

Echo Corn Maze harvests fall fun

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

Gina Tyhuis is excited for another season of sharing her love of agriculture with others at the Echo Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch.

Bob and Gina Tyhuis moved to Echo nearly five years ago — however, Gina's family has been a part of the area farming community for many years. This is the fourth year the Tyhuis family, which also includes 5-year-old Brent, have created the corn maze as part of their farming projects.

"I'm a farmer," Gina said. "I like to educate people on where food comes from — most everything starts on a farm or ranch."

One of the highlights of the corn maze complex, Gina said, is an agricultural education program. Area schools, she said, have enjoyed time at the corn maze — both having fun and learning about farming.

The program features four stations that people can rotate through. They include a focus on the growth cycles of corn, pumpkins and bees. The last station features team-building activities.

In addition to the educational component, the corn maze also harvests a lot of fun. A variety of activities are available, including the regular corn maze, the corn crib, a mini-maze, a straw bale maze and tunnels, a hay bale pyramid, kiddie carts and a zip line. Also, there's a fire pit with seating. The Field of Screams Corn Maze Path is open on three select dates.

The corn crib, Gina said, is extremely popular. Doubling in size from last year, she equates it to a giant sandbox — only it's less messy and more fun. Also, while at the corn maze, don't forget to purchase a pumpkin to take home.

The event schedule includes Special Olympics Day (Oct. 11, \$5 admis-



Staff photo by Tammy Malgesini
Hermiston residents Hope Smith and Angelica White, both 13, walk through the path at the Echo Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch.



Staff photo by Tammy Malgesini
Viridiana Jaimes, who works at the Echo Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch, assists Annie Hennings, 6, on the zip line.

sion for coaches and athletes from 2-10 p.m.), Oregon Army National Guard Day (Oct. 12, \$2 off regular admission with military identification from 2-9 p.m.) and Five Dollar Fridays (through Nov. 1, discounted admission from 2-6 p.m.)

The Echo Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch is the perfect place to celebrate special occasions. Heather Teem of Hermiston ushered in her 26th birthday this past Friday with her family — Rhonda Teem, Michael

Reese and Zoellie Teem, 5.

"There's a whole lot to do — having something like this is really nice," Heather said.

Zoellie's melon-shaped grin confirmed her mother's sentiments. The 5-year-old's eyes lit up even further when she chose her own pumpkin.

Concessions are available Friday through Sunday, which includes beverages and light snacks. People are asked to refrain from bringing their own refreshments and no alcohol

IF YOU GO:

HOURS: Tuesday through Thursday, 2-6 p.m.; Fridays, 2-10 p.m.; Saturdays, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.; Sundays, 11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

LOCATION: 100 N. Dupont St., Echo.

COST: \$10, ages 3 and older; free, ages 2 and younger; \$12, all day pass.

MORE: Ticketed attractions, \$1 (kiddie carts, zip line); Fire pit rental, \$50 for three hours; Field of Screams Corn Maze Path, \$12 (Oct. 19, 26 and 31 from 7-9 p.m.).

INFO: Call/text 509-528-5808, visit www.echocornmaze.com or search Facebook.

is allowed. However, private reservations are available for picnics around the fire pit — bringing your own food or take-out from local restaurants is allowed with reservations.

The corn maze continues through Sunday, Nov. 3. Be sure to check the schedule for added activities or changes in hours.

Lutheran church to install new pastor in Hermiston

HERMISTON HERALD

Grace and Mercy Lutheran Church invites the community as they celebrate the installation of their new pastor.

Rev. Weston Walker's ordination and installation as pastor is Saturday at 10 a.m. at 191 E. Gladys Ave., Hermiston. Bishop Laurie Larson Caesar of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA) Oregon Synod will preside. After the service, a light lunch will be served.

In 1979, Walker graduated from Kamiakin High School in Kennewick, and then completed college and seminary in Abilene, Texas. He taught at a Bible college and served as a pastor, while also serving as a chaplain in the United States Air Force Reserves.

Entering active duty in 1993, Walker served

as an Air Force chaplain endorsed by the Churches of Christ until retiring from the military in 2018. He has also completed the doctor of ministry degree and a one-year residency in clinical pastoral education.



Walker

Serving in an ecumenical context for many years, Walker found his home in Lutheran and Episcopal churches. Upon military retirement, he completed the requirements to be rostered with the ELCA.

Recently, Walker served six months as interim pastor at Kennewick's First Lutheran and has been supplying at Hermiston's Grace and Mercy since April.

He is married to Rostia, a registered nurse, enjoys adventures around the world with his adult children, sings, trains his dogs in agility, and helps in providing care for his parents.



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Project Community Connect offers hand up

Event includes Veteran Stand Down

By TAMMY MALGESINI
COMMUNITY EDITOR

A cornucopia of resources — including giveaways, services and information — is available during the annual Project Community Connect & Veteran Stand Down.

The free event is designed for veterans, as well as those who are homeless or at risk of being homeless. It's Saturday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Hermiston Community Center, 415 S. Highway 395.

Ysenia Gomez, a case manager with Community Action Program of East Central Oregon (CAPECO), said the project provides access to needed services and assists in identifying resources people might not be aware of. In addition, she said the entire event is free of charge.

The Home 4 Hope Coalition teamed up with local veterans services organizations and other community



HH file photo
Alexandria Tonasket, keeps her dog, Bella, calm while receiving free veterinary care during the 2018 Project Community Connect & Veteran Stand Down. This year's event is Saturday at the Hermiston Community Center.

partners to connect people to valuable resources. Those in attendance can receive on-the-spot services, including everything from vision care and health screenings to haircuts and pet care.

"Last year we had dog food and cat food. We put those in containers and gave them out. There will be free immunizations for pets," Gomez said. "I know pet care can be a huge barrier

for people."

Also, a free meal will be offered by Veg Out. In addition, representatives from various agencies will be on hand to assist and offer information about employment and adult education services, legal help, housing options, veteran's benefits, Cover Oregon/Oregon Health Plan, children's resources and other social services, such as mental health, disabilities

and domestic violence.

Linda Skendzel of Morrow County Veterans Services applauded the efforts of all those who work together to organize the event. Due to the small number of veterans in Morrow County, Skendzel said it's difficult to present a comprehensive Veteran Stand Down. Teaming up with the Home 4 Hope Coalition as part of the Project Community Connect not only assists local veterans but also others in the community.

"It provides resources for people that kind of need a hand up," Skendzel said.

Also, Gomez said there will be lots of giveaways during the event. The Walmart Distribution Center, she said, donated 10 pallets full of items to be distributed. People can walk away with hygiene products, personal care supplies, socks, gloves and other clothing items.

For more information or to register to help during Project Community Connect, visit www.home-4-hope.weebly.com.

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