

Chehalis - Centralia Railroad

Chehalis, Washington

Est. 1986

For Media Inquiries

Contact: Mary Kay Nelson

Mkmarketing@localaccess.com

360-508-1774

Overview

A ride on the Chehalis-Centralia Railroad is a pleasant, scenic and relaxing 1 to 2 hour journey back into history. The excursion through the Chehalis River Valley features coaches from the 1920's and offers indoor and outside seating. The train excursion operates Saturdays and Sundays from Memorial Day through Labor Day, with Saturday Dinner Train trips through September. Special holiday events are held throughout the year. The Chehalis-Centralia Railroad hosts the only Dinner Trains and Murder Mystery Dinner Trains in the region.

Location

The train ride departs from the Depot located in Chehalis, 1101 SW Sylvanus Street, across from the Veteran's Memorial Museum. The Depot is conveniently located half-way between Seattle and Portland and only 1 mile from I-5, take Exit 77 west to Riverside Drive.

History

The Chehalis-Centralia Railroad incorporated as a non-profit corporation in 1986 as the Chehalis Centralia Railroad Association. The founders were a group of local citizens whose goal was to restore a 1916 logging locomotive that had been placed in a Chehalis park thirty years earlier. Soon work was underway on the Cowlitz, Chehalis & Cascade No. 15, a Baldwin-built 2-8-2 "Mikado" type locomotive. Over the course of two years, the engine underwent extensive restoration, and several passenger railcars were acquired. In 1989, scheduled passenger operations began over the former Milwaukee Road track in Lewis County.

The Chehalis-Centralia Railroad has one of only a few steam powered railroads in Washington State. Presently, the favorite #15 logging locomotive is undergoing extensive boiler repairs to keep it safe and running for years to come. Train rides are conducted, and our 1920's coaches are being pulled by our trusty #6 Diesel Engine. Additionally, the Railroad is also caretaker of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard's No. 9, a variety of box cars and cabooses, mobile crane and numerous other pieces of railroad equipment. The railroad operates seasonal excursion trains every year over approximately ten miles of track owned by the Port of Chehalis, offering both coach and dinner train service.

A Variety of Train Ride Experiences

- **Weekend excursions:** every Saturday and Sunday, May to September. Trains depart the Chehalis Depot (1101 SW Sylvanus Street, across from the Veterans Memorial Museum) at 1:00pm, 3:00pm and 5:00pm each Saturday and 1:00 and 3:00 on Sunday.
- **Food trains:** The 5:00pm Saturday river view excursion features the popular Dinner Train for the extended river view run to Ruth, a former rail stop along the old Chehalis Western Train route. Murder Mystery Trains are featured periodically through the Summer months.

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Additionally, we host Mother's Day, and Father's Day Dinner Trains, and Wild Wild West Hold Ups catered and served by a professional staff.

- **Seasonal Events:** Spring rides feature the family fun *Easter Eggspress* and Easter Egg Hunt at the Railyard. The Easter Bunny helps hide 4,000 eggs and prizes and candy is hidden in the eggs scattered in the field. Four ½ hour rides into the Chehalis River Valley is a delightful way to start our annual season.

In the Fall, the *Pumpkin Train* takes costumed and excited families into the scenic countryside. Each child returns to pick out a pumpkin and a bag of goodies for the holiday.

Santa Holiday Train Rides begin shortly after Thanksgiving for the Holiday Season. Santa boards the train and visits each and every child, handing out candy canes and hearing their wishes for Christmas.

- **THE POLAR EXPRESS™**

The arrival of The Polar Express™ train is a sight to behold. Once boarded, the passengers chug off to the North Pole while a featured reading of the popular book, *THE POLAR EXPRESS™*, takes place. After an eye-widening look at the North Pole, we pick up Santa for the return trip to Chehalis. Each child is given the first gift of Christmas by Santa on the way back to the depot. Children are encouraged to come in their pajamas like in the movie. Cocoa and cookies are provided on board, as well as singing and other entertainment.

Charters, School Days and More

The Chehalis-Centralia offers more than small group or individual excursions. Reunions, birthdays, anniversaries, and group charters have all taken advantage of the private and relaxing experience along the rails of the Chehalis Centralia Railroad. A limited number of opportunities exist to charter the full train (2 or 4 coaches) for the day or half day. The Dinner Train can also be chartered working with our professional caterer. In addition, an economical option exists to add a single car to an existing run. During non-business hours, the platform and railyard can be rented for private parties. School Days is a special offering during the first two weeks of the season startup, May and June. The crew enjoys explaining the unique experience to students who will become a little more in touch with the past. Contact management for details and rates. Non-profit fundraising rates are available.

Gift Shop & Museum

Stop by and discover some history and find memorabilia in our quaint Railroad museum. Learn about the making of the Chehalis-Centralia Railroad and find out about our logging locomotive #15's beginning in 1916. Books, toys and souvenirs are available for purchase in the Depot at the loading platform.

Permission free Hires photos are available upon request.

Please contact us for link to your story or website.

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The Chehalis Centralia Railroad and museum is a 501c3 non-profit organization created for the specific purpose of preserving history and providing a tourist railroad experience for our extended community. The Engine is owned by the City of Chehalis and the tracks are owned by the Port of Chehalis. The assets and additional equipment is owned by the Chehalis Centralia Railroad and Museum. We serve y 10,000+ passengers each year.