

Twists and turns Find your way in the Echo Corn Maze

EO Media Group

ECHO — Try your navigation skills this fall at the Echo Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch, which is open throughout the month.

“Our mission at Echo Corn Maze has always been to provide a fun, family-friendly, safe environment,” said owner Gina Tyhuis.

The maze is at 300 N. Dupont St., 1.5 miles off Interstate 84.

She said the maze started after she and her husband, Bob, adopted their son in October 2016. The project was a way to create a community activity and teach visitors about agriculture. Every year brings new additions — this version includes a sunflower field, cornhole, and glass corn stalks and specialty gourds for sale.

The main corn maze itself is 8 acres of twists and turns. It takes about an hour to complete.

Echo Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch

The Echo Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch is open throughout October with the corn maze, a

smaller straw bale maze, a mini corn maze, a pumpkin patch and more.

Younger visitors can go through the mini corn maze or the straw bale maze.

“Kids can spend hours digging through the kernels in the corn crib or finding the perfect pumpkin in the patch,” Tyhuis said.

Ages 6 and younger can tour the farm in kiddie carts. There also is a zip line and tunnel maze, and in the evening families can rent cozy fire pits.

The maze is open 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Fridays, 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturdays, and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sundays. The attraction is reserved for school field trips and group visits Tuesday through Thursday.

Admission is \$10 and includes the 8-acre corn maze, corn crib, mini corn maze, straw bale maze and tunnels. An all-day pass plus the Field of Screams is \$12. The zip line and kiddie carts are \$1 per ride. Fridays 2-6 p.m. feature reduced admission of \$5.

Field of Screams

For the bravehearted, the Field of Screams haunted maze is open Oct. 23, 29



A display of pumpkins shows the way to the Echo Corn Maze Oct. 9, 2021.

Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald

and 30, 7-9 p.m. Tickets are \$12 and include all general admission features.

For more information, visit the Echo Corn Maze on Facebook. Also, admission

tickets and fire pit rentals can be purchased online at www.echocornmaze.com.

Masks and social distancing will be required under state guidelines.



Angela Bradshaw of Hermiston pets a shelter dog while with her family Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021, at the Loves Pets adoption event at Hermiston's Pet Rescue Humane Society of Eastern Oregon.

Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald



Beau Putnam, director of the shelter at Hermiston's Pet Rescue Humane Society of Eastern Oregon, holds a shelter cat with the Petsense mascot Saturday, Oct. 16, 2021, during the Loves Pets adoption event.

Erick Peterson/Hermiston Herald

Pets:

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Angela Bradshaw of Hermiston came to the shelter with her two daughters and four grandchildren.

“This is a surprise for me,” Bradshaw said.

Her family told her of the event, and they brought her along to help pick out a new dog. She was happy to be there, she said, because she had adopted a dog at other shelters. It worked out well for her, and she was hopeful for another loving fur-baby.

She said she sees her role with the new dog as similar to any grandparent's position with a new baby. That is, she will enjoy the dog, but the parents will have to do the hard work.

The “parents” would include the second generation of Bradshaw/Winterton family, who were looking to pick up a dog to fill a hole in their hearts. A pair of their other dogs recently died, both of old age. They were especially happy to get a dog that was a rescue dog, a canine obtained from a shelter.

“We’re going to give a dog a second chance, and they make us happy,” Katie Bradshaw said. She is the sister of Callie Winterton, who brought her children.

One of those children, Shay Winterton, said she was happy to get a dog, but she really wanted a

cat, or even a horse.

“Do they have horses here?” she asked her mother.

When she learned she could not get a horse or a cat, she asked if she could get two dogs.

Her mother said she might have to think about two dogs, though she added they have plenty of room for additional pets. The family lives on 5 acres, and they consider themselves a “dog family.”

She said she might even add a horse sometime in the near future.

Dog owner Veronica Lopez brought her daughter, Katherine Lopez, to adopt a pet that would take the place of their small dog, which died after a car ran it over. This was upsetting to the entire family, they said.

By the time they left the shelter, however, they were all smiles. They brought home Shatner, a new small dog that would join a larger dog waiting at home.

Katherine said she would soon give Shatner a tour of his home, plus teach him new tricks.

“This is a happy day,” she said.

The day also was happy for Donna Lutz, even though one dog, Ogano, urinated on her. Actually, Lutz decided to adopt the dog, a husky, because it urinated on her.

She took it as a sign. “I love huskies,” she said. “They’re special.”

As she was leaving the

event, she was giggling, beaming with joy over her new pet.

The value of pet adoption

Jackie Alleman, once owned the shelter, which her mother built. Now a volunteer, Alleman said it was “super important” to hold adoption events.

“We have so many dogs who are abandoned,” she stressed. “The best way to take care of them is with shelters until they can find regular homes.”

Beau Putnam, shelter director and Alleman's son-in-law, said this work means a lot to him. He said he figures the shelter has given homes to thousands of animals. Dogs and cats are the most common, he said, but they sometimes find homes for others, such as a peacock and bunnies.

The shelter obtains its animals from local city governments, which pick up strays. Also, some people bring their own animals to the shelter, giving them up when they cannot care for them.

Even outside of adoption days, Putnam said, the shelter is open to guests Tuesday through Saturday, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Adoption fees are \$125 and up for dogs, \$30 for cats. A driver's license is required.

Putnam pointed out the on-site thrift store is open during shelter hours. Profits benefit the shelter. The store also accepts donations of used goods.

Mandate:

Continued from Page A1

available through the website shows St. Anthony had 412 employees in 2019. Tax returns filed in May 2021 shows Good Shepherd has 887 employees.

The Morrow County Health District, which includes Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Heppner, did not respond to a list of questions prior to press time. An official in the county's human resources department on Oct. 18 was unable to provide data before deadline on how many workers the health district employs.

Schools

In public education, Eastern Oregon's two largest school districts won't face any labor shortages as a result of the vaccine mandate and have already filled the vacancies it created.

In Hermiston, Superintendent Tricia Mooney reported 85% of district staff were vaccinated as of Oct. 15. Another 14.5% had secured a medical or religious exemp-

tion while three Hermiston staff, or 0.5%, left the district as a result. Mooney said the district is filling those positions with a combination of substitutes and temporary hires.

Pendleton Superintendent Chris Fritsch said his district's vaccination status hadn't changed too much since he shared a preliminary report with the Pendleton School Board earlier this month. About 90% of Pendleton's staff is vaccinated, with most of the rest obtaining exemptions to stay employed while remaining unvaccinated.

Fritsch on Oct. 18 said one staff member resigned as a result of the mandate, and the district placed another on unpaid leave. He added that a third employee resigned several weeks ago perhaps because of the mandate, but he couldn't confirm it.

According to Fritsch, no employees were terminated for noncompliance with the mandate. Fritsch said the district already has filled all of its vacancies with permanent hires.

“We're pretty happy with

the quality of candidates,” he said.

Prisons

Two of the largest employers in Umatilla County are its state prisons.

Eastern Oregon Correctional Institution, Pendleton, employs 425 prison staff, according to Lindsey McKnight, the facility's human resources manager. The Oregon Department of Corrections reported Two Rivers Correctional Institution, Umatilla, has 468 employees.

Both prisons reported high vaccination rates among their staffs. TRCI reported 35 of its 325 security officers have not notified the state they have gotten vaccinated. At EOIC, 25 out of its 290 officers have not reported having gotten the shot, according to Jennifer Black, communications manager for the corrections.

Black said unvaccinated staff who inform the prison during the work day on Oct. 18 that they have begun the vaccination process “will have a grace period until Nov. 30th to become fully vaccinated.” This only

applies to AFSCME Security and Security Plus employees, Black said in an email to

the newsroom.

“Now, the majority of Department of Corrections

employees have more time to comply with the governor's vaccine mandate,” she said.



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