



Lewis & Clark Chapter

TRI-CITIES, WASHINGTON



April 2025

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The Local Economy and a New Restaurant

We're trying a new restaurant this month, Lu Lu Craft Bar + Kitchen, which is just east of Anthony's at Columbia Point. There are several choices for the entrée, please indicate which you want when making a reservation.

Our speaker will be Matt Murphy, the Government & Regional Affairs Director of the TriCity Regional Chamber of Commerce.



Matt Murphy

Matt is a lifelong resident of Washington State and has a long history of working with small businesses. He is an 11-year veteran of Chamber leadership. In 2024 he shifted from Chamber management to concentrate on government and regional affairs for the Tri-Cities Regional Chamber of Commerce. He continues taking steps to represent local businesses in the

political sphere in the Tri-Cities region. Matt looks forward to working in the community to make it a better place to live and do business. Matt relocated to Pasco last year with his wife Linda of 36 years.

Matt's presentation will begin by exploring the legislative processes in the Washington State Legislature and the importance of legislative collaboration, and civic engagement within the unique dynamics of Washington State Politics. We'll conclude by examining some of the complex financial challenges our legislators face as they work to craft a balanced budget — one that reflects the needs of our communities while maintaining fiscal responsibility.

Don't miss this chance to try a new restaurant and to gain some insight into the local economy we all live in.

Membership Update

We give members the first quarter of the year to renew, March 31 is the deadline to avoid being dropped. Our current status:

15 regular members

6 honorary & widows

7 non-renewals

We expect a few of the non-renewals to catch up.

**HqMOAA sends . . .
TRICARE Improves
Coverage of Early Alzheimer's
Treatment**

TRICARE addressed a critical coverage gap by approving provisional coverage of a new type of drug for the treatment of early stage Alzheimer's disease – a move supported by MOAA and fellow key military and veterans groups.

For up to the next five years, TRICARE will cover Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved monoclonal antibodies (MABs) lecanemab (brand name Leqembi) and donanemab (brand name Kisunla), for the treatment of Alzheimer's disease in patients with mild cognitive impairment or in the mild dementia stage of the disease. The assistant secretary of defense for health affairs approved the change last October.

Treatment for Alzheimer's disease is most effective when administered early – delays can result in irreversible disease progression – which made this prolonged TRICARE coverage gap particularly egregious.

VA to speed up health records system rollout

[Editor's note: No Washington, Idaho, or Oregon facilities are included]

Veterans Affairs officials plan to rapidly accelerate the rollout of the department's new electronic health record system this year, adding 13 new sites to the deployment schedule in 2026. In December, department leaders had announced plans to resume deployment of the controversial Oracle Cerner system in mid-2026, with a few sites implementing training and software over the next 18 months.

The health records overhaul project, launched by President Donald Trump in 2017, was designed to bring veterans' health records in line with military files for the first time. The project was originally scheduled to take 10 years and cost \$16 billion. But nearly eight years later, only six of VA's 170-plus medical sites are using the software.

"This has been a \$10 billion project that's not going anywhere," VA Secretary Doug Collins said. "So I'm pleased to announce right now that we're moving forward on a new plan that is going to bring by next year double or almost triple the number of hospitals online.

Staffers also complained to federal investigators about poor

training, frequent system outages and lackluster support programs. The total cost of the program has already reached \$16 billion, with outside advocates warning that figure could rise even higher.

Still, VA and Oracle officials testified to the House Veterans' Affairs Committee two weeks ago that they were confident the program was back on track. They expressed optimism about the mid-2026 rollout plan.

Collins' pledge comes as VA is reviewing its entire workforce organization, with a goal of reducing staffing by roughly 80,000 employees this year. Lawmakers on Capitol Hill have warned that trying to install the new records system without sufficient support staff could result in employee frustration and patient safety issues.

April 15 in Military History

1783 – Preliminary articles of peace ending the American Revolutionary War are ratified.

1861 – Three days after the attack on Fort Sumter, S.C., President Lincoln declared a state of insurrection that soon became the American Civil War.

1865 – President Abraham Lincoln dies from an assassin's bullet.

Lu Lu Craft Bar + Kitchen
606 Columbia Point Dr
Richland

Social hour: 5:30
Dinner: 6:30
\$35 per person

*A reservation made
is a reservation paid*

April Meeting
Tuesday, April 15

Reservations by
Thursday, Apr 10 to
Bob Allen
Text: (509) 554-6992
moas.tricities@charter.net
and don't forget to indicate
which entree you want.

Menu

Appetizer

Potato chips & dip

Entree, choose one

Club Sandwich
Grilled Steelhead
Rigatoni Bolognese
2pc Fish + Chips
Thai Salad w/ fried Avocados

Dessert

Lemonade, Iced Tea, Soda