THE Confluence



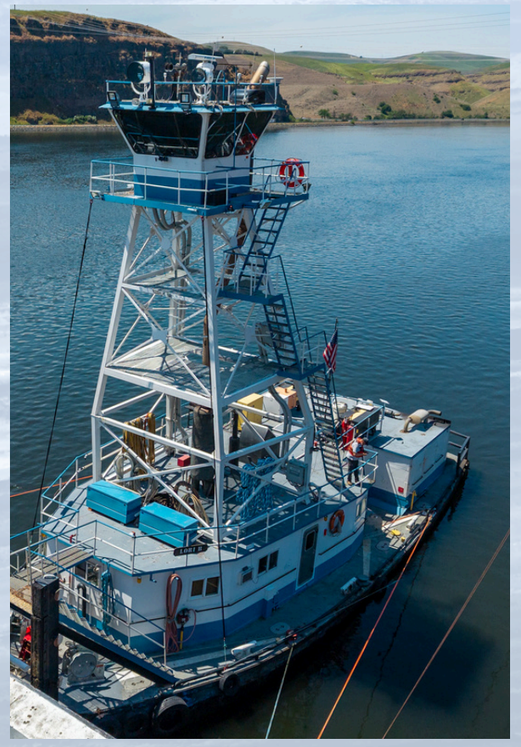
Port of LEWISTON

JUNE 2026

The crew from Bernert Barge Lines' Lori B: Gordon Perlot, Mitch Aschoff, Robert Perlot, and Ryan Laney. (Photo by Christopher Stone of Etched in Stone Photography)







Navigating Legacy

From the wheelhouse of the Lori B, a 75-foot tugboat, the Snake River unfolds as a vibrant tapestry of nature, commerce, and beauty. For Captain Gordon Perlot, it's an office that offers a breathtaking view.

"Sometimes, it feels like I still need to figure out what I want to do when I grow up," said Gordon, a former cattle rancher who lives in Deer Island, Oregon. "I love my job. It's sometimes challenging, but a lot of fun and always different."

To the untrained eye, it may seem relaxing, but looks can be deceiving. On this particular day, waters were calm and the sun was high, allowing the hills sheltering the Snake River to show off their beauty. But to listen is to hear the chirping radio with crew members providing updates from the deck while Gordon adjusted his course as the tugboat departed the Port of Lewiston with a full log barge in tow.

"You have to stay in constant contact with the team," said Gordon, shifting quickly from friendly chatter to focused maneuvering. "You need to listen and be prepared for what comes next. It changes by the minute, sometimes even the second."

As the crew worked together, it was clear they had a smooth rhythm - which can sometimes be a challenge when experience levels and personalities vary. This Lori B crew, traveling from the Port of Lewiston to Astoria with stops along the way, has tenure ranging from deckhand Ryan Laney's 18 months to Gordon's 23 years.

Rounding out the team were Mitch Aschoff, a 10-year veteran, and Gordon's son Robert Perlot, who has worked the rivers for 16 years and shared this trip's captain duties with his Dad.

"You have to have a good work ethic; you can't be afraid to go out and do what needs to be done," said Gordon, whose son Mat also works for a barge company. "The reward is the job, the rivers, and everything you see."

The dedication and efforts are complemented by a strong sense of camaraderie and shared purpose, fostered by the Bernert family's commitment to offering stable jobs with excellent benefits. With a legacy spanning 175 years and five generations, it has been a winning combination for the Oregon City-based Bernert Barge Lines. Indeed, crew members work closely with the Bernert family every step of the way - some even as fellow crew members.

"There's such history here, and we truly feel part of something," said Robert, noting that he and his Dad are Bernert cousins. "Plus you can't beat the views - there's a different sunrise and sunset every day."

Despite being the new guy on the team, Laney, who hails from Newberg, Oregon, said he already feels like a respected member of the crew: "I've always been involved in a family business, and it's great to be smaller, close knit. Everyone is helpful, I'm always included."

Great relationships are important when quarters for a four-member crew are tiny, consisting of little more than a bunk room and galley kitchen. Operating in that small a space takes almost as much coordination as keeping boat operations smooth - but not quite.

"It's a hard being away from home sometimes, but it's great to hang out with these guys," said Aschoff, who lives in Vancouver, Washington. "There's a sense of adventure, never knowing what is going to be around the next bend, but you have to be prepared."

On this day, being prepared for the crew meant being ready to pick a full log barge in Lewiston, carrying a load equivalent to 80-100 log trucks, and adding a wood chip barge at the Port of Wilma before proceeding down the Snake River. The barges - connected single-file - total over 500 feet in length. Safe maneuvering is loosely comparable to a double-haul truck navigating freeways - apt considering that the Columbia-Snake river system is the federally designated Marine Highway M-84.

"This is way more challenging," said Gordon, as he coordinated with the deck crew to sync the log barge with the chip barge. "You have so much more momentum. If you hit something you can cause a lot of damage."

Safety and maintenance are obviously paramount, given the Lori B's rich history. Named for a female member of the Bernert family like the rest of the fleet, the tug was launched in 1957 as a streamlined vessel. An overhaul in the 1980s broadened the tug and technology has been added to meet demands. The Lori B's "Z-drive" propulsion system allows her to rotate 360 degrees as needed, allowing for crucial adjustments.

"It's my favorite boat to drive, especially going through the locks," said Gordon, noting that the river system's vital locks and dams require peak maneuverability and a deft hand. "There is no sleeping up here."

At 63, he acknowledged that many men contemplate retirement, but those thoughts fade for him as he gazes over the rivers, treasuring the opportunity to work alongside his son on the waterways they love.

"It's great to work together, to have this time," said Gordon. "Sometimes I think about retiring, but I like my job too much."





Life on the Lori B



A New Kind of Internet

At Confluence Fiber, we are proud to partner with the Port of Lewiston to bring a new kind of internet experience to our region. If you're tired of every provider offering the same thing—unreliable service and confusing fine print—you aren't alone. We believe our neighbors deserve more than the status quo, which is why we're building a community-owned fiber network. Built with intention and priced for people, our goal is simple: connect our community to opportunity by delivering the reliability, speed, and local ownership Lewiston deserves.

Guided by a local board of directors, our focus is on the people, businesses, and schools in our own backyard. The infrastructure we build together stays right here, fueling economic growth and opportunity for the long haul. We also believe your internet service should mind its own business. Personal information is often treated like a commodity; we take a different approach: your data privacy is our priority, not a product to be sold.

If you're ready for better internet now, head to confluencefiber.org and join the Founders Club today to get perks and be first in line for what's next. It's the best way to follow our progress and ensure your home is ready for the high-speed, secure, and locally owned future we are building together.

Marine Highway Business Center Makes its Debut!



The Marine Highway Business Center made its official debut as the host of "Business After Hours" with the Lewis-Clark Valley Chamber of Commerce. The modular building has been refreshed to offer office space for rent as well as and classrooms for tenants and community members. Call us at (208) 743-5531 for more information.

The Eddy



Scott Corbitt
Port of Lewiston General Manager

I lost my best friend in April. I was sitting in a room in the Rayburn House Office Building on Capitol Hill getting ready to introduce Congressman Russ Fulcher when I received the text that my dog, Maximus, had passed. It hit me like a ton of bricks. Max was my partner, my therapist, my welcome-home-greeter. He was 105-pounds of lap dog, my river buddy, and the best swimmer I have ever seen. I loved Max a lot.

It became very clear to me how much I loved Max, and how much I had taken him for granted, after he was gone. No giant nose greeting me as soon as I walked through the door. Meals eaten without pleading Labrador eyes pretending to be starving. No one to sense that what I truly needed at that moment was a slap in the face from a giant pink tongue. I came to rely on Max for my peace and my amusement. He was a huge part of my world. I was not ready for him to leave. I didn't get a chance to say goodbye.

The things we hold dear in life—people, pets, treasured ways of life—should never be taken for granted. In our Valley, our river system not only shapes that treasured way of life but also feels eternal, unlike our pets, whose time here is all too fleeting. Yet, just as we can lose our beloved animals, we risk losing our rivers through neglect and inattention.

I've spoken with enough residents of our Valley to understand that our decision to call this place home is intricately linked to the rivers that flow through it. These rivers are not just geographical features; they are the lifeblood of our community, providing recreation, tranquility, and joy. We view them as an essential part of our identity, counting on their enduring currents that have shaped the character and culture of our Valley for over fifty years.

Despite our shared love of these rivers, we have taken them for granted, largely due to their perceived permanency. Most of us don't know a different river; there are childhood memories of being flung from a tube towed by a boat for the first time; watching a barge full of wheat head down river to market; biking along the levy with our family in tow; catching that first spring chinook salmon during the migration. They have just always been a common thread weaving our lives together.

Unfortunately, our rivers as we love them may not be as eternal as they appear. We cannot take them for granted because they are under attack from groups that want to remove our dams, irrevocably changing them, and not for the better. The groups are being aided by an Oregon judge that has allowed these groups to lessen the output from the dams in order to diminish their value. The underlying goal is to create a pathway for Congressional action once elections shift the views of those in power.

Those who want to remove the dams do not care about how most of us feel about the rivers. They want to simply ignore the last 50 years of history to chase a world that cannot now exist. In 2026, we depend on these rivers. Removal would mean no more slack water recreation, no more readily available power at low rates, no more levies to bike, no more easy water intake or discharge for cities or industry, no affordable transport for our farmers.

To assume that our rivers will always be there is to take for granted the gifts they give to make our lives better. With the current legal and political fight they now face, there is no guarantee that our way of life with these waterways will be preserved. Our time is now to step forward and let our feelings be known. If we lose these rivers, we will surely be crushed by their unforgiveable loss. Unlike a beloved but mortal pet like Max, these rivers must continue to thrive for generations to come, ensuring the preservation of our way of life.

We Christen Thee ....







The American Encore!

On May 12, with a backdrop of clear skies and a sea of red, white, and blue enthusiasm, American Cruise Lines officially christened the "American Encore," the newest addition to their fleet on the Columbia-Snake rivers and the first to make its maiden voyage from an Idaho port. Cathy McMorris Rodgers, former US House representative for Washington's 5th district and longtime river system advocate, was named "Godmother" of the ship, and broke the ceremonial bottle of champagne. Other speakers included Port Commission President Joe Anderson, Lewiston Mayor Dan Johnson, and American Cruise Lines President & CEO Charlie Robertson.
(Pictured left: McMorris Rodgers breaking champagne bottle; Robertson speaking to the crowd, and President Anderson with McMorris Rodgers. Photos by Christopher Stone, Etched in Stone Media.)

Iacobelli Named Communications Manager

The Port of Lewiston is excited to share that Mary Iacobelli has been promoted to the position of Communications Manager. Mary has been at the Port for almost three years and has led the effort to improve the Port's ability to tell its story. She created a newsletter that is seen as one of the best on the river, telling compelling stories of people along the rivers. She has redesigned the Port's website and become a skilled advocate for the Port's issues. She is very deserving of this promotion and we are lucky to have her on the team. Congrats, Mary!



Port of LEWISTON
IDAHO'S SEAPORT

OUR VISION

The Port of Lewiston is a respected leader contributing to the region's economic growth and vitality: a model of excellence for transportation, international trade, and job creation.

COMMISSIONERS



Pictured left to right are: **Joseph Anderson**, *President;* **Mike Thomason**, *Vice President;* **Denise Metz**, *Secretary/ Treasurer*

OUR TEAM

Scott Corbitt, *Executive Director*
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Preston Comstock, *Finance & Property Manager, preston@portoflewiston.com*
Chad Smith, *Maintenance Coordinator*
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Mary Iacobelli, *Communications Manager, mary@portoflewiston.com*

SCAN THE QR CODE TO VIEW OUR WEBSITE!

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208 MEDICAL
Medical Education for Everyone

How to Save a Life

Launching a business begins with identifying a need and finding a solution. After years in the health sector, including emergency rooms and as a first responder, 208 Medical owner Jesse Acheson saw the need for quality first aid training due to people's reluctance to help, and verbal reports of not knowing what to do in emergencies

"How I learn best is by teaching others," said Acheson, who honed his is instructional chops helping fellow students at Lewis-Clark State College when he was earning his Bachelors in Nursing Science. "I inherently like teaching, and it seemed natural to help by demonstrating proper technique."

208 Medical is the latest addition to the Port's Marine Highway Business Center, a revamped modular building designed to offer office and classroom space for various businesses. Now with storage and two classroom spaces, Acheson has the perfect place to teach everything from basic CPR and first aid to comprehensive trauma courses. For a busy dad who also works full time as a Critical Care Flight Nurse, having everything in one place is a big upgrade.

"I've been looking for a place since last year, and this is perfect," said Acheson, noting that wife Lisa is also pleased to have the basement back at the home they share with their four children. "When I heard about this space, I was on cloud nine."

His newly organized storage room resembles a horror movie prop house, brimming with items like fake blood, artificial limbs featuring injury sites, CPR dummies, and much more. These elements play a crucial role in helping class participants visualize what a real trauma situation entails.

"Trauma and first aid don't typically occur within a classroom, so I try to make the experience as realistic as possible," Acheson explained, showcasing how the fake blood is pumped through a prosthetic leg and demonstrating how students can learn to effectively use a tourniquet.

208 Medical provides classes of various sizes, welcoming businesses, community groups, and anyone interested in learning how to effectively respond to emergency situations. ***For further details, visit www.208medical.org.***