

A new era for Amtrak Cascades: *Airo Fleet debuts Sept. 30*



WSDOT / Amtrak

Close-up rendering of the new Amtrak Cascades Airo.

Summer is in our rearview mirror as we enter into fall activities

Alliance Open, Tourism Summit pave way for Revitalization Round Table and our Economic Alliance Annual Banquet

TODD CHAPUT

Executive Director

Economic Alliance of Lewis County

This past week summer ended and fall swept in. We can now expect the coming rainy season that usually lasts until May. I'm saddened to see the season change — summer in Lewis County is hard to beat.

Last weekend we ushered summer out with our annual Alliance Open Golf Tournament at Riverside Golf Course (see page 2 of this report for a list of Alliance Open sponsors). The packed tournament was once again a success, helping us raise money toward the Economic Alliance of Lewis County's various business support programs, such as where to start in planning a new business venture, taking the plunge into owning your own business, assistance and the resources to maneuver you through the difficult times in managing your business and help with business growing pains.

We'll help budding entrepreneurs with types of business to start, small business planning and increasing success. Our Online Business Startup Training (BEST) provides Lewis County entrepreneurs free access to comprehensive, online, on-demand business startup training. Offered in partnership with the Thurston Economic Development Council's Center for Business & Innovation, BEST courses cover business planning, licensing, branding, marketing, intellectual property, and accounting basics.

If you are interested in any of these support programs, call the Alliance's Dolly Tardiff, Business Development Center/Program Manager, at 360-748-0114.

Also this month, on Sept. 18, Discover Lewis County, along with the Alliance, hosted its first Tourism Summit at the Mason Jar in Onalaska, unveiling the new project Discover Lewis County; Volcano Country, which will highlight the unique position Lewis County holds in its proximity to three volcanoes — Mount Rainier, Mount St. Helens and Mount Adams. Tourism is big business, and our mountains are a top draw for the state. We intend to make our explosive venues known far and wide.

We also announced Tourism Summit awards (see story on page 2). I would be remiss in not singing the praises of the food provided by

The Crowded Kitchen Catering Co. and the bar run by The Juice Box.

With the Alliance Open over, it signals a change in the rhythm of life — football is back, leaves are falling from the trees (to wave hello to fall, take a drive on Highway 12 to White Pass and back; the fall colors are already spectacular) and the holidays are storming our way. Fall to me means football, food and friends. It's hard to beat Thanksgiving in America.

Kids are back in school, businesses are back in the swing of things as they make plans for coming holiday sales and put the final quarter in the black for a hoped-for solid year of profits.

At the Alliance, the pace seems to quicken as well.

We start on this coming Monday with our partnership with the Centralia Downtown Association to bring you our final Revitalization Round Table (see story at bottom left of this page). The Port of Centralia will also deliver a special presentation of Port activities. If you can't come for the opportunity to connect and discuss ways to make the Hub City better, come for the food: the event is taking place at Dick's Brewery's outlet in the Port of Centralia and it's hard to find better eats than their smoked meat and tasty brews.

We are also planning on a slew of sessions and gatherings to fill out the rest of the year (we're in the planning stages for our annual Economic Alliance Annual Banquet on Feb. 5 at Jestors Auto Museum); much takes place out of the spotlight for the Alliance — we are busy behind the scenes lobbying for business interests for example, bending politicians' ears and a myriad of activities to help the business environment here in Lewis County survive and thrive.

So, we'll miss the sunshine and camaraderie of the summer, dress just a little warmer, and embrace this fall season.



Centralia customers will be the first in the nation to experience Amtrak's newest trains

BY LENE LANGDON

Economic Alliance of Lewis County

Beginning Sept. 30, customers can experience the new Airo trainsets on the Amtrak Cascades as Amtrak introduces its newest fleet into passenger service, including stops in Centralia.

Two trainsets, operating four daily trips, will begin carrying customers on launch day, marking the first phase of Airo's introduction between Vancouver, B.C., Seattle, Portland and Eugene, Oregon. As the rollout continues, additional trainsets will enter service through early 2027 bringing more seats, modern amenities, enhanced accessibility, panoramic windows and a refreshed onboard experience to even more Amtrak Cascades customers.

"The arrival of the new Airo fleet

marks an exciting moment for the Amtrak Cascades and passenger rail in the Pacific Northwest," said Amtrak Interim President Byl Herrmann. "After extensive planning, design, manufacturing and testing, we're just weeks away from welcoming customers aboard. This is an important milestone not only for Amtrak Cascades customers, but for Amtrak's broader effort to modernize and expand passenger rail across the country."

Designed for the Pacific Northwest

The new trainsets feature the signature Amtrak Cascades evergreen, cream and mocha color palette along with design elements inspired by the Cascade mountain range. The arrival of the new fleet marks the beginning of an exciting new chapter for passenger rail across the Pacific Northwest.

"Oregon continues to reach record train ridership, and we are proud to partner with Amtrak to bring their new trains to the Pacific Northwest," said Chris Warner, interim director of the Oregon Department of Transportation. "Amtrak Cascades offers Oregonians

and visitors a chance to leave I-5 traffic behind and enjoy some of the most beautiful scenery in the country. We look forward to welcoming the new trains and giving even more people the opportunity to experience passenger rail in Oregon."

"These new Amtrak Cascades trains are a game-changer for rail travel in the Pacific Northwest," said WSDOT Secretary Julie Meredith. "They bring improved reliability, comfort, and amenities to one of the most scenic rail corridors in the country. We're particularly excited to be the first in the nation to introduce these new trains into service."

A new experience onboard

The new trainsets are designed to make every trip more comfortable, convenient and connected. Inside, customers will find more than 300 seats per trainset along with a range of features that enhance the onboard experience.

- Enhanced comfort: Ergonomically designed seating with adjustable

■ SEE **AMTRAK**, PAGE B3

Final Revitalization Round Table set for Monday at Dick's

BY THE ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF LEWIS COUNTY

The Economic Alliance of Lewis County, Dick's Brewing Company, the city of Centralia and the Port of Centralia are hosting the final Revitalization Round Table on Monday, Sept. 28 at Dick's Brewery located at 3516 Galvin Rd, Centralia, in the Port of Centralia.

Doors open at 5 p.m. and the program begins at 6 p.m. This will be an evening of connection, conversation, and a look at what's happening in and around our community.

The Port of Centralia will offer a special presentation, giving attendees an opportunity to hear more about their work and what's happening locally.

Dick's Brewing Company will have the bar open, and Dick's Sandwich Shop food truck will be serving dinner for purchase.

Revitalization Round Tables are about bringing people together, sharing information, asking questions, and staying connected to the work shaping Centralia.

Recent Revitalization Round Table discussions hosted by the Centralia Downtown Association and the Economic Alliance of Lewis County have focused on actionable data regarding Centralia's real estate, tourism gaps and corridor development.

Key findings and discussion points

Critical infrastructure deficits: Ongoing studies highlighted that Centralia is seriously lacking in commercial retail space, office space, and multi-family housing.

Redevelopment opportunities: Analysts identified more than 20 parcels along Centralia's Main Street corridor that are highly prime for redevelopment.

The tourism disconnect: Tourism tracking data revealed that a large portion of visitors only experience the Centralia Outlets or local highway staples like Country Cousin. A major takeaway



Centralia Downtown Association

The first day of fall in downtown Centralia last week signaled cooler mornings, changing leaves, cozy storefronts and a whole season of reasons to get out and enjoy our community.

is the need for strategies that actively draw those highway travelers into the historic downtown core.

Main Street Corridor alignment: The findings run parallel to the city's broader Main Street Corridor Revitalization Plan. This initiative aims to utilize future state and federal grants to

build safer pedestrian/bike routes, introduce streetscape beautification, and unlock housing potential between Pearl and Yew streets.

These ongoing data points will serve as the foundation for this final session as stakeholders shift toward planning future project priorities.

Discover Lewis County announces Tourism Summit award winners



Discover Lewis County

Some views make you stop in your tracks. Mount Rainier reflected perfectly in Bench Lake on a clear autumn day; crisp air, still water and Volcano Country showing off a little, is definitely one of those views. Bench and Snow Lake Trail is an easy 2.5 mile hike that, at this time of year, takes you through colorful, changing foliage as you make your way to the water and this mind blowing reflection. This Trail is only accessible as long as Steven's Canyon Road is open during summer and early fall, but closes for the winter once heavy snow arrives.



Heidi Marshall Photography

Tourism Summit attendees enjoy the food provided by The Crowded Kitchen Catering Co. and the bar that was run by the Incomparable The Juice Box at the Mason Jar in Onalaska.

BY THE ECONOMIC ALLIANCE OF LEWIS COUNTY

What an evening for tourism in Lewis County. Friday, Sept. 18, tourism partners, community leaders and businesses from across the county came together for the Discover Lewis County Tourism Summit; an evening to celebrate where we've been and share where we're going next. Lewis County Commissioner Scott Brummer welcomed guests on behalf of Lewis County, Lisa Smith of the Washington State Microenterprise Association spoke about the important connection between small business and

tourism, and Matthew Ozuna of State of Washington Tourism shared statewide tourism trends and perspective. Discover Lewis County also officially unveiled the new direction for Discover Lewis County; Volcano Country, a bold, countywide destination identity built around the landscapes, communities and experiences that make Lewis County such an extraordinary place to visit. "Thank you to our speakers, sponsors, partners and everyone who joined us; and especially to the businesses, organizations, volunteers and community leaders who make tourism in Lewis County such a success," said



Heidi Marshall Photography

Economic Alliance of Lewis County Executive Director Todd Chaput, at left talks with Lenee Langdon (Third from left) of Discover Lewis County at the Tourism Summit earlier this month.



Heidi Marshall Photography

Lewis County Commissioner Scott Brummer speaks at the Tourism Summit.

Lenee Langdon, the program manager for Discover Lewis County and White Pass Scenic Byway, for the Economic Alliance of Lewis County. "This is a new chapter for Discover Lewis County; one built on robust collaboration, strong communities and a destination we are incredibly proud to share." The incredible food was provided by The Crowded Kitchen Catering Co. and the bar was run by the Incomparable The Juice Box. The evening was an opportunity to celebrate some of the people and organizations whose work continues to strengthen tourism across Lewis County:

- Tourism Champion of the Year: Steven Mayer
- Outstanding Visitor Experience: Chehalis Centralia Railroad & Museum
- Partnership & Collaboration Award: Kathy Murphy
- Rising Star in Tourism: Fionna Velazquez
- Stewardship & Community Impact Award: Tony Karniss
- Tourism Volunteer of the Year: Johanna Jones
- Distinguished Tourism Legacy Award: Edna Fund



Economic Alliance of Lewis County photos



- 1) Congratulations to On Point Real Estate winning the Alliance Open
 - 2) Lincoln Creek Lumber/Ace Hardware won best tent sponsor
 - 3) Dwayne Powell was the long drive winner
- Alliance Open a success thanks to our sponsors*
- The annual Alliance Open Golf Tournament took place earlier this month at Riverside Golf course. The Economic Alliance of Lewis County wants to thank our sponsors for their support. Without them, the tournament just doesn't happen. Funds derived from this tournament go toward business support by the Alliance.



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AMTRAK *From page B1.....*

- headrests, panoramic windows, enhanced lighting and modern interiors.
- More ways to stay connected: Complimentary Wi-Fi, individual power outlets and USB ports, and digital customer information displays.
- Improved accessibility: Accessible seating and features throughout the train, automated steps, enhanced wayfinding and six spacious restrooms with touchless controls.
- A refreshed Cafe experience: Featuring food and beverage offerings inspired by the Pacific Northwest.

Be among the first to ride

The initial launch on Sept. 30 will feature two trainsets operating four daily trips, connecting communities across the Pacific Northwest, including Centralia.

Northbound

- Train 516: Seattle → Vancouver, B.C.

8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

- Train 508: Eugene → Seattle | 4:30 p.m. – 10:50 p.m.

Southbound

- Train 503: Seattle → Eugene | 7:10 a.m. – 1:48 p.m.
- Train 519: Vancouver, B.C. → Seattle | 4:45 p.m. – 9:10 p.m.

Centralia stops

- Amtrak Cascades Daily Stops at Centralia
- Northbound toward Seattle (from Portland / Vancouver, WA):
Morning arrival: 8:53 a.m.
Midday arrival: 11:48 a.m.
Afternoon arrival: 4:01 p.m.
Evening arrival: 9:31 p.m.
- Southbound toward Portland / Eugene (from Seattle / Tacoma):
Morning departure: 10:36 a.m.
Afternoon departure: 1:51 p.m.
Evening departure: 7:21 p.m.
- Coast Starlight Daily Stops at Centralia
- Northbound (Train 14) toward Seattle: Stop time at 12:32 p.m.
- Southbound (Train 11) toward

Portland / Los Angeles: Stop time at 5:36 p.m.

Amtrak has ordered eight Airo trainsets for the Amtrak Cascades, along with two new locomotives and a spare cab car. As additional trainsets enter service, Airo will continue expanding across the route, ultimately replacing the existing Amtrak Cascades fleet.

The entire Amtrak Airo fleet refresh for the Pacific Northwest’s Amtrak Cascades route costs about \$200 million for the order of eight trainsets, two new locomotives, and a spare cab car. This averages out to roughly \$22 million to \$25 million per trainset.

As the first route in the nation to welcome these new trains into passenger service, Amtrak Cascades features a distinctive fleet designed specifically for the Pacific Northwest. Future Airo trainsets operating on other routes will reflect Amtrak’s national red, white and blue branding while maintaining the defining features and customer-focused design of the Airo fleet.

Looking ahead, the next planned

Airo deployment is on the Northeast Regional, where the first trainset recently completed production and began testing. Additional trainsets remain in production ahead of a planned service launch in late 2027.

Manufactured in the United States by Siemens Mobility, Airo trainsets incorporate components from nearly 100 suppliers across 31 states, supporting American manufacturing and jobs.

“When the first Airo trainsets welcome passengers later this month, it will mark the start of a journey that extends far beyond the Pacific Northwest,” said Tobias Bauer, CEO of Siemens Mobility North America. “Airo represents the next level for American passenger rail, built on a proven platform that combines innovation, comfort, and accessibility. Designed and assembled in the USA, as this fleet expands nationwide, its impact will be measured not only by new technology, but by the millions of passenger journeys it makes possible.”

Learn more about the new Airo fleet at media.amtrak.com/airo-fleet/.

PROPERTY SPOTLIGHT • 67 SW CHEHALIS AVE. AND 611 W MAIN ST., CHEHALIS

Features:

The former Darigold facility at 67 Southwest Chehalis Ave. has served as a dairy processing facility for the region for decades. This 7.52-acre property offers a prime redevelopment opportunity on an entire city block in the heart of the vibrant downtown Chehalis community. The existing structures are in excellent condition and can be repurposed for nearly any industrial use. The site also offers heavy electrical service and is rail served by Burlington Northern Sante Fe. Asking price: \$9.7 million (not including production assets) Total square feet: 111,192 (plus 3,000 square foot office) Acres: 5.83 acres (main plant), 1.69 acres tank farm), 7.52 acres total

Zoning: Light Industrial and General Commercial – City of Chehalis
Year built: 1946 with multiple additions
Ceiling height: Varied
Loading doors:
Dock-high and grade level
Wastewater treatment system: 300,000 to 350,000 gallons/day with about 750,000 gallon tank volume
Parcels:
003753003001: Main plant, 3.5 acres, 83,945 square feet building
003974001000: South yard, 1.21 acres, 19,064 square building
003741002001: North Shop & Yard, 0.9 acres, 5,300 square building
003737000000: NE yard, .08 acres, 2,883 square building
003735003000: NE yard, .08 acres
003753003001: NE yard, .06 acres
003688005000: Tank farm, 1.69 acres

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.



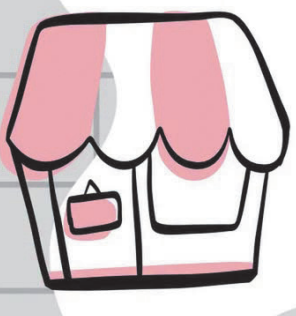


You're Invited

REVITALIZATION ROUND TABLE

CELEBRATING PROGRESS. BUILDING WHAT'S NEXT

SEPTEMBER 28
DOORS OPEN AT 5:00 | PROGRAM AT 6:00PM
DICK'S BREWING COMPANY



SAVE THE DATE

Economic Alliance Annual Banquet

February 5th, 2027
5:30 pm
Jesters Auto Museum



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