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Side 1

Side 2

New Tourism Billboard in Yakima Welcomes Visitors to Washington Wine Country *Billboard Unveiling Took Place February 4*

YAKIMA, Wash. - (February 4, 2005) - Visitors driving into wine country will no longer have to wonder when they've arrived. There's now a colorful new billboard alongside the Interstate in Yakima letting everyone know when they've entered Washington Wine Country.

The giant, 15-by-36 foot sign, along Interstate 82 at the intersection of Hwy 12, will be formally unveiled and dedicated on February 4 by Washington Wine Country consortium.

Created by Foundation Design, the billboard's slogan "Welcome to Washington Wine Country: Perfectly Balanced" and bold primary colors are part of the consortium's campaign to increase local pride and awareness of the growing wine industry. An original piece of stylized artwork created to brand the region with a sense of romance completes the image.

Local companies came together to acquire the billboard, and provide the location and services to put the sign in place, evidence of the willingness of commerce to invest in the region. The companies include Chinook Business Park, Superior Asphalt, Central Pre Mix, Eagle Sign, LLC, Knobel's Electric, Inc., Russell Crane Services, Inc. and the Yakima Valley Visitors and Convention Bureau.

“It’s great to see the way individuals and businesses are taking the lead to promote Washington’s wine country,” says Janet Leduc, Washington Wine Country’s Seattle-based consultant.

Earlier, Washington Wine Country launched a website, www.winecountrywashington.org to promote wine country tourism and produced a series of vintage-style images on posters and banners that are offered for sale to commerce, city governments and the general public www.winecountrywashington.org/cellar.

“The wine industry in Washington is a vital part of our rural economy. It’s much more than agriculture,” says one of the consortiums founders, Al DeAtley. “It’s a lifestyle.”

Formed in 2003, Washington Wine Country is a non-profit association of Eastern Washington businesses promoting wine-related tourism, economic development and recognition of the world-class wine-growing region comprising the Yakima Valley, Columbia Valley, Walla Walla Valley and Red Mountain appellations. www.winecountrywashington.org.

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Editor’s Note: Phone Interviews with Al DeAtley or property owner Gary Lukehart available upon request; Billboard PDF available upon request

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