

# Business Connections



DECEMBER 2025

Centralia - Chehalis  
Chamber of Commerce

Promote ♦ Protect ♦ Inform

Inside This Edition: Santa Parade, District 20 update, Centerville 50th, Tuscany, & more

## KMNT COUNTRY RADIO – “THE MOUNTAIN” 104.3 Named Grand Marshal for the 75th Santa Parade

By Cynthia Mudge  
Chamber Executive Director

With “A Country Christmas” as the theme of the 75th annual Santa Parade, selecting KMNT Country Radio as this year’s Grand Marshal was a perfect fit. KMNT – “The Mountain” – has been Lewis County’s country station since 2005 when Clear Channel Communications purchased the station. In 2007, Bicoastal Media acquired KMNT-FM and KELA-AM from iHeart Radio (formerly Clear Channel), solidifying KMNT’s role as the region’s leading country broadcaster at 104.3 FM. KMNT has been a Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce member since 2005, and its sister station, KELA, has been a member since 1998.

KMNT is an active supporter of community initiatives throughout the year. During the holidays, the station teams up with Lewis County Title for the 5th annual Lewis County Forgotten Children’s Fund Toy Drive on December 5. The Forgotten Children’s Fund is a volunteer-led organization dedicated to ensuring local children and families experience a joyful Christmas. The station also partners with the United Way of Lewis County to support Dolly Day, helping promote early literacy



KELA & KMNT Radio staff promote a variety of community events.



Lindy Waring, KELA/KMNT General Manager, volunteers and donates to many causes.

and children’s access to books. Additional programs KMNT has supported include fundraising for meal organizations such as Timber River Connections and the Lewis County Food Bank Coalition, ensuring resources go

directly where they are needed most. “KMNT is honored to be selected as the Grand Marshal for the Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce Santa Parade,” said Lindy Waring, General Manager of KELA/

KMNT. “We’re grateful to be part of a tradition that brings our community together in holiday cheer and look forward to celebrating the season with the community we are proud to serve.” KMNT broadcast live from

the Santa Parade from 9 to 11 a.m. before heading out to cover a high school playoff game. Supporting local high school teams is another meaningful way KMNT remains committed to its listeners and the community it serves.

## Government works better when you’re in the room

By Rep. Peter Abbarno  
20th Legislative District

Earlier this month, community members in Lewis County gathered for the Chamber forum to discuss priorities for the coming year. I appreciate the Centralia-Chehalis Chamber of Commerce for its continued advocacy for

local businesses and civic engagement. As The Chronicle reported, the conversation reflected both optimism about our region’s potential and deep concern about the growing financial pressures facing working families, seniors, and small business owners. I appreciated hearing directly from con-

stituents who are feeling the effects of state policy decisions every day. Their message was clear: Olympia must do better, listen earlier, and spend more responsibly.



Peter Abbarno

Now, as we approach the 2026 legislative session, the stakes are even higher. Washingtonians cannot afford another year of tax proposals that make everyday living more expensive. Over the past several years, residents have seen a steady stream of tax increases—each one sold as “small” or “targeted” — but together the tax increases passed by the Democrat majority are adding up to real hardship. Families are paying higher fuel taxes, which raise the cost of commuting, groceries,

and deliveries. Taxes on grocery stores push up the price of food. Taxes on child-care centers raise costs for parents already stretched thin. Taxes on health-care facilities ultimately mean higher medical bills for seniors and those on fixed incomes. These are not abstract policy shifts. They are direct hits to household budgets and to the economic health of communities like ours. And yet, despite these increases, some legislators are now proposing even more taxes, including discussion of a new statewide income tax. Washington did not need the previous round of new taxes — and it certainly does not need additional ones. There was, and still is, a better, more responsible path. Instead of supporting massive tax increases, I advocated a commonsense solution: limit spending to what the state already has. That’s why I vot-

ed against new spending that went beyond our available revenue. My approach would have kept the state within the 2023–2025 operating budget, requiring no cuts from the previous budget, preserved reserves for future downturns, and reduced the fastest-growing costs in state government — unnecessary bureaucracy in Olympia. When revenue growth slows, the answer is simple: adjust spending, prioritize wisely, and delay or eliminate nonessential programs. The solution is not to pile on new spending and hope the next tax wave arrives. Washington families make these decisions every month at the kitchen table, and state government should be doing the same. Fortunately, Washingtonians have tools to influence these decisions—but only if they engage. One of the strengths of our legislative process is its openness and accessibility. The most effective voices in Olympia are not lobbyists or political insiders; they are citizens willing to speak up for their communities. Legislators begin arriving in Olympia for Committee Days the first week of December. That is the same time that many legislators will begin pre-filing legislation. There is no better time to get involved and share your opinion than now.

Please See **ABBARNO**, Page 2

### Security State Bank is now Gesa Credit Union.

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# Centerville western stores celebrates 50 years



Photo provided

Trish Hubbard and staff pose with the ribbon from their 50th Anniversary Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in November.

By Cynthia Mudge

Chamber Executive Director

Centerville Western Stores has been celebrating 50 years in business throughout 2025. The Centralia-Chehalis Chamber had the honor of hosting a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony in November as they opened their new store expansion – Bakers Bargain Barn. A large crowd of fans gathered to help celebrate.

Centerville Western Stores features a wide range of country and western clothing for men, women, and children. Their western boots selection is among one of the largest in Western Washington. The new addition of the Bakers Bargain Barn offers 20% to 70% off their top-rated merchandise.

A well-loved local landmark, Centerville Western Stores is more than just boots and western wear — it’s a destination. Visitors can find unique treasures and get a

glimpse of local history, as the store also serves as a mini museum for western and county memorabilia. Among its most eye-catching features are authentic wagons suspended from the ceiling.

Founded in 1975 by Dick and Joan Baker, Centerville Western Stores grew from a single Centralia location to 19 stores across Washington and Oregon over the past five decades. Their first store was located in downtown Centralia at the corner of Tower and Pine across the street from Dawn’s Delectables. The business is now led by their daughter, Patricia (Trish) Hubbard, who grew up working alongside her parents.

“I’ve been thanking God for all the great opportunities we’ve had over these past 50 years,” said Hubbard.

Continuing her parents’ legacy of community involvement, Hubbard noted,



Photo provided by the Chamber

Centerville Western Stores is known for its collection of antiques, including two wagons shown here.

“We’re proud to sponsor the Elma Rodeo, Oakville Rodeo, and the Lewis County Rodeo — which my dad and other

local business people helped start in 1980. We have enjoyed celebrating this milestone with our community.”

## Chamber travel destinations returns!



Photo provided by CI Destinations

The Tuscany trip is one of CI Destinations most popular

By Cynthia Mudge

Chamber Executive Director

### Visit Tuscany in 2026

One of the Chamber’s most popular programs—its annual group travel tours—ended during Covid, but is now returning. CI Destinations will once again partner with the Chamber for a nine-day excursion to Tuscany, Italy, departing October 20, 2026. Past tours have consistently received excellent reviews.

A unique highlight of

this trip is its “unpack once” format. Travelers will stay in a single destination hotel for the duration of the tour, with daily excursions to surrounding regions. Notable stops include Florence, Pisa and Lucca, Siena, Cinque Terre, San Gimignano, the Chianti region, and Montecatini.

Guests who book by March 31, 2026, can secure the trip for \$3,699, which includes airfare and related fees. The package features seven nights



Photo provided by CI Destinations

Visit the stunning Tuscany region of Italy!

in Tuscany plus two additional travel days. Travelers may also add a two-night stay in Rome for an additional \$699.

To learn more, visit

Chamberway.com, click the Events tab, and select the Tuscany option—or call the Chamber at 360-748-8885.

### ABBARNO: From Page 1

If you’ve ever wondered how to make a difference, now is the time to learn—and act. Here are easy ways to participate in the 2026 session:

#### Learn how to testify or comment on bills:

<https://leg.wa.gov/legislature/Pages/Testify.aspx>

Track bills and receive alerts: <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/billinfo/>

Find and contact your legislators: <https://app.leg.wa.gov/districtfinder>

Watch hearings and floor debates live: <https://www.tvw.org>

Contact Rep. Peter Abbarno  
[Peter.Abbarno@leg.wa.gov](mailto:Peter.Abbarno@leg.wa.gov)  
RepresentativePeterAbbarno.com

Participate in monthly Chamber-Legislative Zoom meetings. These are great chances to meet with me, Rep. Orcutt, and Senator Braun. The Chamber provides the Zoom link upon request at [director@chamberway.com](mailto:director@chamberway.com)

Getting involved early matters. By the time a bill reaches the House floor, it may already be too late to change it. Public testimony, written comments, and direct constituent outreach often determine whether a proposal moves forward.

The decisions made in Olympia affect the daily lives of working families, seniors, and small business owners across the district. With the 2026 session nearly here, now is the time to get involved and ensure that our state government lives within its means—just like the people it serves.

...

Rep. Peter Abbarno, R-Chehalis, represents the 20th Legislative District and is the House Republican Caucus Chair.

### SAVE THE DATE!

The Chamber Annual Banquet is January 23, 2026 This event is always fun as we kick off the new year with friends, honors, and auctions. On behalf of the Chamber board and staff, we look forward to seeing all your smiling faces!

You can register now at ChamberWay.com – just click on the Events Tab and choose CC Annual Chamber Banquet.





# BIZZBUZZ



## WHAT'S THE BUZZ?



### Bigfoot Treasure

2800 sq. ft. building available for lease in historic downtown Chehalis

548 N Market Blvd.

Retail inventory & fixtures could be negotiated into a graduated lease.

The graduated lease would have an initial 2026 lease rate of \$2800 monthly + utilities.

The ideal tenant will assume operations of Bigfoot Treasure or create a new retail space.

Bigfoot Treasure will maintain regular hours of operation while space is available.

Contact Mitch at Bigfoot Treasure for further questions (360) 996-4259.

### Holiday Shopping at the Outlets

Get ready to unwrap the magic of the season at Centralia Outlets—where your holiday shopping list meets incredible savings! Stretch your dollars further on the top brands you love, with outlet-exclusive discounts that make gifting both joyful and budget-friendly. As the holidays draw near, watch for even deeper in-store deals that often beat online prices—because nothing compares to finding that perfect gift in person. Looking for gifts that blend comfort, style, and function? Athletic favorites are always a win. Explore Skechers, Columbia, New Balance, Nike, Hanes Brands, and Famous Footwear Outlet—all packed with must-have gear for the active and the stylish alike.

For a touch of sparkle, stop by Kay Jewelers Outlet for dazzling gifts that shine bright under the tree. Or, for something more meaningful, visit the Christian Outlet and explore custom-made décor and inspirational pieces from P. Graham Dunn.

This season, make a day of it at Centralia Outlets—shop, save, and share the joy of giving! Whether you're checking off your list or treating yourself to something special, there's truly something for everyone. Follow us on social media for more holiday inspiration and exclusive deals!



### The Evergreen Playhouse is pleased to present a family-friendly holiday show!

The Best Christmas Pageant Ever

Directed by Yvonne MacNeely

Performance Dates:

December 5-21, 2025

Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30pm

Sundays at 2pm

Artist's Benefit Pay-What-You-Can

Thursday December 11 at 7:30pm

\*Please note - Saturday, December 13, the performance will be at 2pm

In this hilarious Christmas classic, a couple struggling to put on a church Christmas pageant is faced with casting the Herdman kids – probably the most inventively awful kids in history. You won't believe the mayhem – and the fun – when the Herdmans collide head-on with the story of Christmas!

Bring a copy of this article with you for a complimentary non-alcoholic drink and small popcorn.

Tickets: Adults \$17.00, Students and Seniors \$14.00

Evergreenplayhouse.com for tickets.

360-736-8628



### Merry Christmas From Exodus Electric!

As the holiday season approaches, it's the perfect time to reflect on the joys and joys of Christmas. At Exodus Electric, we want to remind you that we're here to brighten your festive celebrations with our reliable electrical services.

The holiday season often brings a surge of decorations, lights, and festive displays, and we know how important it is to create a warm, inviting atmosphere. Whether you're planning to string lights across your home, prepare a festive light display in your yard, or simply ensure your electrical systems are functioning safely, our team at Exodus Electric is ready to assist. Safety is our top priority, especially during this bustling time of year.

We encourage you to check your holiday lighting for frays or damage and to ensure that your circuits can handle the extra load. If you're unsure, our knowledgeable electricians can provide a thorough inspection and recommendations, allowing you to celebrate with peace of mind.

Moreover, if you're considering a more extensive electrical project as part of your holiday preparations—be it upgrading outlets to accommodate more devices or installing new fixtures—

Exodus Electric is here to help. Our commitment to providing high-quality service at affordable rates means you can enjoy the beauty of the season without breaking the bank.

As you gather with family and friends this Christmas, let us handle your electrical needs so you can focus on creating memorable moments. We take pride in delivering exceptional workmanship and customer service, and we look forward to making your holiday season safe and bright.

From all of us at Exodus Electric, Merry Christ-mas! We're excited to serve you this Christmas and in the coming year. Don't hesitate to reach out to schedule our services; we can't wait to help light up your home!

### Inkwell Notary Bureau

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### Prepare for the Holidays at Let's Play Something!

Let's Play Something is your first stop for birthdays, holidays, and

every gift-giving occasion. From stocking stuffers to big surprises, we've got something for all ages and interests—perfect for family game nights, kids' parties, and thoughtful gifts.

We're proud to be a local, family-owned toy store that makes shopping fun and easy. Open 7 days a week, we offer free gift wrapping so you can walk out ready to celebrate. Whether you're checking off your Christmas list, finding the perfect stocking stuffer, or picking out a last-minute birthday gift, we're here to help you make every moment special.

Stop by and see why Let's Play Something has become a favorite in our community.




### Let's Play Something TOY STORE

Downtown Centralia

### Reach Out To NAMI Lewis County About Your Mental Health Concerns!

NAMI Lewis County is a peer-led support organization for individuals and their families struggling with mental health conditions. Our office is located at 1641 Kresky Ave. Ste. 3 Centralia, WA 98531. Our Family Support Group meets on Mondays at 6 pm. This is for adults who have loved ones living with mental illness to find support with others that have similar situations.

We have a new Connections Support Group out at the St. Paul Ev. Lutheran Church St. Rte. #505, Winlock, WA 98596 Monday nights from 6-7:30 p.m. Our Day time Connections meeting is every Friday at 2 p.m. The Friday groups are hosted at the office in Centralia. Connections is open to anyone in the community and our groups are always free. All of our meetings are hybrid so you can join online as well. Please reach out to us directly if you have any questions or want a link to the meetings. Our office number is 360.559.1363 and you can call or text and we will get back to you as soon as we can. Contact us by email at NamiLewisCountywa@gmail.com. Visit our websites to find additional information: NAMI.org, NAMIWA.org, or our local site NAMILC.org.



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### Don't miss out!

We will be closed for Christmas week this year (Dec 20-28) so want to remind you to come in sooner to use your benefits. Many vision insurance plan benefits for glasses and contact lenses expire at the end of the calendar year, which is quickly approaching. HSA and FSA dollars can be used towards prescription items as well as our eyelid hygiene and dry eye products. If you haven't had time for an exam lately, don't worry- we can still fill 2024 prescriptions as they are valid for 2 years in Washington State.

For new glasses or sunglasses, no appointment is needed- just stop in for personal styling by our skilled opticians. Contact lenses can be ordered over the phone and shipped for free to your home or business. Last but not least, if you're trying to decide upon a vision insurance option for your employees, check out our Small Business Membership: <https://directvision.us.business/20269> Happy Holidays from Rainier Eye!



### RAINIER EYE



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**Trick Or Treat Transit – O’Blarney’s**  
Centralia was in full swing Halloween night, and Downtown businesses were ready to greet the trick-or-treaters! Shown here are staff from O’Blarney’s!



**Local Trick Or Treat Transit – Mint City!**  
Downtown Chehalis was also decked out to meet Trick or Treaters. Here are staff from Mint City.



**Bowling Looks A little Different This Year!**  
60 local community members took their chance to get revenge on the Thanksgiving turkey by bowling with it! The winners were able to walk away with two great frozen turkeys (courtesy of Fred Meyer) and tons of great merch! Shoutout to Chehelais Outfitters for being such great hosts! Pictured is one of our community members acknowledging the slight absurdity of hurling poultry down the alleyway towards the bowling pins! But hey, who doesn’t love some good competition!



**Artisan’s Nook Grand Opening**  
Was one to remember! We got a tour of their adorable little space, filled to bursting with awesome local artists’ creations!  
20347 Old HWY 99 SW, Centralia



**Moonstruck Struck Gold!**  
Are you a fan of custom charm bracelets? Then this ribbon cutting was for you! Moonstruck Studio celebrated its grand opening this October and is located here in downtown Centralia!



**B Movement Pilates is On the Move!**  
Expansions are always exciting, especially when emphasized with a ribbon cutting! Make sure to stop in for some local pilates! 463 N. Market Blvd., Chehalis. [www.b-movement-pilates.com](http://www.b-movement-pilates.com)



**Cosmic Tattoo Expands to Downtown Centralia!**  
We love to see local small businesses be supported as heavily as Cosmic has, and they came out in full force to celebrate their new building on North Tower! 531 N. Tower, Centralia. [www.cosmictattooa.com](http://www.cosmictattooa.com)



**Firehouse Construction Cuts the Ribbon**  
Just outside of the building they helped revitalize, right outside of Tiger Stadium in Centralia! Look for Firehouse Construction on Facebook.



**Representative Peter Abbarno at Legislative Preview**  
Having just updated the local community on the steps District 20 is taking to move our community closer to a financially healthy position.



**District 20 Legislative Preview**  
District 20 representatives gave updates on the future financial decisions in Washington State. Courtesy of Senator John Braun, Representative Ed Orcutt, and Representative Peter Abbarno.

UPCOMING  
CHAMBER EVENTS!

RIBBON CUTTINGS

My 2 Scents K9 LLC

Friday, December 5

Noon

585 Leonard Road, Onalaska

Touched By One,  
Touched By All

Friday, December 19

Noon

1735 WA-508, Onalaska

Possibilities Women’s  
Center

Monday, January 26

Noon

1219 Mellen St. Centralia

Hip N Humble

Thursday, January 29, 2026

Noon

202 S. Tower, Centralia

CHAMBER EVENTS

75th Annual Santa Parade!

Saturday, December 6

11 am

1500 Lum Road, Centralia

DEC. BUSINESS AFTER  
HOURS & RIBBON  
CUTTING CEREMONY

Holiday Member Party

The Chronicle

Thursday, December 18

5 – 7 pm

215 N. Pearl Street, Centralia

We are all excited to help The Chronicle celebrate their new space and what better way than with a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony and holiday party!

CHAMBER ANNUAL  
BANQUET

Friday, January 23

Centralia College,  
Trans Alta Rooms

615 West Pear, Centralia

[chamberway.com](http://chamberway.com)

TRAVEL TO TUSCANY!

October 20, 2026  
Departure

Deadline for Discount:  
March 31, 2026

[Chamberway.com](http://Chamberway.com)



**Schedule a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony!**

The Chamber offers Ribbon Cutting Ceremonies as a free service to members and non-members. It is our way of acknowledging the hard work and investment of time and money to opening, expanding, moving, or re-branding a business.

To learn more or secure a date call 360-748-8885 or email [director@chamberway.com](mailto:director@chamberway.com)