



Snohomish County
Parks and Recreation
Evergreen State Fairgrounds

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County to Own and Manage Western Heritage Center Collection

MONROE, WA, August 21, 2017 – Today, Snohomish County announced it would be taking over responsibility for the Western Heritage Center at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds in Monroe.

When the organization that owns and manages the Western Heritage Center collection decided they needed some help or would be forced to close, nonprofit regulations gave members the following options: return items to the donors; transfer the remaining collection to another museum, society, or organization exempt from federal taxation under 501(c)(3) engaged in similar activities to those of the Center; or work with Snohomish County to keep the collection intact.

Their decision: ask Snohomish County to take over ownership and management, keeping the collection intact and at the Evergreen State Fairgrounds, where it has been housed since the Center opened in 2006.

The Fairgrounds shares the organization's historical preservation and educational mission, and several volunteers from the Center's existing membership have committed to guide tours and maintain the collection after it changes hands in the fall.

Snohomish County will work to establish a volunteer board, develop a business plan for the operation of the Center, seek donations for operational costs, and consult with the Snohomish County Historic Preservation Commission and regional museums to better understand how to live up to the vision of the founders.

"Going to see the train, tractors, and historical exhibits is a tradition for most fair visitors," said Hal Gausman, the fairgrounds manager. "Keeping the Western Heritage Center at the Fairgrounds will honor Snohomish County's roots, commemorate the founder's passion for preserving area history, and continue to serve visitors who come year after year to get hands-on experiences that connect them to the past."

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