

FRIDAY WITH *Friends*

MEETING NOTES

Experience Chehalis

May 10, 2024 | 8:30 a.m.

Attendees: Brian Wilkins, David James, Michael Ervin, Terry Harris, Jason Mattson, Tony Ketchum, Tony Baker, Lindsey Pollock, Kate McDougall, Laura Six, Shawna Herriford, Jenna Nacht, Cynthia Mudge, John Six, Susan Delaire, Matt McKnight, Mitch Moberg, Chelsea Barr, Lindsey Senter

Partner Updates

Matt McKnight - Chehalis Police Dept.

The Lewis County Special Olympics Law Enforcement Torch Run will be on May 31 traveling from Napavine through Chehalis, including downtown, and ending up in Centralia. Those who would like to cheer on the athletes should plan to be in downtown Chehalis around 10:30. The program is still accepting sponsors.

Chip Duncan - Veteran Memorial Museum

The museum has events happening almost every weekend. They will host a Tree of Life service is at 2:00pm following the 10:30am service at Claquato Cemetery in honor of Memorial Day.

Cruise Centralia is coming back and they are hoping to have a cruise every weekend. June 20th the VMM will host a car show and BMX for Lewis County Autism Coalition. During the ChehalisFest on July 27th there will be a Resource Fair at the car show for veterans. The Gambler 500 Will be July 4-6. More than 12 tons of trash has been picked up over the years. The biggest car show of the year is Rust or Shine and will be on September 1.

Veteran's Journey Forward is two years old. The Service Officer with the Veterans Museum has been very successful in advocating for Lewis County veterans. They have helped Lewis County veterans receive almost \$750,000 in backpay. They have had over 1,000 appointments with veterans. Chip thanked the county for the funds they have allocated for support of this effort. They just hired a second service officer for the east side of the county. They have utilized the libraries to meet with the vets. They also just hired another councilor who does EMDR (Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing) therapy.

Cynthia Mudge – Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce

The monthly forums will be held in Chehalis for the next couple months. Annalee will be the speaker in June. Business After Hours will be at Boys and Girls Club of LC next Thursday.

Committee Reports

Promotion Committee - David

- Working on printed materials including brochures, walking tour guides, and the business guide.
- Adding plaques to historical walking tour plaques and working with QR code to guide visitors.
- Researching products ideas for merchandise. Chip said the VMM has success with magnets, hats, shot glasses, stickers, buttons, patches, and keychains
- We are making new content updates to our website going through an audit of the site.

Economic Vitality Committee - Laura Six

- Experience Chehalis has approved 16 grants this year totaling \$28,000 in awards. Total project spend has been over \$46,000. Digital marketing grants are currently the most popular.
- We've now awarded 100 grants over the life of the program.

Executive Director - Annalee Tobey

- Experience Chehalis and the City of Chehalis will host the first open house for the Imagine Downtown Chehalis renovation project from 5:30-7:30 to receive community input about their priorities for the project.
- Lewis County sold the Royal Bakery/Star Tavern to Michael McCowan who has experience in restoring Chehalis's historic buildings. We are moving forward with the mural project on the building we first began with Lewis County.
- Earth Day cleanup was a huge success! Thank you to all who came and volunteered to keep Chehalis looking clean and beautiful.

Good of the Order

Tony Baker - Babe Ruth has kicked off for the season and is doing well!

Jason Mattson – They will host a craft workshop on July 13 to decorate costumes for a parade to be held during the Flying Saucer Party.

Michael Ervin - Twin City Rotary is hosting bingo tomorrow at the Eagles.

Lindsey Senter – Port of Chehalis has received additional funding for the grain project.

Also, crops will be planned soon to maintain agricultural lands. Lease agreements are in place.

Shawna Herriford – Blue Zones is working on revitalizing the garden at Boys and Girls Club. They are also organizing a new Chehalis Walking Club.

Tony Ketchum – Shared their will be a 4:00pm statue dedication at Recreation Park today. Also, the grand opening of Sweet Dough Cookies Co. will be tomorrow at 9:00am.

Chelsea Barr – Lewis County Young Professionals hosts networking events month. The June event will be on the 13th at 5:30pm at Interstate Honda.

Kate McDougall – City of Chehalis residents can dump garbage for free tomorrow from 9am-noon at Stan Hedwall park.