by all counties and courts, no courts dropped out of hosting this event and many events grew in size with more community participation and more media attention.

Adding a news highlight for press coverage and outreach, the Children's Administration announced a record number of foster adoptions — 1,701 — for fiscal year 2009. This is hundreds more than an average year, which usually sees 1,100 to 1,200 foster adoptions.

The Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care for the first time issued a proclamation naming November 20, 2009 as Adoption Day in Washington courts. This helped to remind judges, courts and the media how NAD got started in Washington.

A new volunteer group, Free Cakes for Kids, joined in events around the state providing free cakes for the celebrations.

The National Adoption Day Toolkit created in 2008, along with a colorful "Certificate of Family Membership" created specifically for Washington courts, and teddy bears purchased by the Foster Care Commission for courts in need, continue to be popular planning and celebration tools for the courts.

Media coverage was excellent, with NAD stories on KING TV and on KIRO Radio, in the Seattle Times, the Everett Herald, the Tacoma News Tribune, The Olympian, the Bellingham Herald, the Columbian, the Tri Cities Herald, the Wenatchee World, the Kitsap Sun, the Skagit Valley Herald, the Lynden Tribune, and more.

On a bit of a sad note, one judge who launched his court's first NAD event in 2009 passed away suddenly just three weeks later. Island County Superior Court Judge John Linde's event was so successful and he was so happy with the outcome, his staff has vowed to keep it going in his name.

**Washington State
National Adoption Day
Steering Committee
2009**

Judge Dean Lum, Chair King County Superior Court (206) 296-9295 dean.lum@metrokc.gov	Pam Kramer Adoption Program Manager DSHS Children's Administration (360) 902-7968 caip300@dshs.wa.gov	Paulette Caswell Adoption Recruiter, DSHS (425) 673-3147 CAPM300@dshs.wa.gov
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Washington State National Adoption Day November 18-21, 2009

County	Event details	Court Contact Information	Children's Administration Contact
Benton/ Franklin	Friday, Nov. 20 3 p.m. Benton County Courthouse, Kennewick	Judge Bruce Spanner 509-736-3071 Commissioner Joseph Schneider 509-783-2151 Tiffay Husom Tiffany.Husom@co.benton.wa.us	
Chelan/ Douglas	Saturday, Nov. 21 Noon – 3 p.m. Assembly of God Church, Wenatchee	Judge T.W. Small 509-667-6210 Chip.small@co.chelan.wa.us Commissioner Bart Vandegrift 509-667-6210 Bart.vandegrift@co.chelan.wa.us Sue Baker, Chelan/Douglas CASA 509-662-7350 cdcasa@nwi.net	
Clark	Wed., Nov. 18 4 p.m. – 6 p.m. First United Methodist Church, Vancouver	Judge Edwin Poyfair 360-397-2354 edwin.poyfair@clark.wa.gov Judge Scott Collier 360-397-2170 Scott.collier@clark.wa.us	Lori Whittaker, DCFS 360-993-7978 Whil300@dshs.wa.gov
Cowlitz	Friday, Nov. 20 1:30 p.m. APPW Bldg., 724 15 th Ave.	Judge Jill Johanson 360-577-3085 JohansonJ@co.cowlitz.wa.us Jeanmarie Moore 360-442-9605 Moreclan9@hotmail.com	Debbie Marker 360-501-2620 Made300@dshs.wa.gov
Island	Friday, Nov. 20 3 p.m. Island County Superior Court	Judge Vickie Churchill 360-679-7361 Vickiec@co.island.wa.us Sherry Cameron, Court Manager 360-240-5524 Sherryc@co.island.wa.us	Jami Belieu jbel300@dshs.wa.gov 360.416.7200

Kitsap	Friday, Nov. 20 3 p.m. Kitsap County Superior Court, Port Orchard	Judge Anna M. Laurie 360-337-7140 alaurie@co.kitsap.wa.us Frank Maiocco, Administrator 360-337-7140 fmaiocco@co.kitsap.wa.us	Ann Kaluzny 360-475-3547 Kaan300@dshs.wa.gov
Mason	Thursday, Nov. 19 4 p.m. Mason County Superior Court, Shelton	Rich Adamson (360) 427-9670 Richa@co.mason.wa.us	
Okanogan	Friday, Nov. 20 3:30 p.m. Okanogan County Superior Court	Judge Jack Burchard 590-422-7131 jburchard@co.okanogan.wa.us Tim Hargraves, CASA coordinator 509-422-7257 Tim.hargraves@co.okanogan.wa.us	
Pierce	Friday, Nov. 20 9 a.m. Pierce County Juvenile Court	Joni Irvin, Pierce County Juvenile Court Adoption Investigator 253-798-7978 jirvin@co.pierce.wa.us	
San Juan	Friday, Nov. 20 3:30 p.m. San Juan Superior Court	Judge John Linde 360-370-7489 JohnL@co.san-juan.wa.us	Sherry Brummel Brus300@dshs.wa.gov Ellen Roberts RELL300@dshs.wa.gov
Skagit	Friday, Nov. 20 3 p.m. Skagit County Superior Court	Delilah George, Court Administrator 360-336-9325 delilahg@co.skagit.wa.us	Jami Belieu jbel300@dshs.wa.gov 360.416.7200

Snohomish	Friday, Nov. 20 10:30 a.m. adoptions, Celebration at noon Snohomish County Superior Court	Judge David Kurtz 425-388-3881 judge@co.snohomish.wa.us Media contact, law clerk Rachel Anderson, 425-388-3881 Jessica Gurley, staff contact 425-388-7840 Jessica.gurley@co.snohomish.wa.us	Sarah Casey sbsh300@dshs.wa.gov 425.339.4809
Spokane	Friday, Nov. 20 Noon Spokane Superior Court jury lounge	Commissioner Steven Grovdahl 509-477-5702 sgrovdahl@spokanecounty.org	
Thurston	Thursday, Nov. 19 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Thurston County Family and Juvenile Court, Tumwater	Judge Paula Casey 360-786-5557 caseyp@co.thurston.wa.us Bev Morgan 360-709-3232 Morganb@co.thurston.wa.us	Delores Dang 360-725-6724 Ddel300@dshs.wa.gov
Whatcom	Friday, Nov. 20 9 a.m. Whatcom County Superior Court, 5th Floor	Judge Charles Snyder 360-738-2457 Csnyder@co.whatcom.wa.us Joe Bates, PIO jbates@whatcomcounty.us NF Jackson 360-676-6777 Nfjackson@whatcomcounty.us	Jami Belieu jbel300@dshs.wa.gov 360.416.7200
Yakima	Thursday, Nov. 12 2 p.m. – 4:30 p.m. Yakima Juvenile Justice Center	Commissioner Robert Inouye Yakima County Superior Court 509-574-2710 Robert.Inouye@co.yakima.wa.us	Cheri Holden, DSHS adoption worker 509-865-1650; Cell: 509-969-5254 mylc300@dshs.wa.gov



Certificate of Family Membership

Pursuant to the authority vested in me by the State of Washington,
it is now hereby Declared, Adjudged and Ordered that

Is Declared to be the Child of

And it is further Declared that said Child is a member of the

family with all the rights and responsibilities attached thereto.

By Order of the Court this _____ day of November, 2009, in the

County of _____, State of Washington.

Signed: _____
(Judicial Officer)





Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, all children deserve to belong to safe and loving families; and

WHEREAS, National Adoption Day was founded in 2000 to raise awareness of more than 120,000 foster children nationwide in need of new families; and

WHEREAS, the Washington Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care was founded in 2005 to improve the lives of the state's foster children by removing barriers to better outcomes, including barriers to adoption; and

WHEREAS, the Commission sponsored the first statewide celebration of National Adoption Day in state courts in 2005, and continues to support the event as it spreads to more courts and communities each year, with more than 540 children being adopted during NAD events; and

WHEREAS, more than 1,750 foster children in Washington State are legally and permanently separated from their birth parents and are waiting and hoping to be adopted into nurturing forever families; and

WHEREAS, foster children benefit from raised awareness in their communities, and from increased collaboration between child welfare workers, courts and advocacy groups;

NOW, THEREFORE, the Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care proclaims November 20, 2009 to be Adoption Day in Washington State, and encourages residents and communities to take part in local celebrations and to support efforts to help improve the lives of foster children everywhere.

Signed, this 19th day of October, 2009.

Justice Bobbe Bridge (retired), co-chair

Denise Revels Robinson, DSHS Assistant
Secretary, Children's Administration, co-chair

Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care

Membership Position	Name
Supreme Court, Co-Chair	Justice Bobbe Bridge, (retired)
Assistant Secretary, DSHS, Children ' s Administration, Co-Chair	Denise Revels Robinson
Washington State Attorney General	Rob McKenna
Foster Parents Association of Washington	Beth and Mike Canfield, co-chairs
Superintendent of Public Instruction	Annie Blackledge (SPI designee)
Office of Public Defense, director	Joanne Moore
Superior Court Judges' Association, president	Spokane Superior Court Judge Tari S. Eitzen
Washington State CASA, program services manager	Ryan Murrey
Chair of House committee with oversight of child welfare issues	Rep. Ruth Kagi, Chair, Early Learning and Children ' s Services Committee
Youth currently in foster care	Sassi Jarvela
Chair of Senate committee with oversight of child welfare issues	Senator James Hargrove, Chair, Human Services and Corrections Committee
One alumni of foster care	Julio V. A. Carranza
Office of Civil Legal Aid, director	Jim Bamberger
Northwest Intertribal Council, chair	Chorisia Folkman (NWITC designee)
Center for Children and Youth Justice, executive director	Michael Curtis

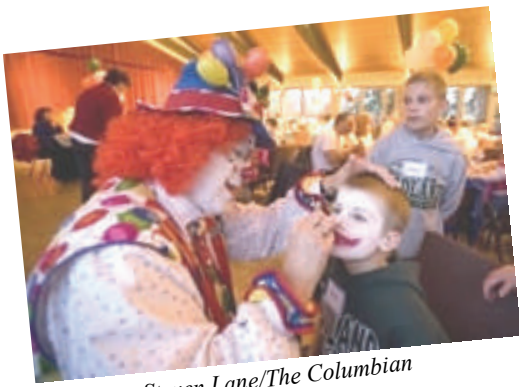


Photo by Steven Lane/The Columbian



Photo by Zoe Fraley/Bellingham Herald



Photo by Andy Sawyer/Yakima Herald



Photo by Matt Wallis/Skagit Valley Herald

Images from 2009 National Adoption Day celebrations in Washington courts and communities



Photo by Washington Courts

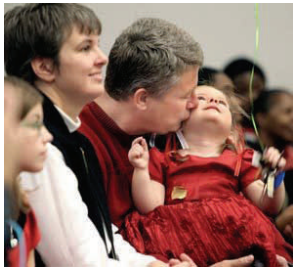


Photo by Mike Seigel/The Seattle Times



Photo by Mark Mulligan/Everett Herald



Photo by Washington Courts

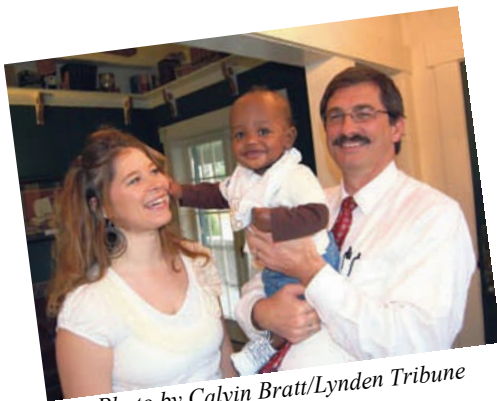


Photo by Calvin Bratt/Lynden Tribune



Photo by Mike Seigel/The Seattle Times



Photo by Mark Mulligan/Everett Herald

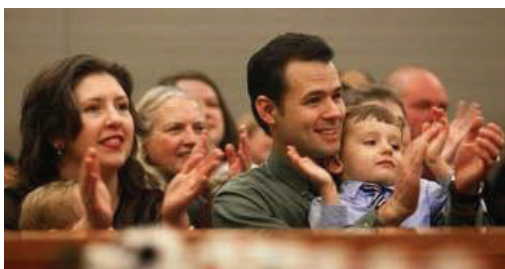


Photo by Mark Mulligan/Everett Herald



Photo by Dean J. Koepfler/The News Tribune



Washington State Courts

Washington State Department of Social & Health Services

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FROM: Lorrie Thompson
Administrative Office of the Courts
(360) 705-5347

November 13, 2009

Sherry Hill
DSHS Children's Administration
(360) 902-7892

National Adoption Day: Washington courts will join children to new families while DSHS announces record number of foster adoptions this year

Ten-year-old Michelle finding her 'forever' family after living in five foster homes... 2-year-old Lisa banging the judges' gavel during her adoption hearing while her new mother cries... Five children taking turns each day tearing a link off a paper chain to mark being one day closer to their adoption hearing....

These are among more than 500 foster children who have found new parents and homes during National Adoption Day events in Washington courts in the past four years, and more will be joining them this month, with the media and public invited to join in these unique family celebrations.

More than 175 children are scheduled to be adopted during special events in Washington courts during the third week in November as the state marks its fifth statewide National Adoption Day celebration (**see attached for list of events**). Although adoption hearings are generally closed, these events provide a rare opportunity for the public and media to be present as new families are being formed and learn more about adoption of foster children.

"It is a joy to have these children find the safety and warmth of loving, forever families," said Denise Revels Robinson, Assistant Secretary of the DSHS Children's Administration. "For the children and their new families, this is a day they will never forget. The many social workers and child advocates across the state cherish this special day along with the families, and hope it will inspire others to consider opening their hearts and homes to children."

In addition to celebrating foster adoptions during National Adoption Day, the Children's Administration announced that a record number of Washington foster children were adopted into new families in Fiscal Year 2009 (July 2008 through June 2009). While normally about 1,100 – 1,200 foster children are adopted each year (with 1,177 adopted in FY 2008), in FY 2009 there were 1,701 Washington foster children adopted into new families.

"This record number of adoptions is wonderful news, and demonstrates the dedication and hard work of the Children's Administration staff and child welfare and court workers throughout the state," said retired Supreme Court Justice Bobbe Bridge, founder and co-chair of the Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care. Robinson also co-chairs the Commission.

"Foster children are in our care and we owe them a special responsibility," Bridge said. "We know that finding permanent, loving homes for these children can save them years of stress, uncertainty and personal struggles."

As of January 1, 2009, there were 9,546 children living in foster care in Washington, with more than 1,750 of those available for adoption — meaning the courts had permanently terminated their biological parents' rights to raise them.

Washington courts and DSHS Children's Administration offices began celebrating National Adoption Day in 2005 when it was first sponsored by the Washington State Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care. The event continues to grow into more courts and communities each year. Nationally, NAD was founded in 2000 by a coalition of child welfare agencies and businesses to raise awareness of the many thousands of foster children in the U.S. available for adoption and waiting for new families.

CONTACT: Retired Justice Bobbe Bridge, co-chair, Supreme Court Commission on Children in Foster Care, (206) 696-7503; DSHS Children's Administration Assistant Secretary Denise Revels Robinson, (360) 902-7892; King County Superior Court Judge Dean Lum, chair, Washington State National Adoption Day Steering Committee, (206) 296-9295, dean.lum@kingcounty.gov; Pam Kramer, DSHS Children's Administration Adoption Program Manager, (360) 902-7968.

Attachments: Three-page list of court and county events planned

Dispatches from the front lines:

Not only did the local Children & Family Services, CASA and Families For Kids staff help with the set up hours before the event, and the clean-up afterwards, they also provided, literally, hundreds of delicious cookies for refreshments. A grand time was had by all and we look forward to another celebration next year.” –*Jeanmarie Moore, Cowlitz County National Adoption Day Committee*

“Our event continues to grow each year, with standing room only in our Presiding courtroom. This year we estimated over 200 guests and adoptees attended and we finalized 28 adoptions of which 22 were children from the foster care system.” – *Merle Redd-Jones, manager, King County Superior Court Family Court Operations*

“This was the first year for Okanogan County Superior Court to celebrate National Adoption Day...We had close to 30 family members and friends in attendance. We also requested a young family come and speak about their adoption experience. They brought both of their children, making it even more special.” -- *Tim Hargraves, Okanogan County CASA Coordinator*

“As in previous years the courtroom was standing room only. There were four children adopted into three families. Each child received a teddy bear and the three families that had their adoptions finalized went home with a beautiful floral arrangement donated by a local florist. I look forward each year to this joyous event.” -- *Island County Superior Court Manager Sherry Cameron*

“We adopted nine kids into seven families. DSHS provided a large cake that had each child's first name on it...Our courtroom was standing room only.” -- *Mason County Superior Court Commissioner Rich Adamson*

“We had a great Adoption Day in Spokane. We ended up doing about 13 adoptions with about 10 of our judicial officers involved. We had an Adoption Day party going just about all day long with snacks, juice and cake. Our local foster parents group took photos of the adoptees and their families all day long as well. It was definitely our most successful Adoption Day ever.” --*Spokane County Superior Court Commissioner Steve Grovdahl*

“We had a wonderful celebration honoring all of the families in Clark County who had adopted a child during 2009. We had 17 families attend... A fun time was had by all and we were happy to recognize these families, who had done so much to provide a ‘forever home’ to children in need.” -- *Lori Whittaker, supervisor of the Division of Children and Family Services (DSHS) office in Vancouver.*

“We had 14 children adopted in NAD, the MOST we have EVER had. It was wonderful to see all of the happy families and children. We are already planning on having more than 14 to finalize next year.” --*Cheri Holden, adoption worker with DCFS for Yakima County*

"The King County event went beautifully. The bulk of the credit is due to the folks behind the scenes, of course." -- *King County Superior Court Judge Kimberley Prochnau*

"The next day at a board meeting for the Superior Court Judges' Association, where Judge Linde served as secretary, he was still beaming and telling everyone about the special occasion. It was another first for San Juan County Superior Court and a long line of firsts for Judge Linde...It was a beautiful, happy occasion with me in tears for such an emotional time. I know that Judge Linde will want us to continue this, and I certainly will be proud to help with the planning in the years to come." -- *Island County Clerk Joan White*

"Thurston County celebrated Adoption Day on November 19. This year a record 12 children were adopted by their forever families. Judge Wickham presided over the adoptions. Adding to the festivities were bears, balloons, and fresh flowers for all the families; family photographs; Booker T Bear and free books from our Reading Foundation; a craft table from our Children's Museum; cakes donated by Free Cakes for Kids -- and more. Family Court was buzzing with happy families!" -- *Thurston County Superior Court Judge Paula Casey*

"The courtroom was decorated with banners and dozens of colorful balloons, and filled to capacity with happy families. This was a very special event for Skagit County and we'll look forward to the celebration again next year." -- *Skagit County Superior Court Administrator Delilah George*