

# Echo Market wraps up 2021 season

By ERICK PETERSON  
Hermiston Herald

The Echo Market ended the final day of its season Saturday, Oct. 2, as it had every other day throughout its inaugural year — with happy vendors, joyful attendees and one extremely busy organizer.

Teres Fair, Echo Market founder and organizer, rushed from one booth to another as she made sure everyone was satisfied. In the minutes before the market's opening, she hardly had time to take a breath.

"I feel really good. We had a great season," she said.

She, who also owns the Jack Correa Ranch, said she believes the market reached many vendors and visitors who will return next year. Likely, she said, they will spread the word of the market, thereby attracting even more people.

"The big story here is that big things can happen here," Fair said. "We're a small town with a big market."

She also said several other people deserve credit for the community event and the vendors played a big part. Around 40 vendors operated Oct. 2 at the market, which attracted 350-400 attendees.

Mike Duffy, Echo Heritage Association president, expressed his amazement with Fair and the market. He said he was unsure about this event at its outset. Fair promised to "do what she could" with the market, Duffy said, and in the end Fair exceeded every expectation. Duffy said there is "every indication that it's going to work again next year."

Duffy, who has lived in Echo 22 years, said he expects the Echo Market will be his town's signature event. He has seen events come and go, he said, but this one is different. In con-



Ruben Harris, local farmer, stands beside his booth Saturday, Oct. 2, 2021, during the last day of the season of the Echo Market. Harris, who brings vegetables to the Echo Market, said he has enjoyed the market.

Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald

trast to some other events, this market is linked to Echo's identity as a small town. Having small sellers selling handmade or home-grown goods fits the small-town feel of Echo, Duffy said.

Also, he added, Fair, a local farmer, is the "perfect person" to host such an event. Her contacts, work ethic and passion for Echo all make her a terrific organizer, Duffy said.

Josh English, owner of Pendleton Woodcrafters, had been to six of the Echo Market events prior to the final one. Having only missed one of them, he said he really enjoyed his experience. In addition to selling his wood products, he also created games for children to play at the market.

He said he has already started trying to figure out items to make and sell at next year's Echo Market.

"That's what the off-season is for," he said. He will return with new goods, he said. These woodcrafts will be items no one has ever

seen before, he promised.

Haley Winters, flower seller at the market, started her booth around June, when her products began to bloom. She first became aware of the market from family members who were also attending. With the success they were enjoying, it made sense to Winters to also open a booth.

Winters operates a business, Seed and Trowel Flowers, out of her home. She said she enjoys this market, and she will come back next year.

"It's been fun," she said. Ruben Harris has a larger farm in Echo, and he pulls three to five acres each year for farmer's markets.

"We like it a lot," he said of the Echo Market. The atmosphere makes it a pleasant home for his squash, pumpkins and other vegetables. He said he will return next year.

Shareana Pittam, owner of Simple Blessing Designs and Woolly Love Rabbitry, was operating two separate booths, one for each of her

businesses.

"We love it, and we're very popular here," she said of her company's participation at the market. Children in particular flock to her rabbits and guinea pigs so they can pet them. She said she plans to return next year.

Katie Munoz, a merchandizer for children's clothes, also is a Hermiston resident. She owns Dot Dot Smile with Katie Munoz. She was at the market with children's clothing for sale.

She has been to four of the Echo markets, as well as markets and events in Hermiston, Irrigon and Heppner. She likes the Echo Market.

"This is a fun one," she said. "There's always a lot of vendors, and I like the small-town feel."

She said this is a fun, friendly market, and she plans to return next year.

Though Fair deemed this season a success, she said there is room for growth and next year will be bigger and better.

# New drop-in peer centers opening to help with addiction

By ERICK PETERSON  
Hermiston Herald

Locals struggling with substance use are getting new places to seek some help.

The Oregon Washington Health Network is opening three drop-in peer centers next week, one in Pendleton, one in Hermiston and one in Milton-Freewater. The centers will offer "low-barrier access for individuals and families that are struggling with substance use," said Amy Ashton-Williams, the network's executive director. "Our purpose is to offer some support and guidance."

Ashton-Williams said the "peer movement has really exploded" in recent years, and it has given people with "lived experience" a chance to help other people. That is, a "peer," who has a personal history with recovery and addiction, can help other people. They can share their own stories, relate to others and possibly even chart the recoveries of others.

Family members of people in crisis do not always know about available resources or the best next step, she said. Someone in that situation can meet with one of the center's "peers," people who are experienced with and understanding of life's many difficulties.

The peers also are there to help individuals in recovery, seeking to end their use of alcohol or other drugs or to make their addictions safer. The network in such cases, directs people to harm-reduction resources, such as a needle-exchange program.

Professional staff work at each center, Ashton-Williams said. The Hermiston Center has two peer mentors, Pendleton has three peer mentors and Mil-

ton-Freewater has two peer mentors and two peer mentor supervisors. They all vary in education, as some have high school diplomas or GEDs, some have bachelor's degrees and others are completing their master's degrees. All staff, Ashton-Williams said, regardless of schooling, are familiar with resources and able to help.

The centers, Ashton-Williams said, are open to clients of different ages. They will even be able to help adolescents. Peers are also available by phone and services are free.

The centers also can help people with English or Spanish-language services, Ashton-Williams said. When individuals walk in, they will be met by someone who looks like them, speaks their language and knows their culture, provided they speak either English or Spanish.

"That was very important," she said. Spanish language speakers, a large portion of her service areas, have a history of being neglected by programs similar to hers, she said.

She added, these centers will meet a great need. She said she fears increasing overdose rates in Umatilla County. The pandemic, she said, is likely exacerbating problems, isolating people.

The Oregon Washington Health Network will host grand openings Wednesday, Oct. 6, at each of the drop-in peer centers. The times and locations are as follows:

- 9-10 a.m. at the Hermiston Center, 165 S.W. Third St.
- 12-1 p.m. at the Pendleton Center at 200 S.E. Hailley Ave., Suite 105/106.
- 3-4 p.m. at the Milton Center at 410 N. Main St., Milton-Freewater.



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