

# Faithful to restore old Echo church

## Echo Oktoberfest to benefit St. Peter's project

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**  
COMMUNITY EDITOR

A day before the old St. Peter's Catholic Church hosted an open house event in Echo, a handful of curious bypassers stopped in to get a glimpse of the historic building, which was constructed in 1913.

"It's so neat to see the doors open," Matthew Greenup said Saturday as he made his way up the concrete stairs.

The Heppner man was in town looking at antiques and heard there was some activity at the old church. The building was de-consecrated in 1996 and donated to the Fort Henrietta Foundation by the Diocese of Baker. While initial discussion centered around a possible museum, the church has sat empty for more than 20 years. It was added to the National Register of Historic Places on Aug. 28, 1997.

A small group of volunteers with the Echo Kiwanis Club and Fort Henrietta Foundation worked both inside and outside the structure Saturday in preparation for Sunday's open house. In addition to dusting and vacuuming, Kiwanian Phyllis Shovel-ski said they removed the plastic covers from the ornate statues and other fixtures inside the building. Outside, Michael Duffy, Echo Kiwanis president, cleaned up the parking area with a backhoe.

The Kiwanis, Duffy said, have no interest in taking over the project. However, he said they want to lend a hand and provide financial support to help in reducing the building's degradation.

"We need to treat this as the treasure it is," Duffy



STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MALGESINI

**Michael Duffy, Echo Kiwanis Club president, operates a backhoe during a clean-up day Saturday at the St. Peter's Catholic Church in Echo.**



STAFF PHOTO BY TAMMY MALGESINI

**A bell sits on the front steps of the old St. Peter's Catholic Church in Echo. The 1913 building was donated to the Fort Henrietta Foundation by the Diocese of Baker in 1996.**

said.

Regardless of their religious upbringing, Shovel-ski said the consensus from what she hears from the people around town is they don't want to see the building destroyed. In fact, she said the building elicits quite the emotional response from some people.

"A year ago it was covered in bird droppings, dead flies, cobwebs and there was a beehive in the wall," Shovel-ski said. "It was pretty bad and people

were tearful."

On Sunday, more than 150 turned out for the open house, from Echo, Hermiston and the surrounding area. Many shared memories of worshipping in the chapel or attending events there, like weddings. People also commented with pride on seeing many of the artifacts, like statues, the confessional booth, altars and organs still housed inside the century-old building.

The inaugural Echo

Oktoberfest, held in 2016, raised about \$6,000 for the project, Shovel-ski said. The Kiwanis are again hosting an Oktoberfest event, with most of the funds going to the St. Peter's project. Some of the money, Shovel-ski said, will be earmarked for the Kiwanis scholarship program for area youths who are furthering their education.

This year's Echo Oktoberfest is Saturday, Oct. 21 beginning at 4 p.m. in downtown Echo. The family-friendly event will include kids' activities, food (German sausage, coleslaw, potato salad, hot dogs and brats) and beverages, including 16 varieties of beer from Hermiston Brewing Co., Shovel-ski said. In addition, Cruise Control, an oldies rock and roll band from the Tri-Cities, will perform.

Oktoberfest tickets are \$15. Those purchased in advance will include \$20 in event tokens. They are available at H&P Cafe in Echo, Hermiston Brewing Co. & Nookies Restaurant and from Echo Kiwanis members.

# SAGE Center harvests family fun

By **TAMMY MALGESINI**  
COMMUNITY EDITOR

Showcasing the region's produce, local artisans and other local food products, the Morrow County Harvest Festival offers free family fun.

In its fourth year, the event is presented by the Boardman, Heppner and Irrigon chambers of commerce in conjunction with the SAGE Center. The free festival is Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the SAGE

Center, 101 Olson Road, Boardman.

The Kids Corner will feature such activities as carnival games, pumpkin painting, an obstacle course made of straw bales and a "kiddie corral." Mule-drawn wagon rides will be available from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Also, beer and wine tasting runs from noon to 4:30 p.m., courtesy of local producers Ordinance Brewing and Sno Road Winery.

Stefanie Swindler, SAGE Center education

coordinator, said nearly two dozen artisans feature everything from jewelry and art to home decor and hand-crafted items, including crochet, quilting, woodworking and leather crafts. In addition, she said food will be available for purchase, both from local artisans and in the SAGE Center.

"We want to provide a fun opportunity for families to do something and get people out to see the SAGE Center and see what's happening in their local com-

munity," Swindler said. "It's a free event for the community to have some fall fun."

Also teaming up with the event this year is Threemile Canyon Farms. They are hosting the Fall Harvest Bounty For Youth In Ag. It offers people a chance to "fill-a-bag" with organic onions, organic carrots and traditionally grown potatoes. There is a requested donation of at least \$5 and Threemile Canyon will provide the bags.

## IN BRIEF

### Fort Walla Walla digs into archaeology

Hands-on activities of children an experience working as archaeologists at Fort Walla Walla Museum.

Kids ages 9-11 will participate in surveying, mapping and identifying artifacts during the Archaeology Kids Camp. The museum's historical archaeologist, Ashley Morton, will share what cultural artifacts that are recorded and analyzed by professional archaeologists reveal about the past.

The event is Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. at the museum, 755 Myra Road, Walla Walla. The cost is \$30, which includes a pizza lunch and an official souvenir. Financial assistance is available

Pre-register at [www.fwvm.org/kids-camp](http://www.fwvm.org/kids-camp). For more information or to inquire about a scholarship, contact Jennifer Pecora at 509-525-7703 or [jennifer@fwvm.org](mailto:jennifer@fwvm.org).

### Free workshop addresses health insurance

A free two-hour workshop on health insurance will be offered in Pendleton.

Health Insurance 101 is Wednesday, Oct. 11, from 6-8 p.m. at Pendleton City Hall, 500 S.W. Dorion Ave. RSVP at [www.eventbrite.com/health-insurance-101-ticket](http://www.eventbrite.com/health-insurance-101-ticket)

ets-34912617579?aff=e-homecard.

The session will explain coverage options, dispel myths related to health insurance and the Affordable Care Act, and answer questions about health insurance in Oregon.

For more information, contact Amy Coven at [amy.n.coven@oregon.gov](mailto:amy.n.coven@oregon.gov) or 855-268-3767.

### Community theater sets auditions

College Community Theatre is hosting auditions for "All in the Timing," a collection of short comedies by David Ives.

Auditions are open to the public and will consist of cold readings from the scripts. No preparation is required. Scripts are available for checkout in the Blue Mountain Community College library in Pendleton. The auditions are Tuesday, Oct. 10, and Wednesday, Oct. 11, at 7 p.m. in Bob Clapp Theatre, located in Pioneer Hall at BMCC, 2411 N.W. Carden Ave., Pendleton. Roles are available for at least six men and six women.

Directed by Craig McIntosh, the production will be staged Nov. 9-12 and 16-19. For more information, contact McIntosh at 541-278-5928, [cmcintosh@bluecc.edu](mailto:cmcintosh@bluecc.edu) or search Facebook for "College Community Theatre."

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