

RETAIL TRADE CONTINUES TO FALL IN THURSTON COUNTY, Except in Yelm Where It Rose 4.69% in First Quarter of 2009 DESPITE CURRENT FINANCIAL MELTDOWN

RSE Students inject \$2,626,050 into the Local Economy in 2008 and more than \$1.5 million in the First Half of 2009. Could this be the factor of Yelm's unprecedented growth in the middle of a major recession?

Yelm, Washington - A large number of Ramtha School of Enlightenment (RSE) students from the United States and all over the world travel to the City of Yelm every year to participate in the teachings of their spiritual teacher Ramtha. Last year RSE students from thirty-nine foreign countries visited Yelm, contributing \$2,626,050 to the local economy.

RSE regularly conducts this demographic survey to measure the economic impact RSE students make in the local community during school events. According to the data collected at these events by those students who participated in the survey, the total purchases and expenses in the local community reached a high of \$2,626,050 during 2008. Furthermore, in the first half of 2009, students spent \$1,599,920, which is an increase from last year's \$1,515,259 of 5.58% in the middle of a major recession.

A total of 6,365 students visiting the community participated in the survey during 2008, and 3,022 participated this year so far. The average amount spent per student during the same periods from 2008 to 2009 also increased significantly to an average of \$529 per student, despite the current financial meltdown. Not only are spending amounts by students rising, but the number of students attending RSE is increasing as well.

This surely serves as a healthy boost in such grim economic times when other surrounding areas within Thurston County have suffered from a retail trade drop of 4.25% to 13.61% according to the state's Department of Revenue, recording a straight drop in Thurston County's retail sales in the last five quarters. However, Yelm — which now houses a Super Wal-Mart, making it comparable to other cities — underwent an increase of 4.69% in retail trade possibly because of the RSE students from all over the world coming to their events in Yelm. RSE students continue to report an increase in local spending for the goods and services in the local community, which is very significant given the many challenges we are all facing in today's global economy.



Ramtha's School of Enlightenment is honored that the expenditures of dedicated RSE students have made a positive difference for the local economy.

For more information on Ramtha's School of Enlightenment go to www.ramtha.com