

**Washington County Republican Women
Regularly Scheduled Luncheon
March 2nd, 2017- Abbey Inn**

President Lesa Sandberg welcomed the group and opened the meeting at 11:45 am. She recognized the following dignitaries:

- Bette Arial -City Councilwoman and Southern Utah Director for Senator Mike Lee
- Courtney Brinkerhoff -Southern Utah Director for Senator Orrin Hatch
- LaRene Cox -School Board Representative
- Becky Dunn –School Board Representative

Becky Dunn gave the prayer. LaGene Halverson led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Lesa Sandberg announced the following:

- On February 18th, 2017 the Washington County Republican Party Lincoln Day Dinner featuring guest speaker is Dinesh D'Souza was a success. WCRW was a Silver Sponsor and sold eight tables.
- The Chamber of Commerce is having an event for professional women on March 23rd.
- WCRW's April luncheon will be April 6th at the Abbey Inn. The topic will be a Post Legislative Report from our legislators.
- The Washington County Republican Party organizing convention will be 8:00 am on April 22 at the Washington County Fairgrounds.

Bette Arial made a motion to approve the February Luncheon Meeting Minutes which have been on our website since last month. The motion was seconded by LaRene Cox. The minutes were approved unanimously. They will remain on the website.

The Spotlight was not in attendance. The Spotlight Report was skipped.

Bette Arial distributed a booklet from Senator Lee for our legislative report.

LaRene Cox and Judy Houston led our membership report and membership drawing. We have 55 members total, 11 are new. Three new members are new associate members. We have 30 Gem Members. Current membership is at 83% of last year's total.

Members who had birthdays were given cookies. Guest drawing winner was Penny Barben, member drawing winner was Linda Petit?? Dean Cox was Associate of the Month.

Lesa led the Postcard Campaign Activity. WCRW members filled out postcards and sent them to President Trump letting him know we support him.

The Financial Report was provided by Treasurer LaStar Richins and printed on the meeting agenda. The WCRW General Account has \$17,789.15 and the Caring for America account has \$1,788.14 currently in it.

Penny Barben introduced our guest speaker at 12:15.

Jeriah Threlfall, our guest speaker, is not only Penny's son-in-law, he is also the economic director for the St. George Area. As Jeriah explained, his organization used to have "Washington County" in the title, but there are too many Washington Counties in the country. St. George is the brand.

Jeriah brought his deputy director, Rusty Lee, with him.

Jeriah shared that Washington County is the fastest growing county in the fastest growing state (Utah). He asked the group what they thought made Washington County a great place to live. The responses included the weather, the beautiful scenery, the low crime, high recreation, and the good community.

Challenges for Washington County, as presented by Jeriah from an economic development standpoint are lower wages, high home prices, isolated from other large cities, rapid growth, and lack of natural resources like water.

Jeriah focused mainly on low wages in his presentation to WCRW. He and his team are working to diversify the area's economy. He wants to increase the talent of our work force and shift the focus on the industry here.

Last year Washington County added 4,000 jobs. Key economic drivers include Dixie State University, DXATC, and Intermountain Health Care.

Jeriah took questions from the group from 12:45 to 1:00pm when the meeting adjourned.