

Community hosts going away party for DeBolt



Richard DeBolt shares time with his son Austin (center) and his daughter-in-law Tess.

BY THE ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF LEWIS COUNTY

For the past five years Executive Director Richard DeBolt has headed up the Economic Alliance of Lewis County, but that leadership will end with his partial retirement at the end of the year.

Business leaders, family and friends gathered Tuesday evening at the Chehalis American Legion to give him a warm congratulations and thank him for his efforts to help existing businesses to expand and also to attract new business to Lewis County.

Economic Alliance Initiatives Program Manager Todd Chaput will fill the position of executive director.

“This has been a challenging but



Richard DeBolt, right, chats with Edward Jones Financial Advisor Derek Burger during Tuesday's retirement celebration.

enjoyable five years and I am proud of what we have accomplished and I feel I am leaving at a time when the Alliance is strong, with a vibrant team and board in place. And I'm leaving the Alliance in very capable hands in Todd.”

DeBolt is moving to Texas along

with his wife Amy to be close to his new granddaughter, his daughter and son-in-law.

DeBolt isn't leaving us altogether. He'll return regularly to visit family and friends as his son and daughter-in-law remain in Lewis County.

The past five years has been a fabulous ride — thanks

BY RICHARD DEBOLT

Executive Director

Economic Alliance of Lewis County

I've enjoyed my time here in Lewis County, first as the director of the Chamber of Commerce, then as your representative in Olympia where for years I had the privilege to be the Minority Leader in the House, I worked for TransAlta for several key years during its plans to shut down its power generation (stalled this week by an edict from the feds to keep on producing power at least through the winter), then, the past five years, as executive director of the Economic Alliance of Lewis County.



The chamber job was a great start for what was to come, as I was given the opportunity to get to know the business community in Lewis County at a grassroots level. The TransAlta position brought me knowledge of the business leaders in the region, and the state House job added in contacts and the inside look into how the state does its work. All these combined to give me the experience and contacts needed at the Alliance.

All of the positions helped me tremendously as I stepped into the Alliance executive director shoes with a focus.

It helped as we forged our mission statement:

“Our goal is to contribute to the economic vitality of the community by increasing the number of jobs and improving the local quality of life. To accomplish our goal we work to retain our local businesses and aid them in expanding as well as recruit new businesses to the area.”

During my term, we assisted more than 80 firms to locate in Lewis County, creating more than 2,300 jobs and worked with more than 250 local businesses to help them expand and strengthen their operations.

It has been a great ride. I was able to attract an exceptional staff to the Alliance, which has made my job a pleasure as they stepped into new roles and we expanded our offerings to the business community.

Specifically, I want to thank Dolly Tardiff, our Business Development Center/Program Manager, and for those who know her, someone who gets things done on time and with quality. She is the sparkplug for our operations and I really don't know what I would have done without her all these years.

Eric Sonnenberg, the External Relations Manager for the Alliance has helped in numerous ways during the years. You can thank him for the outstanding yearly Alliance golf tournament each summer.

Our Communications Strategist Michael Wagar has been with me during my time at TransAlta, at our time at The Chronicle during its transition stage, and at the Alliance.

A fairly new employee, Lenee Langdon, Tourism Alliance Project Coordinator, is another employee who gets tasks done and like all of the staff, always has a smile going.

The Alliance board has been and continues to be a strong player, offering expert advice and direction. I believe an agency is only as strong as its board, and boy, do we have a strong board. The quality of business knowledge on the board and their key leadership positions in the community have helped me throughout the past five years.

I also want to thank the three presidents of the board during my time — first Ben Kostick followed by Luke Moerke and current chair Stuart Cavness. They all stepped up and made the Alliance a true player in Lewis County's business community.

I do leave the Alliance strong, as Todd Chaput has now taken the post of executive director. Todd has been my right hand man at the Alliance, taking on several different duties over the years, and I can call him a great friend and even a better partner at the Alliance.

When describing Todd, beyond his general positive outlook on life (and perhaps the finest chef around), he is usually the smartest person in the crowd.

So, thanks for all the support during the past years to all, and I wish Lewis County the best as it grows into a regional, business powerhouse.

December 2025 flood recovery assistance after the disaster

County reduces/waives fees to help with flood recovery

BY THE ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF LEWIS COUNTY

In response to recent flooding, Lewis County is reducing or waiving several fees to help affected residents recover. To get started, call the Lewis County damage reporting hotline at 360-740-2600 and leave your name, address and phone number (county staff will return your call within two business days):

Free coliform drinking-water testing is available in the Randle and Packwood areas through Jan. 14.

A special building inspection for qualifying structures (to have moisture readings taken and your sheetrock and insulation inspected) is \$25 through Jan. 31. The administrative and technology fees generally charged for those inspections also are waived through Jan. 31.

Disposal fees for flood-damaged debris are waived with a voucher through Feb. 27 at the county's transfer sites, including its temporary site at the Old Hampton Mill in Packwood.

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT HOTLINE: 360-740-2600

Lewis County has established a dedicated damage reporting hotline for residents whose homes or properties were affected by recent flooding. Call 360-740-2600 and leave a message with your first and last name, your phone number and the address of the damaged site. Lewis County will return your call within two business days. This information will help staff conduct preliminary damage assessments and connect you with recovery assistance. Other important contacts are as follows:

DAMAGE ASSESSMENT / REPORTING

Reporting helps us connect you with resources, including potential FEMA assistance.
Lewis County Hotline: 360-740-2600

ROAD AND BRIDGE SAFETY

For debris removal and road / bridge reviews, assessments and repairs, call the relevant jurisdiction.

LC Public Works: 360-740-1123
Chehalis Public Works: 360-748-0238
Centralia Public Works: 360-330-7512

WATER SAFETY / HEALTH MATTERS

Public health issues such as drinking water quality, clean-up efforts and animal disposal.

LC Public Health: 360-740-1138

SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL

For information about the disposal of flood-damaged debris, including details about disposal vouchers and collection sites.

Lewis County Solid Waste Utility: 360-740-1451

REPAIRING AND REBUILDING

For info on building permits, which are required for work on roofs, walls,



I-5 between Exits 72 and Rush Road was closed in both directions near Napavine due to water over the roadway Tuesday.

siding, cabinets, insulation, etc.
LC Community Development: 360-740-2696

PROPERTY VALUES / TAXES

For information about how to seek a reduction in property values for flood-damaged property.

LC Assessor's Office: 360-740-1392

MONETARY DONATIONS

The United Way of Lewis County is coordinating the collection of and disbursement of monetary donations for those affected by the flood.

United Way of Lewis County: 360-748-8100

Helpful Links

- 2025-12-15 Reduced and Waived Fees
- 2025-12-12 UWLC Flood Relief Press Release
- 2025-12-12 Recovery tips
- 2025-12-10 Recovery and Damage Assessment
- 2025-12-09 Afternoon Flood Update
- 2025-12-08 December Storm Press Release
- River Levels
- County Road Closures
- City Road Closures
- State Road Closures
- Sandbag Locations
- Non-Emergency Numbers
- Community Development Flood Information

NON-EMERGENCY NUMBERS

ROADWAY FLOODING

To report roadway flooding, call the county's non-emergency line at 360-740-1105.

Lewis County Pud Outage

To report a Lewis County PUD outage, call 360-748-9261.

City Light Power Outage

To report a City Light power outage (for residents within Centralia city limits) call 360-330-7512

(during regular business hours) or

360-736-7040 (after hours).

Fire Departments

- Adna (Chehalis FD6): 360-740-5241
- Ashford / Big Creek (FD17): 360-569-0033
- Boistfort / Curtis (FD13): 360-506-5557
- Chehalis (rural FD6): 360-748-6019
- Centralia (see RFA below): 360-736-3975
- Doty / Dryad (FD16): 360-291-2410
- Glenoma (FD18): 360-498-5337
- Mineral (FD 9): 360-492-5942
- Morton (FD4): 360-496-5183
- Mossyrock (FD3): 360-983-3456
- Napavine (FD5): 360-262-3320
- Onalaska (FD1): 360-978-4182
- Packwood (FD10): 360-494-4123
- Pe Ell (FD11): 360-291-2906
- Randle (FD14): 360-497-7745
- Salkum / Silver Creek (FD8): 360-985-2345
- Toledo (FD2): 360-864-2366
- Vader / Ryderwood (FD20): 360-295-0906
- Winlock (FD15): 360-785-4221
- OTHER:
- Riverside Fire Authority (RFA): 360-736-3975
- Riverside Fire Authority serves roughly 26,000 residents in a 184-square-mile area that includes parts of Centralia and the Hanaford Valley, Seminary Hill, Cooks Hill, Lincoln Creek Valley, Independence Valley and Garrard Creek areas.
- City of Centralia: 360-330-7680

Sandbag Locations

- Self-Serve / Bring Your Own Shovel
- Chehalis (Lewis County) 19 SW Cascade Avenue, Chehalis (in the brick garage at the corner of Main Street and Cascade Avenue).
- Randle (Lewis County) Kiona Shop at 8911 Highway 12, Randle (between Morton and Packwood).
- Centralia (city of Centralia) Corner of Center Street and Tower Avenue.

■ SEE FLOOD, PAGE B3

White Pass hoping to open this weekend



BY THE ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF LEWIS COUNTY

[DiscoverLewisCounty.com](https://www.discoverlewiscounty.com)

With the snow flying, it's only a matter of time where there is enough powder on the ground to experience a winter adventure at White Pass Ski Resort.

Soak in majestic views of Mount Rainier while carving groomers in Paradise Basin. Dive into steep steps off the West Ridge or explore Pigtail Peak's epic front side. White Pass prides itself on providing a relaxed, family atmosphere for skiers and riders of every ability.

And it might even open for the season on Saturday (Go to skiwhitpass.com for the latest update).

White Pass is closed now as of press deadline on Thursday, but heavy snow is falling and they are assessing conditions.

For now, uphill travel is closed and itchy skiers are asked to stay off the hill while the crew gets things ready for the season opener.

In the meantime, plan to attend these winter wonderland events at White Pass Ski Resort.

UPCOMING EVENTS

HIGH CAMP THEME DAYS

Holiday Cheer

December 22 and 23

Show your Holiday Spirit and love for the High Camp team by wearing your (ugliest) holiday sweater. Stop in at High Camp to share in the holiday cheer.

Nightmare After Christmas

December 27 and 28

Ate too many cookies? Realize you're on the naughty list? Spooky. Whatever your post-holiday nightmare might be, it won't haunt you at High Camp.

Come give us a good scare.

New Year Crazy PJ

January 3 and 4

Does your New Year's Resolution include wearing pajamas less often? Ours certainly doesn't. Join us for crazy PJ days and cozy up at High Camp.

Throwback Tie Dye

January 17 and 18

Get groovy with your garb for the throwback weekend at High Camp.

Go Sports!

January 30 and February 1

Show your team spirit and see if you share the chair with any rivals. Join us at High Camp to cheer on your favorite team.

Wild West

February 14 and 15

Saddle up cowboys and cowgirls, the High Camp team is going western. Yee haw.

Winter Carnival Renaissance

February 28 and March 1

Huzzah! Dress to impress for Winter Carnival in your best renaissance costumes. Princesses, dragons, and wizards — oh my! The High Camp crew can't wait to celebrate with you.

Night Skiing

December 26 and 27, from 2 to 8 p.m.

Tubing, twilight snowshoe tours with the day lodge open

Twilight Snowshoe Tours

Saturday December 27th, from 4:15 to 6:15 p.m.

Led by our expert guides, enjoy a tour through both the Wenatchee and Gifford Pinchot National Forests encircling Leech Lake and traversing the Pacific Crest Trail.

New Year's Eve: Learn to Ski or Ride
Wednesday December 31st,
from 2:30 to 8 p.m.

The New Year's Eve Learn to Ski or Ride Event is perfect for first time skiers and snowboarders or for those looking to get reconnected to snow



sports. The event offers a package inclusive of equipment rental, a magic carpet lift ticket, and access to our newly designed Terrain-Based Learning Zone.

New Year's Eve

Wednesday December 31,
from 2 to 9 p.m.

Join us for our New Year's Eve party — celebrate until 9 p.m. so you'll still catch first chair on New Year's Day.

Night Skiing, DJ Dance Party in the Day Lodge, Night Tubing, and Learn to Ski or Ride event. Day Lodge will be open to the public.

Friday January 2, from 2 to 8 p.m.

Adult Workshop

Weekly on Thursdays starting
January 8 through January 29, from 9 a.m. to noon

Elevate your game this winter with the four-week Adult Ski and Snowboard Workshop — the perfect blend of fun, skill-building, and mountain adventure. Available January, February and March.

Dick Kendall Memorial Nordic Race
Sunday January 11, from 10 a.m.
to 3 p.m.

Join us on Sunday, January 11 for the Dick Kendall Memorial Race with the start location at the Nordic Center's Corral Loop. Racing is available for all ages and divisions at the White Pass Nordic Center.

Night Ski | Light Up the Night
Saturday January 24, from 2 to 8 p.m.

Light up the night with your favorite glow sticks, battery operated lights, or go all out with the full glow suit. Includes a DJ dance party.

Bantam Cup

Bantam Cup 2026

January 31 and February 1
Team White Pass



Beers with Friends
Fridays, February 6 through
February 27

High Camp 11 at 1 p.m. | Sitzmark from 1:30 to 4 p.m.

Hang out with friends in the local brewing industry and sample their latest beers. Join us Fridays for all your skiing, snowboarding, and beer sampling needs.

SheJumps Wild Skills Junior
Ski Patrol

Sunday February 8

SheJumps Wild Skills Junior Ski Patrol is a one-day camp where girls learn mountain safety and first aid while working with the strong women of the ski patrol community and SheJumps volunteers.

Washington Nordic Cup
Sunday February 8, from
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Washington Nordic Cup Round #5 for youth teams. We have added an open class 5 km following the WNC Races.

At the White Pass Nordic Center.

Ninety Pound Rucksack Challenge
Wednesday February 18, from 5 p.m.

Take part in the 2026 Ninety Pound Rucksack Challenge: 81st anniversary of the 10th Mountain Division's Riva Ridge Climb. Grab your skins/snowshoes, rucksacks, and gather your friends to honor the tradition and roots of American skiing. Night Skiing available until 8 p.m.

White Pass Alpine Club Reunion
February 23-24

Winter Carnival
40th Annual Winter Carnival
February 28 through March 1, 2026
Snow Castle, kids' obstacle course race, Poker Run, music, face-painting, and all-around fun. Celebrate snow as we enter the second half of ski season. Admittance to the base area, day lodge, and castle area are all free and open to the public.

PROPERTY SPOTLIGHT • COMMERCIAL SPACE FOR LEASE IN DOWNTOWN CHEHALIS



ERIC SONNENBERG
Economic Alliance of Lewis County External Relations Manager

\$3,500 per month • Available January 1
This versatile commercial building offers multiple leasing options just 2 blocks from downtown with convenient off-street parking.

- Entire building is 2,500+ sq ft
- Two storefronts
- Multiple layout options
- Electric heat with A/C
- Private bathrooms
- Ideal for retail, service businesses, or light production

Call Jill at On Point Real Estate for more details 360-791-8607

OR Lease Separately
1,500+ square feet unit for \$2,250

- One bathroom
- Electric heat with A/C
- Great visibility

OR
1,000+ square feet unit \$1500

- One bathroom
- Modern glass garage door
- Electric heat with A/C
- Perfect for boutique retail, studio, workshop, or creative space
- Parking: Off-street parking included

For information on this property and others available throughout Lewis County (or to list your industrial/commercial property for sale or lease), contact Economic Alliance of Lewis County External Relations Manager Eric Sonnenberg at 208.206.5407 or eric@lewiscountyalliance.org, or go to lewisedc.com.

College-level challenges in a community-minded setting



Photo by Dolly Tardiff

Economic Alliance of Lewis County Initiatives Program Manager Todd Chaput (wearing a baseball cap) helps with last week's Business Week.

The Centralia/Chehalis Area Business Week Program was hosted at Centralia College

BY THE ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF LEWIS COUNTY

Last week's Business Week was a landmark experience for the junior class high school students of W.F. West, Centralia, and other Lewis County high schools.

Like the summer program, students spend an intensive week in a simulated "corporate" environment learning business, team building, leadership, and life skills.

"It is perhaps my favorite event of the year," said Executive Director Richard DeBolt. "This is my last event as the director of the Alliance (he is retiring at the end of the year) and it is a perfect end to my tenure — helping students hone their business skills is one of the Alliance's

most important goals. I was impressed by the enthusiasm of the students and their presentations were top notch."

This program is required for student graduation and teams are composed of a mix of multiple schools, guided by a teacher and a company advisor from the surrounding business community. With a strong rivalry between the schools, it's a healthy way for the community to come together and for young people to make lasting connections outside of their usual circle.

The local business and educational community of Centralia and Chehalis believe so strongly in the benefits of Business Week for their students that the community fully funds every aspect of the program each year. With the exception of lunch, there is no cost for students to participate. Students are transported by bus to Centralia College every morning and back in time to catch their afternoon school buses.

FLOOD:

Continued From Page B1

- Toledo (Fire District 2)
Fire station at 150 2nd St., Toledo.
- Winlock (Fire District 15)
Fire station on SW Kerron Avenue, Winlock.
- Vader (Fire District 20)
Fire station at 801 B St., Vader.
- Pe Ell (Fire District 11)
Fire station at 721 N Main St., Pe Ell.
- Pe Ell (second location)
City utility building at the corner of North 1st Street and Evergreen Lane.
- Onalaska (Fire District 1)
1733 WA 508, Onalaska.
- Mossyrock 500 block of Larson Road, Silver Creek.
- Ashford (Pierce County Fire District 23)
Big Creek Fire Station at 136 Osborn Rd., Ashford.

\$1M Disaster Cash Assistance Program available

Washington residents affected by recent floods can also request replacement food benefits for food lost during power outages, flooding

Washington residents affected by recent floods in many parts of the state can apply through the Department of Social and Health Services for emergency cash assistance to help meet their immediate needs. DSHS is now able to access funding through a newly amended proclamation from Gov. Bob Ferguson to activate this temporary program that helps residents of Benton, Chelan, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, King, Kittitas, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston, Yakima and Whatcom counties through this time of disaster recovery.

The governor's proclamation enables DSHS to offer \$1 million in Disaster Cash Assistance Program benefits to

people who are not eligible for other cash assistance programs. The assistance application window is available from through Jan. 15, to all families and people without children who meet the location, income and resource limits of the program.

"We are doing everything we can as a state to support people through this crisis," Gov. Bob Ferguson said. "This is one part of that work. We will bring more state resources online in the coming days as we continue to work toward federal relief."

"Our thoughts are with the many people experiencing loss, disruption and uncertainty due to the recent flooding," said DSHS Secretary Angela Ramirez. "DCAP is one small step toward helping people recover during this incredibly challenging time."

DCAP is available regardless of citizenship status and does not require applicants to provide a Social Security number. The benefit amount depends on household size, income and need, and it ranges from a maximum of \$450 for a single person to a maximum of \$1,662 for a household of 10 or more people. Once approved, people will receive their DCAP benefits on an existing Electronic Benefit Transfer, or EBT, card. DSHS can issue new EBT cards for people who are newly eligible for benefits at local Community Services Offices or via U.S. mail.

DCAP requires an application and interview. People can complete both steps by calling the Customer Service Contact Center at 877-501-2233 or going to a local Community Services Office. To start the application process online, people can submit an application at WashingtonConnection.org and then call the Customer Service Contact Center to complete the required interview. Due to higher-than-normal call volumes, people are asked to call before 11 a.m. and to keep in mind that the busiest call times are 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Customer

Service Contact Center is open for interviews from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday.

In addition, people who lost or lose food bought with food benefits because of recent flooding or a power outage can file a claim to replace those food benefits.

To receive replacement benefits, people must file a claim within 10 days of the loss. Call DSHS at 877-501-2233 or visit your local Community Services Office to request replacement.

For more information, visit dshs.wa.gov.

Annual Banquet
ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF LEWIS COUNTY
Feb 6th, 2026

Where: Jesters Auto Museum
Time: 5:30pm Social hour/ Silent Auction
7pm Dinner & Program
Keynote Speaker/Economist:
James McCafferty
No host bar (Cash Only) by the Shire
Tickets: \$100 per person
VIP - Table (8) \$1000.00 w/logo promotion
Call Dolly for tickets 360-748-0114

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