

A Visit from Washington's Secretary of State, Sam Reed

At the invitation of the Pullman League of Women Voters, the Foley Institute and Neill Public Library, Washington's Sec. of State, Sam Reed visited Pullman on March 3rd and 4th. There were two occasions for the public to meet the secretary. He gave a public lecture followed by questions on the responsibilities of the office of Secretary of the State's office on Monday evening, March 3, at 7:30 pm at the Community Congregational Church. Neill public library and the friends of the library held an open house Tuesday afternoon from 2:00 to 3:00pm, presenting him with a framed picture of the Palouse by local artist, Jerry McCollum.

The first morning was a whirlwind tour of WSU arranged by the Foley Institute which saw him meeting with pre-law students, Dr. David Nice's government class and WSU librarians, followed by lunch with President Elton Floyd, Vice-President Mike Tate, the Ombudsman and the presidents of ASWSU and the GPSA (graduate and professional students association). That afternoon he met in Colfax with the Whitman County Auditor and visited the Whitman County Library where a visitor from the Sec. of State's office is helping the library make a digital archive of historical documents from Whitman County. Tuesday morning found him speaking to middle and high schools and meeting with school officials. Following lunch with WSU Provost, Robert Bates, was a tour of the Neill Public Library and the open house. To finish the afternoon he met with Mayor Johnson and city officials. He ended his stay with a light dinner at the Wine Bar with Pullman LWV members.

Secretary Reed has a very important, intriguing and often overlooked job. His office supervises voter registration and elections, works to increase civics education, aids business interaction with government and preserves and disseminates history through our archives and libraries. The first two are of particular interest to the League with its mission to encourage active and informed participation in government. The Secretary's latest project, the Washington Heritage Center, will bring the State Archives, Library and State Capital Museum and their collections into a new home on the Capitol Campus, preserving Washington's unique heritage for generations to come. His discussion of the responsibilities of the office was most interesting and many questions about the protection of state voter registration bases from fraud and fraudulent purging, protecting mail-in-ballots from tampering, archiving digital records, protecting and enhancing libraries were answered. We were impressed with the Secretary Reed's straightforward answers and ideas, his sense of humor and his stamina. Thank you Secretary Reed for a most enjoyable and informative two days.

Alice L. Schroeder, President, LWV Pullman