

**SUNSHINE WEEK**  
**YOUR RIGHT TO KNOW**

Who wants records? Candidate, union and others

"I won't give up fighting to the end. ... I agitate, educate and try to get things done."  
 — Patsy L. Buckwalter, Representative

"This is no way worse than the average...  
 ...per asked government for information...  
 ...lines in 2004. Most of the time, over and...  
 ...over each day, government ignores — and...  
 ...other sources — provide information to...  
 ...reporters during special interviews and...  
 ...interviews."

Through the Maryland Public Information Act, The Herald-Mail looked at all 99 of the requests — which also are public — to do the story as part of a national public information effort known as Sunshine Week.

Here's a sample of who asked for what from our local governments and why.



Web site outlines

Sunshine: Without laws government

**EVENTS**

Steps toward openness

Continued from Page A1

...under the heading of...  
 ...related campaigns work...  
 ...directing reviews of...  
 ...or Superintendent David...  
 ...Heacock eventually...  
 ...a letter to the editor...  
 ...had written into his...  
 ...least one new benefit...  
 ...or potentially thought...  
 ...and board approval...  
 ...collaborative obtained...  
 ...the open records law...



Laws ensure that 'democracy thrives in the light of day'

A... of coordinated...  
 ...columns and editorial...  
 ...governmental...  
 ...State Bureau...  
 ...people...  
 ...K.Norman...

Getting information

Try these Web sites for information

Open records pave path to changes

SUNSHINE

...Reports...  
 ...and Cheney...  
 ...a variety of...  
 ...deadlines to...  
 ...part series...  
 ...individual...  
 ...Florida was...  
 ...that did not...  
 ...have any...  
 ...beyond high...  
 ...and...  
 ...and...  
 ...and...

...were at the heart of a two-part...  
 ...investigation last year of the...  
 ...Florida Department of Juvenile...  
 ...Justice by reporter Steve...  
 ...Hunt. DOJ is the state agency...  
 ...that works to rehabilitate...  
 ...young criminals.

...Mannix reported...  
 ...from Florida's child-welfare...  
 ...agency, the Department of...  
 ...Children & Families, which...  
 ...investigates child abuse and...  
 ...neglect. That data showed...  
 ...that...



**ARE WE SAFER IN THE DARK?**  
 MARCH 13, 2006  
 A SUNSHINE WEEK NATIONAL DIALOGUE ON OPEN GOVERNMENT & SECURITY

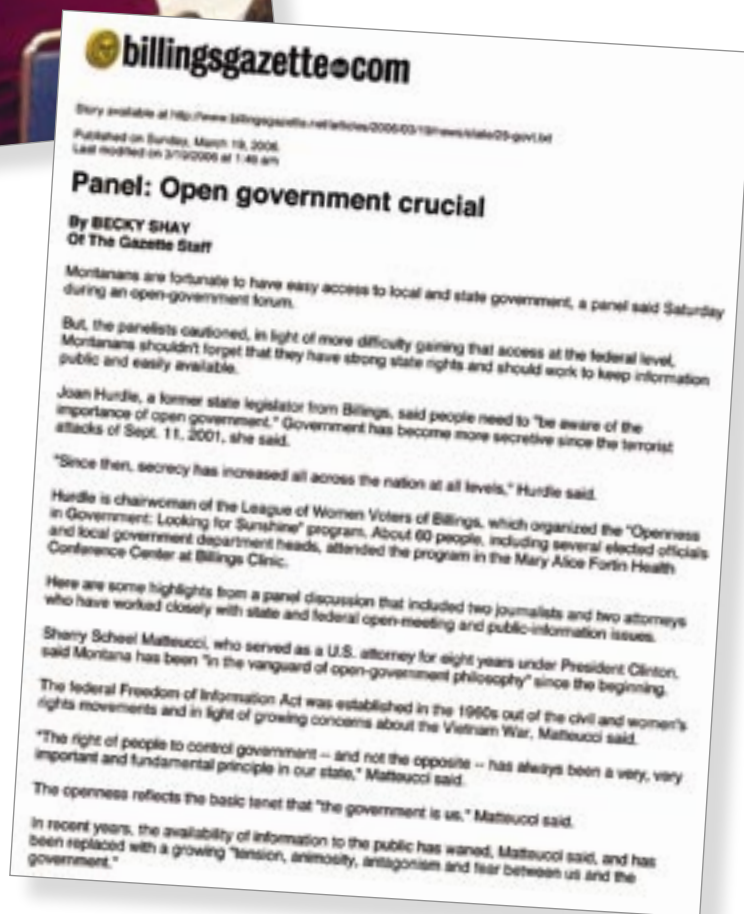


**A forum on open government** was broadcast live from The National Press Club in Washington to nearly 50 sites, which afterward hosted discussions on state and local access issues. During the national discussion, those watching the broadcast could phone or e-mail questions to the panel. Panelists were (clockwise from top): Barbara Petersen, Florida First Amendment Foundation; Thomas Blanton, National Security Archive at George Washington University; moderator Geneva Overholser, University of Missouri School of Journalism's Washington Program; and Thomas Susman, partner, Ropes and Gray. Event sponsors were the American Association of Law Libraries, American Library Association, American Society of Newspaper Editors-Sunshine Week, Association of Research Libraries, Coalition of Journalists for Open Government, League of Women Voters, National Freedom of Information Coalition, OpenTheGovernment.org and Special Libraries Association.





▶ **The Billings Gazette and League of Women Voters in Billings, Mont.**, hosted an open government forum during Sunshine Week that was attended by some 60 people, including elected officials and local government department heads. Among those on the panels, which were televised on a local station several times during the week, were attorneys, government officials, print and broadcast journalists, and a librarian. In addition to the forum, The Gazette editorialized on the dangers of official secrecy and open government in Montana, ran opinion columns on the importance of public involvement in holding government accountable and the state of FOI, and produced a feature story on the Montana Freedom of Information Hotline. *Photo by David Grubbs, courtesy of The Billings Gazette.*



▶ **The Olympian, Timberland Regional Library, League of Women Voters Thurston County and TCTV in Olympia, Wash.**, worked together to produce a televised forum on the importance of open government. The discussion, which coincided with the nationwide forum (p. 44), was broadcast by Olympia community-access channel TCTV. Video of the program, and additional Sunshine Week coverage, was available on The Olympian's Web site. *Photo by Steven M. Herppich, courtesy of The Olympian.*



▶ **The First Amendment Center's** eighth annual National Freedom of Information Day began with keynote speaker and Sunshine Week 2006 Honorary Chairman Hodding Carter III. Discussing federal FOI legislation were (l-r) Andy Alexander of Cox Newspapers, Pete Weitzel of the Coalition of Journalists for Open Government, Lucy Dalglish of the Reporters Committee for Freedom of the Press, and Rick Blum, then with OpenTheGovernment.org. Other panels looked at an executive order on FOIA and the difficulties facing whistleblowers. In addition, 21 “champions of open government” were inducted into the National FOIA Hall of Fame.

▶ **The Times** in Shreveport, La., marked Sunshine Week with comprehensive in-paper and online coverage, in addition to co-hosting a debate on national security issues. The event, sponsored by The Times and Northwestern State University's Student Government Association and the NSU Department of Journalism, featured Colorado Gov. Bill Owens and ACLU Executive Director Anthony Romero. The debate, “Liberty vs. Security and the Patriot Act: How to Keep America Safe and Free,” was moderated by Times Executive Editor Alan English. In the days leading up to the debate, which was held on the NSU campus in Natchitoches, Times readers were invited to submit questions for the participants.



▶ **The Heritage Foundation** hosted a Sunshine Week discussion titled, “What if the Answers Don't Add Up? Transparency and Government Data,” which examined trends in government data collection and what happens when that data is withheld from the public. Panelists included Heritage Foundation Center for Data Analysis Senior Policy Analysts Kirk Johnson, who discussed education data, and David Mulhausen, who explained trends in crime data collection; as well as Heather Boushey, an economist at The Center for Economic and Policy Research, who explained why some social science data is at risk. Audio and video recordings of the discussion are on The Heritage Foundation Web site.