

# Our Community

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FILE PHOTO

Beautification efforts in Echo continue to be recognized. The town recently received a 3-bloom award from America in Bloom.

## ECHO BLOOMS WITH NATIONAL AWARD

### HERMISTON HERALD

The city of Echo received a 3-bloom rating out of a possible five blooms and special recognition for its environmental efforts during the 2016 America in Bloom National Awards Program.

The announcement was made Oct. 8 at the annual awards held in Arroyo Grande, California. In addition to its 2016 honors, Echo has an im-

pressive history of past successes with America in Bloom, winning its population category three times, said Laura Kunkle, America in Bloom executive director.

All participants were evaluated on six criteria: overall impression, environmental awareness, heritage preservation, urban forestry, landscaped areas and floral displays. In addition, they were judged on community in-

volvement across municipal, residential and commercial sectors.

America in Bloom is the only national awards program that sends specially trained judges to personally visit participants. In addition, each participant receives a detailed written evaluation that can be used as a guide to future improvements.

To date, 250 communities from 41 states have participat-

ed in the program and more than 22 million people have been touched by it. Registration for the 2017 national awards program can be submitted until Feb. 28, 2017. Eligible participants include towns, cities, college and university campuses, business districts, military installations, and recognized neighborhoods of large cities.

For more information, visit [www.americainbloom.org](http://www.americainbloom.org).

### IN BRIEF

#### First Draft features Portland poet

A writer with some of the nation's most prestigious poetry awards under her belt is the featured presenter during the First Draft Writers' Series.

Born in Berlin, Germany, Andrea Hollander later spent 30 years in the Ozark Mountains in Arkansas. Now living in Portland, Hollander is the author of four full-length poetry collections, including a finalist for the 2014 Oregon Book Award in Poetry. Also, she's the editor of "When She Named Fire: An Anthology of Contemporary Poetry by American Women."

Hollander will take the stage Thursday at 7 p.m. at Pendleton Center for the Arts, 214 N. Main St. The event is free and open to the public. After her presentation, local authors will have an opportunity to read from their works during an open mic.

For more information about First Draft, call 541-278-9201. For more about the Hollander, visit [www.andreahollander.net](http://www.andreahollander.net).

#### Film festival opens Thursday

More than 30 independent works will be screened during the Eastern Oregon Film Festival.

In its seventh year, the event also includes music programming and after parties. The festival runs Thursday through Saturday with the headquarters located at 112 Depot Street, La Grande. Screenings are at The Granada 3 Cinemas, Stage Door Theatre in The

Liberty Theatre and a special screening at Eastern Oregon University's Huber Auditorium, all in La Grande.

Festival passes are \$60, which provide access to all screenings and after parties. If seats are available, people can purchase tickets (\$9.50-\$11.50) at the door for individual events.

For more information, including film synopsis' and schedules, music line-ups and band information, and to purchase festival passes, visit [www.eofilmfest.com](http://www.eofilmfest.com).

#### Guardian Angel Homes offers freaky fun

A kids' costume contest, food and fun are planned during the Fall Festival at Guardian Angel Homes.

The public is invited to attend the free event, which features two "freaky"

rooms, candy and treats, spooky picture cutouts, pumpkin decorating, face painting, cupcake decorating, a bouncy house, fishing pond game and a haunted graveyard.

The event is Friday from 5:30-7 p.m. at the assisted living facility at 540 N.W. 12th St., Hermiston. Food offerings include chili or hot dogs, cotton candy, popcorn, cider and witch's brew and desserts. Cash prizes will be awarded for first-third places in each of four age groups for the costume contest.

For more information, call Leilani Pratt at 541-564-9070.

#### Music workshop addresses performance anxiety

The Umatilla-Morrow District of the Oregon Music Teachers Association,

in partnership with the Oregon Community Foundation and the Nellie Tholen Fund, will present a free workshop for music teachers on performance anxiety.

The event is Saturday, Oct. 29 from 10 a.m. to noon at the Hermiston Church of Christ of Latter-day Saints, 850 S.W. 11th St. Diane Baxter, professor of music at Western Oregon University, will present "Stepping into the Light: Thoughts on Performance Anxiety." The workshop is open to all who are interested; no pre-registration, membership or fee is required.

Performance anxiety is a complex topic that involves how people think, feel and behave, Baxter said. The results may range from mildly discomforting to completely paralyzing. The workshop will introduce some of the causes of performance anxiety and will offer some tips on how to do your best under duress.

For more information, contact Sue Nelson at [musicdoc3@mac.com](mailto:musicdoc3@mac.com), 541-276-0346 or visit [www.oregonmta.org](http://www.oregonmta.org).

#### Festival features gospel bluegrass

Some of the best bluegrass musicians in the region will perform during a Gospel Bluegrass Festival.

The public is invited to the free event Saturday at 7 p.m. at the Milton-Freewater First Christian Church, 518 S. Main St. A time of fellowship will follow the concert.

For more information, contact [mfjcollins@q.com](mailto:mfjcollins@q.com).

#### TOPS group offers support

A local TOPS (Take Off Pounds Sensibly) group meets weekly in Hermiston.

The organization offers support and focuses on health as people work to lose weight and maintain weight loss. There is a nominal fee for yearly membership. The first visit is free.

For more information, call Janell Bailey at 541-571-5744 or visit [www.tops.org](http://www.tops.org).

#### Friends of the NRA offer raffle prizes

Rifles, guns and a Yeti package are among the items available in the Friends of the NRA raffle.

Tickets are \$20 each. In addition, winning tickets will go back in the drawing — every ticket purchased will be eligible for each gun drawing. Only 400 tickets will be sold and the winner doesn't have to be present to win.

The drawing will be held Monday, Oct. 31 at 123 Pawn Shop, 1500 E. Isaacs Ave., Walla Walla. Winners of firearms must pass the National Instant Criminal Background Check System.

For tickets or more information, contact 509-730-5871 or [wallawallafrnra@gmail.com](mailto:wallawallafrnra@gmail.com) or search Facebook for "Walla Walla Valley Friends of NRA."

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**STUDENT OF THE WEEK**

**Braydon Postma**  
PILOT ROCK HIGH SCHOOL

Pilot Rock High School student of the week is Braydon Postma. Braydon is an outstanding student, carrying a 4.0 GPA in to his senior year. He is a member of National Honor Society, FFA and a three sport athlete throughout high school. He actively participates in classes and always encourages other students. He is a friend to all and meets everyone with a smile. PRHS is a better place because of Braydon. Congratulations on this honor.

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