

April 2026

Vol. 31, No. 6

Single Copy \$2.50

Women in Business seminar featured two keynote speakers

By Amber Brown
Business to Business

The Economic Alliance of Lewis County hosted the Women in Business Seminar for the third year in a row on May 13 at The Loft in Chehalis. Acting as MC for the event again this year was Dolly Tardiff, the Alliance's Program Manager for its Business Development Center, who welcomed nearly 50 people to the seminar.

U.S Representative Marie Gluesenkamp Perez, one of two keynote speakers this year, spoke first in a pre-recorded video. "Prior to getting into politics, I ran a machine shop with my husband, Dean. I loved running my own business," she said. Their machine shop is located in Skamania County and her husband still works there.

Her advice to other women who were in leadership positions was to "continue to grow your own agency and grow your own skills. Move through the world with confidence." Strong business leaders continue to learn and present themselves as confident people, she added.

Another piece of advice that Gluesenkamp Perez shared was echoed by other speakers throughout the event. It was to "practice joy or there could be a potential burnout," she noted. Setting time aside to live life to its fullest was agreed upon by many as important throughout the event.



Photo by Amber Brown/Business to Business

From left to right: Economic Alliance of Lewis County Business Development Center Program Manager Dolly Tardiff asks panelists Ashlee Shirer, Sweet Dough Cookie Co.; Julia Gaul, Edward Jones; Emily Moneymaker, KMB Architects; and Carrie Whistler, Oly Fed a series of questions during the third Women in Business seminar on May 13 at The Loft.

(See "Women in Business" on Page 2)



Photo by Buddy Rose/Business to Business

The annual Cowlitz River area program review by Tacoma Power took place at the Veterans Memorial Museum meeting room in Chehalis on April 22.

Tacoma Power provides annual operations update

By Buddy Rose
Business to Business

Tacoma Power hosted its annual Program Review and Science Conference on April 22 at the Veterans Memorial Museum in Chehalis. The annual meeting reviews operations within Tacoma Power's Cowlitz River

Project area that includes Mayfield and Mossyrock dams, Mayfield and Riffe lakes, Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery, Cowlitz Trout Hatchery and the North Shore Fish Collector at Cowlitz Falls Dam. More than 40 people attended the event,

(See "Tacoma Power" on Page 2)

Graeber named executive director for Port of Centralia

Markstrom resigns from commission to pursue opportunity out of the area

By Susan DeLaire
Business to Business

Port of Centralia Commissioners unanimously approved Amy Graeber as their new executive director at the meeting on May 20, and authorized Commissioner Ally Pickard to begin contract negotiations. Graeber has been acting as the port's interim director since December, after former director Kyle Heaton's contract was terminated. The action followed a 30-minute executive session.

Executive Assistant Erin Maloney and Noelle Vasquez with maintenance were also complimented at the meeting. Their capability and ways they can each continue to grow in their positions was noted.

Pickard noted Graeber has been a pleasure to work with and will make an extremely capable director in her remarks. Pickard attended the meeting remotely. Commissioners Peter Lahmann and Kyle Markstrom also praised Graeber for her abilities and expressed gratitude she was willing to accept the position. Centralia Community Development Director Emil Pierson weighed in, stating the last few months he's been working with Graeber have been fantastic and naming her director was a great choice in a public comment.

Graeber said she appreciated the commission's trust and confidence in her in her remarks.

At the end of the meeting Commissioner Markstrom announced he was resigning effective June 12 to pursue a professional opportunity out of the Centralia area. In his statement, Markstrom thanked everyone who voted for him and trusted him to represent them, noting he did not take that lightly.

In his statement, Markstrom said he was proud of what the port accomplished during his time in office, and was especially "proud of the current progress in Fords

(See "Port of Centralia" on Page 3)



Amy Graeber

On The Inside



Alliance addresses Olympia Master Builders meeting
Page 5



Artist creates new city logo for Mossyrock
Page 8



Rare coin and precious metals business opens
Page 12