



## Echo Sage Trail Run supports women in agriculture

'It was brutal,' says one winner

By NICK ROSENBERGER  
EAST OREGONIAN

ECHO — With the sound of shoes crunching through rocks and sagebrush, a line of runners disappeared on Saturday, Sept. 25, into the rolling hills of the Sno Road Vineyards in Echo at the Echo Sage Trail Run to raise money for women in agriculture and to beat a challenging, rugged course.

The fun run, 5K and 10K were open to anyone from runners to walkers and was organized by the Eastern Oregon Women for Agriculture — an organization dedicated to uplifting and supporting the role of women in agriculture. Proceeds from the event went to their annual scholarship for women pursuing agriculture degrees.

Two courses split out from the bottom of the hills: a 10K winding its way south along a ridge before meeting up with the 5k course, which looped north past the winery and through rows of grape vines.

"It was brutal," said Adelaide Zumwalt, who took first place in the 5K with a time of 32:54. Her father, Tom Baker, took second place with a time of 33:20.

Despite the difficulty of the course, many of the runners, such as Dan Stein or Gena Cook, who placed third and fourth, felt good about their race, even with slower times than a normal road 5K.

"It's amazing what people can do," Stein said. The Echo Sage Trail Run marked his second 5K.

The winners of the 5k and 10k received medals, while second and third place received certificates. Everyone who participated received a green T-shirt emblazoned with the Oregon Women for Agriculture slogan: "Almost everything starts on a farm or ranch."

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## COVID-19 setbacks

Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald  
Dave Bender, RetroRagz shop owner, inspects "Stanley," a wooden seal on Friday, Sept. 26, 2021. The seal was among items that he was selling in his Stanfield store prior to closing it.

### Dave Bender closes RetroRagz without having much of a chance to open it

By ERICK PETERSON  
HERMISTON HERALD

In the days leading up to closing his Stanfield store, RetroRagz shop owner Dave Bender was sorting out the antiques inside. He was trying to figure which items he still could sell, which he could give away and which he could keep for himself.

Bender received two positive test results for COVID-19 on separate occasions at Rite-Aid pharmacies. The first positive test was in July 2020 in Everett, Washington. The second was in Hermiston. But said he thinks he actually suffered one case prior to the other two.

#### Multiple COVID-19 cases

Getting COVID-19 twice, according to Joseph Fiumara, Umatilla County Public Health director, is not unheard of.

"We consider everyone who is not vaccinated to be susceptible to infection, and this includes individuals who have already tested positive before," he said. "Per Oregon Health Authority guidelines, any individual who tests positive, symptomatic or not, 90 days after previously testing positive is considered to be reinfected."

People commonly think their first infection leads to developing antibodies, he explained, which protect them from another infection. But this is not the case, and the "immune system is much more complex than that," he said.

Verified multi-occurrence cases of COVID-19, though, are uncommon, Fiumara said. His department claims there have been 116 such cases through Aug. 31.

"We do not have many documented reinfections, so I do believe it is rare," he said. "Three times is likely very rare."

#### Bender's troubles

Back in December 2019, Bender became ill with what he thought was a common flu. It was strange, because he had unusual symptoms — loss of smell and taste, common symptoms of COVID-19. But he did not, then, think it was the emerging coronavirus.

At the time, the disease was in its infancy, and reported cases were not in the U.S. So, he did not get a test to verify it. He thought he would recover a bit, work through the end of his sickness and be fine.

His illnesses, and other personal issues, delayed the opening of his new business. He had started renting a storefront in downtown Stanfield. Its location, across both a library and a popular restaurant, made it attractive.

As he was an auctioneer with many contacts in antiques and vintage clothing, he was

able to develop an inventory. He had paintings, movie memorabilia and more. In addition, he possessed a collection of wood art, which he carved, and inventions of his own making. He fashioned a collection of bow ties for dogs, and he was in the process of making new clothing from used designer wear.

He was excited, and he even painted the name of his new shop, RetroRagz, on his van. His plan was to open in late 2019.

Illnesses, including what he believes to be his first bout with COVID-19, though, kept him from opening his doors. He would later feel better, but would then get sick again and be unable to ready his store for a proper opening. He opened for customers by request, but he did not see much interest from the public.

"Who would want to come to an antique store during a pandemic?" he said.

A couple of times, he brought items outside the front of his store for a sidewalk sale. These sales, however, were not helping him pay his bills. He maintained his online business, selling antiques, but those sales were not paying much, either.

He was falling behind on his rent, his wife was in the hospital with multiple sclerosis and he kept getting sick. His problems were piling up, and he could not find the help he needed.

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## HAC, HAC, Hooray for the Hispanic Advisory Committee

Hermiston Hispanic Advisory Committee members help their community for Hispanic Heritage Month and every day

By ERICK PETERSON  
HERMISTON HERALD

Hermiston is a better place because of Hermiston's Hispanic Advisory Committee, according to committee members. As the nation celebrates Hispanic History Month, Aug. 15 to Sept. 15, HAC members reflected on their identities as Hispanic people and the role of their committee in Hermiston.

The committee is a bridge between Hispanic people and city government in Hermiston. Committee members seek the opinions of local Hispanic people and relay issues and concerns to the Hermiston City Council and city government. Committee members also report their findings back to their community.

The goal of HAC is to solve problems and strengthen this

community for everyone, according to the city's website.

#### Jose Garcia

Jose Garcia, committee president since 2015, is proud of HAC and of his work on it. As president, he heads the group, which includes three other members — Mark Gomolski, Obdulia "Abby" Munoz-Reyes and Nazario "Naz" Rivera. A fifth member is likely to join the committee. A vacancy review board recommended Agustin Vega-Peters at the city council meeting on Monday, Sept. 27.

Garcia, who runs a drug and alcohol program in Hermiston, said his friends caused him to join the Hispanic Advisory Committee. Before that, he was active in the Hispanic community in other ways. He coached soccer and served on a multicultural committee in Salem. His friends, though,



Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald  
Lilly Alarcon-Strong is the city recorder for Hermiston and is a city representative for the Hispanic Advisory Committee. She was hard at work on Monday, Sept. 27, 2021.

suggested he should serve his local community rather than drive to Salem.

In 2014, he read an East Oregonian story about the committee,

saw there was an open position and joined.

It is a good fit, he said. As an extrovert, he likes talking with people and making connections.

Also, he is a problem solver who is concerned about Hispanic people. The New Horizon Alcohol and Drug Program, which he serves as program director, has many clients, several of which are Hispanic agricultural workers.

"I've been enjoying every minute of it," Garcia said.

He said he likes helping his community and the city. The mayor, city council and department heads have all been solid partners, he said.

At every meeting, he thinks about HAC's place in history. Some of the decisions, he said, may seem small, but they are significant. For instance, when the Funland Playground was built, the Parks and Recreation Department sought the committee's input. The committee answered by inviting a local artist to paint a mural at the playground. This would make the attraction more inviting to Hispanic people.

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