

# The Tenino Independent

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## GMR Chamber hears county tourism update



Photo by Dan Fisher

Shauna Stewart, Interim CEO for Experience Olympia & Beyond, gives a tourism update during the May 2 lunch forum for the Grand Mound/Rochester Chamber of Commerce. Stewart noted that this year's FIFA World Cup will bring lots of visitors to this state.

### World Cup visitors may boost tourism

By Dan Fisher  
*News Editor*

A Thurston County tourism update was delivered to members of the Grand Mound/Rochester Chamber of Commerce May 2 by Shauna Stewart, Interim CEO of Experience Olympia & Beyond.

Stewart began her update by asking Chamber members what was new in the Grand Mound-Rochester area. The answers included the GMR Chamber's new historic driving tour (directions available online at GMRDrivingTour.com), a new visitor's center and a weekly car show put on by PaPa's Diner every Saturday from 7-10 a.m. April through Labor Day. PaPa's Diner has also added Door Dash to make its food available for delivery.

"Our vision is for Thurston County to become a top travel destination in the Pacific Northwest," Stewart said. "Our 2026-27 Visitor Guides are coming soon."

Stewart said EO&B is teaming with the Thurston County Chamber of Commerce in an effort to attract soccer fans she expects will be visiting Seattle soon.

"The FIFA World Cup is hosted by the U.S. this year and one of the sites is Seattle," Stewart said. "It will bring lots of people to the Seattle area."

EO&B also now has artificial intelligence (AI) chat personalities linked to its web site, Stewart said.

"Travel should be fun – I

want to be able to delight our visitors," Stewart added.

She showed figures connected to marketing Thurston County which showed that 3.39 million visitors came from 50 or more miles away in the past year, representing \$572.5 million in spending.

"Marketing begins with awareness and interest and decision-conversion," Stewart said. "Visitor and community guides along the I-5 corridor, ferries – these things generate interest in those visitors."

Stewart said the best way for GMR Chamber members to get engaged is to work with EO&B, share pdaes and local events.

"We have a Super Secret Project coming in September," Stewart said. "It will encourage and inform."

An event coming up is a QPR (Question. Persuade. Refer.) community training session May 13 at Oakville High School from 5-6 p.m.

QPR is an innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training which empowers everyone, regardless of the background, to make a positive difference in the life of someone they know. Those trained in QPR learn how to recognize warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade and refer a person to help.

It was also announced that the Swede Day group received no applications from RHS juniors to be Swede Day Queen or Princesses, so no coronation ceremony will be held the evening prior to Swede Day, which this year will be on June 20. Because of this, the 11 a.m. parade will have no Swede Day Court entry.

## Warriors win district baseball opener

By Dan Fisher  
*News Editor*

Despite being held to just six hits, the Rochester baseball team was in control after taking the lead in the third inning and rolled to an 8-4 win over Castle Rock in an opening-round game of the 1A District 4 tournament May 11 at Rochester.

Both teams brought 11-7 overall records into the game, with Castle Rock the No. 3 seed from the Southwest Washington 1A League's Trico Division and Rochester the No. 2 seed from the league's Evergreen Division. But on Monday, the host Warriors were clearly the sharper squad.

Warrior starting pitcher, senior Tayden Martin, faced only nine Castle Rock batters through the first three innings. During that time he gave up one hit, a leadoff single in the second by Rocket Stuart Teter, but Teter was then caught stealing and Martin struck out the next two hitters.

"He threw the ball extremely well," said Rochester Coach Brad Qarnstrom. "I felt like from when we scored a couple of runs in the third, we were in control."

Martin went the distance for Rochester to earn the win, striking out five and walking two, with one hit batter. he threw 101 pitches.

Rochester, meanwhile, began the game with leadoff hitter Owen Driver getting hit by the first pitch from Rocket starter Jerry Neighbors. He was then balked to second base and took third on a wild pitch before Ethan Rodriguez lined out to second base who then threw to

third to double off Driver and end the frame.

The Warriors broke the game open with three runs in the bottom of the third. Simon Barth drove in one with a single and the other two scored on wild pitches.

"They gave us some free passes (on walks, errors and wild pitches), and we took advantage," Quarnstrom said.

Castle Rock got a run back in the fourth on an RBI single from Teter, but the Warriors scored two in the bottom of the inning.

The Warriors added a run in the fifth to make it 6-1 before the Rockets pushed one across in the top of the sixth. But again Rochester answered with two scores for an 8-2 lead going into the seventh.

Facing defeat, the Rockets tried to rally, sending seven hitters to the plate and scoring twice on an RBI single by sophomore Tristan Honey and a sacrifice fly Brady Hamer. Castle Rock added a single by Jack Kerker to put two runners on, with Teter, the CR cleanup hitter, coming up. But Martin got Teter on a called strike three for the game's final out.

The Warriors played again May 12 against the winner of Monday's game between Columbia (White Salmon) and Trico No. 1 seed Seton Catholic

In other baseball action from last week, Rainier edged Tenino 9-7 on May 5, but the Beaver bounded back on May 8 to win 21-4 at King's Way Christian to end their regular season. On May 6, Rochester beat Ocosta at home 8-4 in non-league action.

## Deputies arrest THS student May 7

On Thursday morning, May 7, Thurston County Sheriff's deputies arrested a student at Tenino High School.

A fellow student told school officials the suspect had said he was going to bring a gun

to school. The information was determined to be credible, and the TCSO was informed.

The suspect was arrested on suspicion of Intending to do Damage to School Property. Investigation is continuing.

## Prep Sports Calendar

Friday, May 15

Track

Tenino, Rochester at Evergreen 1A League meet, Montesano, 4 pm

Thursday, May 21

Track

Tenino, Rochester at 1B/2B/1A District meet, Vancouver, 3:45 pm

## Tenino FFA Plant Sale



Photo by Dan Fisher

Tenino High School Future Farmers of America volunteers Dendall Bawe (left) and Katen Burkhardt check out some of the flower baskets up for sale May 8 at the Tenino FFA Plant Sale's second weekend. The pair said that business usually picked up at about the time school lets out on Friday, and they anticipated some added business on both Friday and Saturday from people looking for last-minute gifts for mom with Mother's Day on Sunday, May 9.