Community Profile

Echo, Oregon

2013
Introduction to Echo, Oregon

Echo is a town of 715 people located in Umatilla County. The town is 188 miles east of Oregon's largest city, Portland and 20 miles west of the county seat, Pendleton. Echo is located in Northeast Oregon which is in the rain shadow of the Cascade Mountains. As a result the climate is arid. Echo's annual rainfall is less than 8 inches per year.

JH Koontz, a merchant who came to Oregon over the Oregon Trail, platted the town in 1880 and named it for his three-year-old daughter, Echo. The City's logo was created from an historic photo of Echo Koontz. The Oregon Trail passed through Echo and crossed the Umatilla River here. The
Fort Henrietta Park was created at the crossing and campground and is a National Park Service designated National Historic Oregon Trail Site. The river is the western boundary of town. Emigrants camped and rested there and many of them mentioned the Utilla Indian Agency "as the first sign of civilization since Fort Laramie" in their diaries. The agency was destroyed in 1855 and Fort Henrietta, a militia stockade, was built on the same spot. These are now archaeological sites. Wagon ruts, still visible in several spots on both sides of Echo, attract visitors each year. Echo also boasts numerous historic buildings and sites. Ten are on the National Register of Historic Places.

Echo is also known for its historic ambience, the numerous historical sites and buildings that have been preserved, its golf course and its sense of style and community pride. At a Visioning workshop in April 2013 participants described how important it is to them that Echo is not a cookie cutter community. Jim Waddell, the facilitator, commented on the strong “Sense of Place” that participants articulated. The 30 people who participated ranged from high school students to retired, community leaders to business owners from new residents to those who's families had been here for several generations. As well as pride in the historic buildings and sites, nearly all commented on the fact that scenic beauty, natural spaces, agriculture, residential and business improvements were all integrated within a small geographic area. The city’s Tree City USA status (Oregon’s smallest for 24 years), arboretum, lovely parks and annual Christmas Light Displays are also sources of pride. Echo was awarded an Oregon Heritage Excellence Award in 2009. In 2007 we participated in the International Awards for Liveable Communities (LivCom) at the urging of America in Bloom Judge Matt Rosen. We were the only finalist from the USA in the under 20,000 population category Whole City and received a Bronze Certificate in the finals.

While Echo has long been known in the area for its historical ambience it is now earning a reputation for the award winning wines and wine grapes grown here and for the Echo Red2Red Mountain Bike Race, which in its 5th year drew over 450 cyclists of all levels (largest in the Northwest for the 2nd year).

Both Judges Dwight Lund and Alex Pearl have visited Echo before. Hopefully they will find the change in the downtown, not only the improvements made in the streetscape, but also in the business district to be dramatic, especially since Dwight’s initial visit, when many of the store fronts were vacant. The downtown is now thriving with small businesses, many of which have symbiotic relationships with the winery.

We have attempted to implement many of the judge’s recommendations—though often with our own spin: Screening recycling center, diversifying plantings, museum of the streets, historic building marking, new entry signs, etc. Dwight should be pleased to note that the ACE Car Show for the second year has a pickup division.

One thing we have only used in a limited way is use of native plants. While we have used Flax on the golf course and a few grasses, as well as cultivars of perennials such as Coneflower and Gaillardia Daisy which originally were wildflowers, residents have not been receptive of use of many of the ‘plain’ perennials. One factor is that as a small community geographically we are surrounded by the native landscape on a daily basis—thus limiting its appeal for yards. Secondly as our location is so arid, the use of exotic and colourful plants is new and appealing to residents because of its contrast to the native landscape.

We have now reached the point in our beautification efforts that creating a sense of style and art are important. You will note the style or artistic touches being added to the gardens such as figurines and garden art to RV Park and Golf Course Gardens (both of which have received favourable comments from golfers, visitors and residents) The use of the bicycles in
two of the new downtown planters, a spinner in another, use of galvanized planters against a rustic wagon. The downtown benches are custom designed and feature horsehead cut outs designed by Chris Huffman who created our new Echo entry signs and custom bike racks. Chris also created planters that match the new garbage receptacles, drinking fountain and ash receptacles, but will include horses instead of flowers. Horsehead hitching posts were added at the suggestion of the mayor. The new playground project includes an old tractor for kids to climb on that also recognizes our farm heritage.

Above: Main Street Improvements & Museum.

**Floral Displays – Attracting Attention with Colorful Plants**

Downtown: The City completed a $700,000 renovation of downtown in October 2012 which included 8 raised 6.5 ft. in diameter planters at intersections. We have combined bulbs, perennials and annuals. We are also adding garden art to the planters. Eight 20” square custom planters were created for the downtown by artist Chris Huffman. Huffman is the artist who created the Echo Interstate Overpass Art depict horses and the new city entry signs. The project engineers liked the idea of continuing these themes into the downtown, so Huffman also designed the bike racks and design for the benches.

A major part of the downtown renovations was the addition of 15 Vintage-style Street lights with irrigation drippers for hanging baskets. The City purchased the baskets from Kopacz Nursery, our major sponsor. The nursery planted the baskets with help from city manager Diane Berry and grew them in their green house. We decided to make the plantings similar, but not all the same in color.

During construction of the downtown project, the contractor had to make cuts in the asphalt and trench for underground utilities and irrigation along the side of the museum and up to the Hose Cart House next to city hall. The original plan was to repave this area. Public Works Director Darin Tuil suggested that the curb line be extended to the end of the garden Diane Berry started two years before instead of paving the area. He said, Diane will love having an are for more plants---which I did. This added nearly 400 square feet of additional garden area. Hydrangeas, bulbs, perennials and planters have been added. One area will feature a variety of Echinacea and another Heuchera/Heucherella.
School Greenhouse: School Superintendent Raymon Smith has a background in vocational/FFA programs and operated a greenhouse program in Arlington, Oregon where he operated a program to grow and sell Poinsettias at Christmas to help fund his greenhouse classes. Working with Vocational Education instructor Chelsea Nolan, he is bringing a similar program to Echo. He obtained funding from the Echo Community Benefit Board to construct a greenhouse at the school. While the greenhouse was not completed in time to grow plants for this season, they plan to grow poinsettias this fall and hopes to work with the city next year to provide part of the plants for Echo’s Floral Display. City Administrator Diane Berry is looking forward to being able to have the school start Dahlias and Cannas in the greenhouse and to have the school grow annuals that are not available through Kopacz Nursery.

Sno Road Winery. The Piercy’s, owners of Sno Road Winery/Echo West Vineyard experienced delays in their efforts to renovate the Koontz Building in Echo as their new event center and winery. In order to handle their growing followers, in the interim, they added a paved, fenced courtyard on the side and rear. Planters and areas for trees and flowers have been added. The rear of the winery butts up to the George Park. The Piercy’s used a combination of glass fence sections and antique wrought fencing in this area so their clients can sit and enjoy the view of the park and sound of the water feature. During public events centered in the park such as the CROC/ACE car show (Dwight there is a category for Pickups), this allows people to freely move between the park, winery and Main Street.

Publicity. Echo and our America in Bloom program was featured in the Oregonian Thursday [Sept. 2010]. They provided a great deal of space and lots of photos. Kym Pokorny, Oregonian Home and Garden writer, visited Echo in June and accompanied the America in Bloom judges on their tour of Echo. The article is also on the Oregonian’s Oregon Live.Com website at: http://blog.oregonlive.com/kypokorny/2010/09/echo_a_small_town_in_northeast.html

City Hall. The highlight of the city’s public floral displays are at city hall and adjacent George Park. Kopacz Nursery has donated the plants and labor to plant hanging baskets and hay racks for city hall since the city joined the AIB program. The large “mall” style planters around city hall were added as part of the city all renovation project that was completed in 2000. The first few years we had problems with vandalism to the plants when first planted before roots expanded. Often the vandals were young children who wanted to pick the pretty flowers and instead “picked” an entire plant. Tania Hoeft of Kopacz Nursery came up with the idea of finding large tree planters that would fit into the planters. These are planted at the green house each spring and kept in the greenhouse until May. Plants are established and well rooted to provide instant color. “Ready to Go” planters are popped out of 8” pots and inserted in other large planters. Since Echo has an arid climate and keeping planters and hanging baskets alive can be a challenge, until recently, planters and flowers in public areas were rare. After city hall renovation was completed in 2000, hanging baskets and planters were added and a shade garden was planted on the north side of town and in the courtyard between city hall and the George Park. These have been so beautiful that there were an inspiration for the committee developing the downtown plan. They wanted the entire business district to look like the area around city hall and the park. Hanging floral baskets were added to the vintage style street lights on the Thielsen Street because of the city hall planters.

While the Downtown Project was underway, the concrete planters and an array of plastic planters with plants and herbs in front of the H & P Café had to be moved. As a temporary solution they were moved between city hall and the museum. Galvanized water tubs cans were placed in front of an old wagon. This made such a beautiful display that it is now permanent and two of the small raised planters from the Community Garden were moved here to add a tomato or two, some herbs and a pepper. If someone wants to pick a vegetable and take it home, that is fine. This placement makes it easy for City Administrator Diane Berry and volunteer Sue Kays to hand-water the plants. Shade loving planters are displayed in the City Hall Courtyard around the pond.
Newsletter. Articles in the newsletter promote AIB and beautification including. This year we have included ideas from Pinterest to inspire residents not only to garden, but add fun and style to their gardens and floral displays.

George Park Garden. In the summer of 2007 a new garden was added in the George Park. The area under a pine tree had once been planted with Petunias, but over the two previous years the garden had not been planted. It was planted with a variety of shade loving perennials. More roses from the Heirlooms Rose Garden in St. Paul were added around the park. Now in 2013 this small garden is full of shade loving plants and is a beautiful site with the low angled afternoon sun highlighting the Hostas, bleeding hearts, evening primroses and other plants.

Diversity. 2006 judges comments mentioned need for more diversity in floral displays, especially seasonal ones and bulbs. As a result glads, dahlias, cannas and other summer bulbs and corms are being added in the parks, Chinese House, Thielson St. Planters and the Rain Garden. The tall Oriental Lilies planted at the China House have multiplied so fast, that last fall they were divided and now there are a dozen new plants thriving around the China House gardens. Cannas and Dahlias have been added to Mall Planters after seeing pictures of planters at Butchart Gardens. Dinner plate Dahlias and Cannas have also done very well in the large (7.5 by 2') Thielson Street Planters and have made a showy display the last two years. The new Main Street Planters and Museum/City Hall gardens have a variety of bulbs-spring and summer-as well as perennials and annuals. While the full impact of the bulbs will not be fully realized for a year or two we are building toward this showing.

Encouraging Floral Displays. In 2006 seed packets were mailed with water bills in April. In 2007-2008 they were handed out at school for students to take home and encourage their parents to help them establish gardens. Additionally classes will be given seed packets to grow plants for the school grounds and the elementary students planted seeds in the rain garden. In 2009 150 packets were distributed at the Arbor Day celebration. Seeds were also provided along with certificates during National Volunteer Week. In 2010 we purchased bulk packages of a perennial and annual garden mix and these were placed in snack size baggies with a sticker announcing they were being given free as an America in Bloom project. Some seeds were also donated by the Master Gardeners. Most were distributed at the Arbor Day celebration and the balance at city hall and garden club meeting. In 2012 Peggy Haines, city clerk was give several hundred seed packets by her son and about 200 were distributed at Arbor Day and were placed on the counter at city hall so people could pick them up when they paid their water bill. This year we called the program Bulbs for Beauty and purchased bulk bulbs, primarily glads. These were placed in baggies and along with over 100 of the seed packets (they were placed in the freezer to extend their lives) were distributed at Arbor Day and then placed in a bin at city hall. Over 100 packets with 4-5 bulbs were given away before the end of April. On May 15, councilwoman Jeanie Hampton, who despite her membership in the garden club, claims a black thumb, proudly showed me one of the glads she planted which has leaves about 7” high poking out of the ground along her fence.

Golf Course. For years the only floral displays at the golf course were a few planters around the club house and Sue's rose garden. Volunteer Colleen Williams began planting gardens in 2006 and has added so much color to the golf course over in the interim, its like a new place. Now there are gardens, to help disguise the old city reservoir, in several areas where grass did not grow and by #2 and #6 tees. The tee markers are a burst of color with zinnias, cosmos, spring bulbs and other annuals and perennials. Williams, an artist, has added interest with use of rocks, including "rock" animals she creates. Williams asked golfers to donate old golf shoes and clubs and these have been added to some of the gardens to add interest. In 2012 health problems late in the summer and fall limited Colleen's gardening, but this spring she is back at it and even gained a new helper.
expensive garden art such as metal silhouettes, flags, and kinetic sculptures were added to golf course gardens and the regular golfers have expressed their appreciation of them. In 2013, the golf course men’s club gave Colleen a budget for adding annuals. The city also provides several flats of annuals, bulbs and perennials. Last spring, one of the golfers went to Bi-Mart and purchased two hanging baskets for the front deck because she thought the flowers were so beautiful and wanted to help.

**Official Flower:** In 2011 the city asked Echo students and the community to vote for an Official City Flower. Posters with images of flowers growing around town such as the dahlia, rose, lily, petunia, canna, sunflower and begonias. The Dahlia was selected as the official City Flower. We have been adding dahlia’s to planters and displays in the interim.

**Landscaped Areas – Designed Tree, Shrub, Turf, and Perennial Plantings**

Public landscaped areas owned and maintained by the city include: Fort Henrietta Park (park, skatepark, and RV park), George Park, Echo Hills Golf Course, tennis courts & grounds, city hall, Chinese House, Downtown planters, City Hall Planters/Gardens, and the Oregon Trail Arboretum. The Sprague Street garden is maintained by the Methodist Church and the Museum Garden by the museum board with the city and volunteers providing spring help with bark, annuals and weed removal. Funding comes primarily from the city's parks and tree department budgets within the General Fund and from donations from residents and businesses from Echo and the Hermiston area. Most of the work is done by the city administrator, Public Works Director & his assistant. The Two Rivers Correctional Institute inmate work crew provides some assistance with the arboretum, special projects, laying bark, plugging and sanding golf greens and removing grass from around trees. From 2010 AIB Judges evaluation: The Chinese House Garden and The George Park and the Historical Museum Garden are the 3 major sites in this wonderful small city. It is remarkable that a small town with the population the size of Echo has 3 major gardens practically within view of one another. Judges have suggested the use of more native flowers and plants in the landscape, but since Echo is in the center of a rural area, residents are already surrounded by Native Plants. Additionally as an arid region, the number of native flowering and plants that have ornamental value are limited. Instead it seems to be the consensus of area residents that they want to see more exotic and colorful plants.

**Golf Course/Smith Drive:** One of the 2013 projects is ‘landscaping’ the triangle where Smith Drive and Golf Course Road meet. River rock and boulders will be placed (probably will not be completed by June) and an old farm wagon will be placed in this area near the golf course. Adding a piece of art for this area is on the agenda.

**Volunteers:** Colleen Williams/Golf Course, Sue Kays (downtown), Sharon Lilly, deadheading and weeding. The school’s Community Service Day provides help with bark, weeds, tidiness, etc.

**Downtown Planters:** The planting design for the downtown planters and public garden along the museum/city hall is a 2013 project. In addition “garden art” such as bicycles with sphagnum moss lined planters for two of the new circular planters and a kinetic tulip for a third have been added. Other public art projects will be added over time.

**Commercial:** Thanks to Lloyd and Lois Piercy, Echo’s downtown landscape improved dramatically in 2012. The Piercy’s developed a huge patio/courtyard on two sides of their small winery tasting room/farm office to provide more room for their functions each week. They installed a fence combining wood, antique wrought iron gates and windows so the area is open to view Main Street and flows into the George Park at the rear. Pavers were placed on the ground and open areas were left for rose
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buses, Japanese Maples and other plants. Tables with umbrellas, wine barrel or iron tables and chairs, outdoor lighting and even art make this a wonderful and comfortable place to sit in, listen to music or enjoy art displays. Across the street at the old “Mercantile” building, the Piercy’s landscaped the area in front of the apartment located in the building. What once was a open area filled with dirt, weeds and dog droppings, is now a paver patio with a raised bed and outdoor living space that the renter has taken ownership of and has added her own plantings, furniture and plantings making it a place of beauty along Main Street. The Piercy’s purchased a decorative antique bridge rail and installed it as a fence along the patio to add art to the project and continuity with other improvements on Main St. Two other businesses, Gathered over Time and Echo Bike and Board, located in the Mercantile Building added unique planters such as a bench/planter and bright chalk paint chair planter. Dottie Sheffield, owner of Gathered Over Time is planning to train a Trumpet vine to grow from a planter onto the overhang above her door. Phyllis Shovelski has hanging planters and decorative ceramic planters in front of her store front. The Echo Methodist Church tore out the old wooden steps and faced the front with decorative block. Because of the AIB project, they decided to add a planter along the front of the steps.

Residential: While problem areas always remain, four residences last year made major improvements. Stella Queen located one block south and across the street from city hall, installed concrete from her fence to the road (with city endorsement and at considerable expense) and placed planters on it to create a roadside “patio”. New homeowner Teresa Ramos is a descendent of Echo pioneers and her uncle still operates the Spike Century Farm outside of town to the west and cousins operate the Ramos farmstead to the south east. Ramos found small farm implements, wood and old carts on the farm to transform her yard from a weedy mess to a rustic and interesting garden within a few months. Ben & Jessie Campbell started a transformation of their yard on Main Street two years ago, and continued their efforts last year. They will be adding on to their home this year to show continued “ownership and investment in Echo”. Next door Stephanie and Shayne Myers, owners of Echo Bike and Board and organizers of the Echo Red2Red Mountain Bike Race, transformed a neglected yard into a manicured space with a few small planting areas. Further down Main Street one of the renters at Fife’s Apartments has created a lovely small garden outside her door step, while her neighbor in the RV Park has collected a variety of planters and horse-related figurines in front of her RV. The containers overflow with wave petunias and other plants.

Sprague Street. An outgrowth of the AIB program is the Sprague Street Garden started in 2008. This small triangle of undeveloped street right-of-way abuts the Echo Methodist Church on one side and a mini-storage facility on the other. The church approached the city about making a mini park out of this area. The project includes a garden, grass, a fire pit and large boulders to keep cars from parking on the lawn and to use for seating. The city provided plants, boulders and backhoe for the project and added concrete curbing to edge the garden. Echo High school students have been weeding and planting annuals the last three years.

Museum Garden. Another 2008 project was renovation of the Echo Museum Garden. This Main Street Garden was established by the Echo Garden Club about 25 years ago and in the interim grass crowded the border gardens and violets had taken over gardens and lawns. Many of the plants have died out and others taken over. The prison crew cleaned out beds and the city crew planted nearly 100 bulbs, perennials & shrubs. Annuals provided by Kopacz Nursery were used in beds and new planters. A wishing well planter, a small patio and benches, large basketweave concrete planters and concrete curbing were also added. Trees were added including a Redbud and Japanese Maple., Rhododendrons and Azaleas, Hostas & Columbine, Bleeding Hearts and Hydrangeas have been planted. During 2013 the museum garden will be the focus of more improvements as part of the downtown project. The cyclone fence at the front is scheduled for removal and wrought art fencing and an arbor will be added to make this more of a public friendly pocket park. Public art will
eventually be added. Work on this aspect of the project was delayed until we were able to see how much funding remained.

Fort Henrietta Park/Picnic Shelter: Several grants have provided funding for park improvements at the Fort Henrietta Park, including a restroom, picnic shelter and playground equipment. The area around the picnic shelter will have some minor landscaping around it & will have rock added around posts and chainsaw art cat tails added to the two front posts. A chainsaw Heron was added last year to the Fort Henrietta Park river access sign. The grasses, groundcovers and vines added to the slopes on the south and west side of the skatepark bowl in 2011 are filling in and thriving.

RV Park Camp Host Gloria Rodriguez loves to garden. Gloria has used a variety of old metal bed headboards in the garden at the Fort Henrietta Park entry to create color and interest. In 2009 perennials were added to the park and more will be used to infill gardens this spring to bring more color to the park. In 2010 the skatepark was landscaped by placing vines along the fence on the west side to screen the private residence this nest to the park. Juniper and lilac bushes were also used. The west hillside was planted with ground covers, day lilies and grasses. Chipped rock and gravel were used as mulch. Boulders are part of the landscape and have the function of keeping vehicles from driving too close. This spring High School students replaced dead vines and plants on their cleanup day. Unfortunately Gloria informed me in May that many of the Asiatic (some new cultivars) that she was so proud of in the entry garden were pulled up by the high school class weeding the garden.

Rock Gardens. The Union Pacific Railroad cuts Echo nearly in half and the railroad owns about 10 acres of right of way in the center of town. This large vacant, weed and grass covered area is not the most attractive area of town. This area was originally covered with warehouses, corrals for sheep and cattle and a wool scouring plant. In 2006 one of the AIB projects was to landscape the Intersection of Thielsen and Main Street. This intersection is along the railroad right of way and state hwy. 320. The project was aimed at making this area more attractive. Large Boulders and small cobbles were placed over landscape cloth. Perennial were planted in the rock garden for color and drip irrigation installed to the plants. The comments from the public were extremely enthusiastic and "when are you going to do more" was a common comment. So we have added more. The county provided $1000 from their economic development fund for this beautification project. The city's entry/welcome sign was moved into the area. The county funds were used to help purchase and paint a historic wagon for Main Street. The Base of Golf Course Road was also covered with rock. This garden was expanded in 2011 and the ones at Main & Thielsen will be enlarged this year also. Six whiskey barrel planters were added in the rock gardens and rain garden.

North Entry. A parcel of land donated to the city by Umatilla County near the north entry to town was landscaped with boulders and cobbles in 2010 and a collection of antique farm equipment was displayed among the rocks. In 2011 the city received a grant from the County Cultural Coalition to paint the equipment with authentic colors and to add a sign that tells about the farm equipment. Because there is no water at this site, no plants will be used.

Thielsen St. Bike/Pedestrian Path project. A grant from the Oregon Dept. of Transportation (ODOT) provided sidewalks and bike paths along the county road (city's Thielsen & Gerone Streets) through town in 2007. Stormwater was directed to a retention basin & the city established a “Rain Garden” in the bottom of the basin. The retention basin site was an unkempt weedy vacant lot before. Three rest stations include 7 ft long planters, a bench, a vintage style street light & hanging floral basket. Not only has this project made these streets that connect to the school safer, but more attractive. We have continued to add plants and bulbs. Since the lot abuts the railroad right-of-way, Moonglow juniper and other shrubs were planted along the lot boundary to screen this area. The
trees have grown at an amazing rate. The city applied for another Transportation Enhancement Grant in 2013 to extend this project north and a site visit is scheduled in May.

The planters have Lilies, Cannas, Dahlias, spring bulbs, Petunias and various perennials. The perennials and bulbs in the Rain Garden in the bottom of a proposed storm water retention basin provide a splash of color. Concrete curbing was added along the west side of the tree row to make this area more manicured and easier to maintain, and discourage vehicles from driving into the trees. Farmer Lloyd Piercy bought an entire pallet of daffodil bulbs from Lowe’s for $85 to plant around his winery. He had so many bulbs he donated several sacks to the city, which were planted in the bark between the curbing and sidewalk. Piercy also planted several hundred bulbs in the Fort Henrietta Park, which is behind his office building.

An interesting fact about the planters: The general contractor on this project contacted the city because the mason who bid on the planters had backed out and the only subcontractor they could find to do the job wanted $5000 to make the three planters. The general asked for suggestions and the city suggested contacting a local concrete vault company as the 7 by 2 ft planters sounded like a vault. The vault company had a better idea—call your local mortuary, these sound like coffin vaults, he said. So for less than $200 each the contractor bought three coffin vaults that were 7.5 by 3 ft. He found another contractor to face with planters with stone. They look fantastic and the project engineers said they will use this idea on other projects. We may use them for the Main Street Project.

Concrete Curbing. The City began installing concrete curbs around trees and gardens in the city park in the fall of 2005. Curbs were installed around golf course tee markers and gardens in 2006 and more in the parks at the same time. In 2008 curbing was added at the Sprague Street Garden and in the Museum Garden.

George Park. When former city public works director Arnie Neely arrived in Echo in 1983, the George Park, which is located behind city hall was a disgrace. He created a manicured park with gardens. The gardens have been renovated several times in the interim, but the park still remains a beautiful serene place where residents can listen to the waterfall and water feature, smell the roses and general feel good after a walk through it. A few scraggly trees, patching grass and a half demolished outdoor fire place were the extent of park plantings and improvements when Neely took over. Today the park is full of trees, has restrooms, a unique gazebo, a rose garden, raised gardens, concrete curbing around trees and gardens, a waterfall and pond within an iron-enclosed courtyard. This park is the site of many community gatherings, such as the National Night Out and a matter of local pride. [When Lloyd and Lois Piercy created a courtyard around their winery tasting rooms in 2012, they made sure to add glass panels, gates and open wrought iron fencing, so the guests sipping wine or listening to music in the courtyard could enjoy the sight of the George Park trees and gardens and listen to the water feature.]

The rose garden was started when Jackson Perkins Roses would send surplus roses for park and school gardens. A water feature using boulders and river rock was added in 2009. This project was the result of funds donated in memory of several long-time residents and Dr. John Woodward, the archaeologist who excavated the Fort Henrietta Site and started the Fort Henrietta Project. A Red Horse chestnut Echo’s “official” city tree was planted and dedicated in April 2009 for Arbor Day. A bronze plaque has been placed at the base of the tree on a boulder.

A courtyard fenced with wrought-iron style fencing joins the library and park. This courtyard garden features a pond, water fall and garden along with seating areas that can be accessed from the library door. The pond features a variety of Koi and gold fish. Garden art, such as western planters & décor items, flags and statuary have been added.

China House RR Museum. Besides planting trees when the China House Museum was moved across from city hall, a miniature rose garden was established. More color in the form of perennials, bulbs and petunias have been added in the last few years.
**Low maintenance.** Because of the small staff and budget, we try to plant low maintenance trees, shrubs and flowers. We also mulch, mostly with bark to conserve water and help control weeds.

**City Hall Gardens:** As well as large mall planters, the area around city hall, between the museum and city hall and in front of the park restrooms has been landscaped with a variety of plants. A moon shaped garden on the edge of the sidewalk on the street corner has a flag pole and a variety of sun-loving shrubs, bulbs and perennials. The area north of the building and on the north side of the adjoining historic hose cart house have more delicate plants such as azaleas, rhodies, hydrangea, magnolia and shade-loving plants like bleeding heart and pulmeria. Between the buildings is an old weathered wagon base. Rustic planters area displayed around the wagon and more decorative ones screen the propane tank and back of the museum and winery.

**Beautification Contest.** The City has continued the Beautification contest started in 2006 in 2012 even though we didn’t compete in AIB or CIB. Prizes are awarded to the “Top Ten” in Echo in Bloom(Floral Displays) and Curb Appeal. We also recognized 17 people on an honorable mention list and 3 residences for most improved. Awards included gift certificates, plants, garden books and garden art objects. Plaques recognize winners are on display at city hall.

**Sue Sperr Garden.** The city beautification efforts inspired the creation of a memorial for former City Administrator and golf course supporter Sue Sperr. Sperr, who died in December 2006 after a long battle with Cancer.

**Curbing.** The City began installing concrete curbs around trees and gardens in the George park in 2005 and has added them at the golf course, museum park, Fort Henrietta Park, Sprague Street park and on Thielsen Street since. These provide a neat appearance and reduce the need to weedeat around trees.

**Urban Forestry**

**Tree City USA.** Echo has been a Tree City USA since 1989 and has been the recipient of 15 Tree Growth awards and several Oregon Forestry awards. Echo is the smallest Tree City in Oregon and the second one in Eastern Oregon to be named a Tree City. There are still only three Tree Cities in Eastern Oregon as of this year and 54 in the state. As part of the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial, the City of Echo issued a challenge to other cities in Oregon to become Tree Cities and to join America in Bloom. The State Forestry Department, League of Oregon Cities and local media carried this challenge and Paul Ries, Urban Forestry Department Manager promoted it as 50 Tree Cities for Oregon’s 150. Ries gave Echo credit for this succeeding as in 2009 Oregon finally broke the 50 mark and beyond with 52 trees being recognized as Tree Cities in 2009 for 2008 and for 2009 & 2010 54 cities were named Tree Cities.

**Official City Tree.** Since 2008 was Echo’s 20th year as a Tree City USA, the town wanted to do something different from the usual programs to honor this event, especially as the award was celebrated in 2009, the state’s 150th birthday. The idea of naming an official Echo Tree was suggested, and the city council asked the City Administrator to narrow the original list of over 20 trees to about 10 trees. Residents were told about the tree selection in newsletters and posters around town. Residents could vote for: Maple, Oak, Fl. Cherry, Red Horse Chestnut, Beech, Honeylocust, Redbud, Fl. Crabapple, Linden or Sweetgum. The Red Horse Chestnut was selected. When an established Tulip Tree had to be removed in the year anniversary, the state’s 150th, 150 years of Echo area settlement, and memorialize former Mayor and City Council member Jeannette Bell who died of cancer in November. The Umatilla Masonic Lodge #40 donated $700 toward the purchase of the bronze plaque and the tree. On April 16, 2009 the tree was planted and dedicated. In honor of our 25th anniversary, we are asking residents to submit names for the city’s Red
Horsechestnut in the Fort Henrietta Park. The oldest Tree is Mesthuslah and largest is General Sherman, so why not name our Echo Tree.

**Arbor Day/Tree Fair.** The annual Arbor Day Celebration is shared with Echo Elementary Students who earn prizes for correctly answering tree trivia questions, which are provided to students ahead of time for practice. Cookies n punch are served and door prizes provided.

**Tree Selection Guide.** The City has tree selection guide which is upgraded every 2 years. Residents can view a copy at city hall or in the library.

**Oregon Trail Arboretum.** Echo has a small arboretum with over 100 trees and shrubs on about 3/4 of an acre. Grants provided funds to build the arboretum, signage and interpretive panels. Memorial donations are recognized on plaques. Drip irrigation is used to conserve water. A grant from the Echo Community Benefit Plan has funded a new sign, kiosk, tree labels and artwork for the gazebo that are ordered and expected to be installed in late summer or early fall.

**April Celebration.** To recognize Arbor Day, the city has collected a set of tree posters from the Schmidt Nursery and Arbor Day Poster Contest posters from National Arbor Day Foundation and publications on care and selection of trees. These are displayed in the city hall/library hall ways during April. The Tree posters are normally hanging on the south staircase of city hall. City Administrator Diane Berry has also put together a list of her favorite trees. Copies of this are available free of charge. For the second year, the city provided each class K-6th grade with a tree related book for their class room library.

**Library Tree Resources.** Books on gardening and trees are pulled from library shelves and placed on a cart for easier patron access. The city administrator maintains a collection of tree selection books and CDs and helps residents select trees appropriate for their location and a set of tree posters from JR Schmidt & Sons.

**Maintenance.** Community Service and prison crews help maintain the trees on the golf course and at the arboretum each year. The Work Crew from the Two Rivers Correction Institute 15 miles north of Echo spends at least 2 days each year trimming trees, placing bark, planting trees and weeding the arboretum.

**Tree Ordinance.** The city updated its Tree Ordinance last year.

**Tree History/Native Trees.** Interpretive panels within the arboretum provide information about the city's urban forestry program, native trees and history of trees in Echo. Because of the dry climate and lack of irrigation at the turn of the century there were few trees that would survive in Echo. Ladies from the Echo Needlecraft Club researched trees and were told that the Black Locust would survive. The ladies sold tags to raise money to purchase the Locust. Volunteers planted the trees around town and in the George Park. Business owners watered the trees by buckets until they were established. In the last 20 years, many of these trees have either died or become dangerous due to an infestation of the Black Locust Borer. Many others have been topped.

**Newsletters.** The City provides articles in the city newsletter on a regular basis with tree related educational materials and promoting the city Urban Forestry program.

**Tree Inventory.** City staff with assistance from Oregon Department of Forestry Community Foresters completed an inventory of trees along street right-of-ways and in parks and other public spaces. It does not include the golf course or arboretum. A separate inventory is maintained of the arboretum. As a result of the inventory, limiting planting of maples, particularly Silver Maple are encouraged to maintain urban forestry diversity.
**Heritage Tree Program.** The City resurrected a Heritage Tree program from 1997 in 2010. The original program only had one tree, a Linden on Main Street, associated with early newspaper publisher and city recorder WH Crary and his wife Nan. The 2010 resolution adopted by the council in April provides an application form and added two cedars at the historic Spinning House, an Elm and Lilac at the JH Koontz House, Cemetery Arborvitae, Arboretum Elm grove, Luciani property tree collection. **Preserving the Tree History.** Echo's tree heritage has been preserved and is included in publications and on an interpretive panel at the arboretum. As Echo has an arid climate, the only trees in the area were natives such as Cottonwood, Alder, Serviceberry and Willow along rivers and streams.

**Parks.** The city has created urban forests in the George and Fort Henrietta Park. An Oregon Arts Council report on public art for Echo, equated the variety of trees in the park as a form of. When you consider that less than 20 years ago this park was filled with Black Locust trees that had been topped decades before, and a lone Pine, you can appreciate how far the park has come, to the forest it is today. The pine remains, but now Bur, Northern Red & English Oak, Sweet Gum, Persian Parrotia, a couple of Magnolias, Flowering Pear & Plum, a Tri-Color Beech, Fl. Crabs, Crimson Sentry Maple, Kousa Dogwood, Forest Pansy Redbud, Red Horse Chestnut, a birch and 2 Bloodgood Sycamores fill the park. While the Fort Henrietta Park did not exist until the mid 1980s, now there is a mixture of large and small trees. Sycamore, Flowering Crab and Plum, Princeton Golf Maple, Littleleaf Linden, Briotti Horse chestnut, Beech, Flowering Pear and Blue Spruce are among the trees in this park.

**Golf Course Trees:** In 1960 a irrigation system was installed at the golf course and Russian Olive, Black Locust and a few Spruce & Pine Trees were planted. These were selected because of the hardiness & drought tolerance. By the mid 1980s the Russian Oliver had began to die off so the city started a tree planting program at the golf course which continues today. Every year at least 15 1” to 1.25” trees are planted on the course so that now it has a diverse forest. Because of the wind exposure we have found that Linden, Honeylocust, Austrian Pine, Norway Maple and Sycamore do the best.

**Environmental Effort – Sustainable Development and Awareness**

**Composting.** The council is working to develop a program to provide composters at a reduced fee for residents. The project was mentioned in a newsletter this spring and a list of interested residents was compiled. One back yard composter was purchased and provided as a trial to one homeowner, but is too flimsy, so research on an inexpensive but durable composter continues. The project is expected to help reduce the amount of household waste deposited in the sewer as well as garbage.

**Mulch.** Bark Mulch is used within concrete curbs in parks, museum garden, Sprague Street Garden, the **Bonanza Street Garden** and at the golf course to reduce weed eating and maintenance of tall grass in these areas. Bark mulch is also used at the arboretum and river rock at the north entry site. Gravel and river rock have been used at the skatepark as mulch. Wood chips provided by the power company contractor is used along Thielsen St.

**Puncture Vine Bounty.** This year the city will be following the lead of Boardman, Oregon and offering a bounty $2 for each sack of puncture vines bagged and turned in at city hall.

**Mowing patterns.** Only the center part of golf course fairways are mowed every week. The outer edges are mowed every other week. The roughs are left natural, primarily native bunch grass, and are only mown once or twice per season. They are not irrigated, except for drift from the fairways. This saves on gas, water and labor.

**Irrigation.** Automatic sprinklers are used on some city facilities, but wherever practical, drip irrigation is installed, such as on tree rows, the arboretum, most of the skatepark landscaping, etc. . The golf
course original sprinkler system was installed in 1960 and a new more efficient one using satellite controllers and a computer system was installed about 12 years ago. Drip irrigation is also used on Main Street, City Hall hanging baskets to conserve water and control weeds. Development of ultra efficient drip irrigation is allowing growth of high value crops with less water. Echo West Vineyard uses drip irrigation on their vines.

**Groundcover:** Several trays of Lamium and Sweet Woodruff were donated to the city by Kopacz Nursery during the winter of 2007 to plant around trees. Lamium is a groundcover that works very well in our area. As of 2013, most of the tree circles are filled with ground cover and the lamium is being transplanted and given away. We will planted a variety of ground covers around the Skatepark such as ajuga, daylily and kinnikinnick. This helps limit the need for water and bark mulch.

**Stanfield Compost Center.** The city encourages residents to cleanup yard debris piles along ROWs by putting reminders in the newsletter, that they can haul the debris to the City of Stanfield's compost yard, which is 3 miles away.

**Newsletter emails.** To conserve energy and paper, we have asked residents to sign up to receive the city newsletter via email. While most still want a hard copy the email list has expanded. The newsletters are also posted on the city’s website each month.

**Recycling Bins.** The city has recycling bins for glass, tin, aluminum, newspaper and cardboard, which the local garbage company empties. These are available for use by residents 24 hours a day and are located behind the post office for easy access. The “Welcome” letter we provide new residents tells about these bins.

**Kill-a-watt Program:** The Echo Library worked with the State Energy Trust to offer Kill-a-Watt Energy Use Monitors. The monitors can be checked out at the library, plugged in to measure the energy use of most plug in devices and appliances.

**Newsletter.** The city's monthly newsletters are used to provide residents with information about the garbage company cleanup week, April 1-7th each year. During this week residents can haul up to 454 lbs per load to the transfer station in Hermiston free of charge. They can also obtain slips at city hall allowing them to haul limbs and yard debris to the transfer station, free of charge year round. The clippings are used in the landfill to help with environmental control of this site which is no longer accepting trash.

**Water Leaders.** Echo is located in an area the state designates as a Critical Groundwater Area. As a result the state will no longer issue new water rights and has curtailed or severely cut back the amount of water junior water right holders can pump. Because our region only has an annual precipitation rate of 6-10 inches per year, this is a major problem. Our region, including the city, depends on deep basalt wells for drinking and irrigation water. Declining water tables force cities & farmers to keep drilling deeper in a chase for water. Use of Umatilla River water and Columbia River Water has been limited to maintain water for Salmon runs. Echo farmers have been leaders in development of water conservation and development of new irrigation technology. Center Pivot irrigation systems have gone from sprinklers on top of the center pivot arms to low profile heads that hang on the bottom of the pipes near the crops, reducing drift & water waste They have also been involved in the use of computers, satellites and other technology to more efficiently irrigate and get the right amount of water to the right place.

The region was the center of major private and federal irrigation projects developed near the turn of the century that built miles and miles of canals that provided water to turn our desert into a region where anything can grow due to our long growing season. Most of the ditches used flood irrigation to water crops, which was considered wasteful. However it did recharge the alluvial aquifer. As more efficient irrigation practices have been implemented, the negative impact has been
that the shallow wells have dried up as flood water no longer recharges them. Echo area farmers were quick to try to use the natural recharge to develop “reservoirs underground that could be charged in the winter and then the water would be pumped out in the summer.

In 2007 area farmers submitted legislation to try to develop a project to take Columbia River water and pump it into Echo and the surrounding areas. The governor was so impressed with the proposal he lent his support to the project. The state funded a feasibility study and the project has progressed to the point the state is helping fund the implementation and working with farmers to allow the season Columbia and Umatilla River water withdrawals.

**Windpower.** Wind towers were installed about 8 miles west of Echo a few years ago and have been a major boost to the town, not just through energy production, but through the development of the Echo Community Benefit Plan which is an investment project allowed by the state to stabilize annual taxation related to depreciation of the industrial assets in exchange for contributions to a grant program. Echo resident & businesswomen Tammy Williams went to bat to get the program started for Echo, working with the county commissioners and tax districts when the project was about fall apart. The project has put over $100,000 into projects for the city, school and even funded adding an elevator to the Echo Church.

**Jeanie Hampton/Echo School** Echo Council Woman and retired 5th grade teacher, Jeanie Hampton has been an advocate for recycling for years if not decades. Her 5th grade recycling program was award winning, and now although she has retired, the 5th grade class continues the program and collects office paper, newspaper, glass and cardboard from around the school, city hall, The city donated a composting bin to the school in 2010 to help with a proposed worm project. The project will take waste food from the school cafeteria and use it to help create compost in the arboretum. They are also researching what they can do with waste milk to recycle it, as it cannot be used directly in the compost because of odor and insect problems.

**Magazines:** The Echo Library maintains a number of subscriptions for magazines & has others donated each month. As new magazines arrive the older copies are pulled and given to the 5th graders who pickup recycling at city hall. The magazines are used by students for craft projects and other activities and then recycled.

**Bird Sanctuary.** The city limits has been designated a Bird Sanctuary by ordinance and signs announcing the bird sanctuary status are posted at town entries.

**Green Belt.** When the city comprehensive plan was adopted a green belt was zoned on the hillsides between the golf course & the main part of town on the valley floor. Two ditches provide a border for this area as well as seepage to feed a small pond and groves of willow and cottonwood trees which provide wildlife habitat for a small herd of deer, raccoons, squirrels, and numerous species of

**Thielsen Street Project.** The Thielsen/Gerone Street Sidewalk/Bicycle project included a retention basin to collect run off from streets. The city modified the project so that it is not only a functional system for filtering run off, but is a beautification project by removing sod from the bottom and creating a "Rain Garden" with plants and shrubs. Further, this reduces the amount of the basin that has to be mowed. Recycled plastic benches were used for this project. **Curb cuts** on Thielsen Street allow stormwater to run across the sidewalk to the tree row.

**Recycling:** City Hall and the Public Library recycle cardboard and newspaper. Office paper is saved and the unused side used to print council packets and other reports and correspondence copies. Shopping bags are also recycled and used in a variety of ways such as collecting cat litter from the city cat, City Kitty, giving them out to carry library books home and for packing material.
Skatepark: Storm Water from the skatepark bowl is pumped out of a weir and through rock on a “dry creek” to prevent underground emissions of storm water that could contaminate ground water.

Portland Wastewater. Madison Farms has been helping the City of Portland recycle for nearly a decade, while improving the quality of farm soil by taking sludge from Portland wastewater systems and applying it on fields. The project, which is supervised by the state Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), improves the soil on the dry desert lands on Madison Farms western edge by adding organic materials to the sandy soil.

City Wastewater. The city has been working on the wastewater project from hell since 2006. The city's wastewater system is over 35 years old and as a result a few problems have begun to show up. However the major problem facing the city is a change in environmental regulations. Problems finding land have resulted in a change from the original goal of creating a wetland to polishing ponds. The city just sent a letter of just compensation to a landowner north of town. This is an environmentally friendly, passive project that will eliminate discharge of water into the Umatilla River and provide ponds that will be attractive to water fowl.

Light Bulbs. Light fixtures in City hall, the/library and other city-owned buildings that normally would use incandescent light bulbs (except ones on dimmer switches) now have spiral fluorescent bulbs which save not only on electricity but also last much longer than incandescent bulbs saving money on bulb purchases and labor to replace bulbs. In 2010 we discovered that fluorescent bulbs are also available for bathroom lighting strips that used to take the 25-40 watt large format bulbs, so these are being converted to fluorescent bulbs as well.

Xeriscape. In areas such as the skatepark and Thielsen Street Landscaping plants are limited and use of Rocks and boulders abounds. In many of the new “gardens’ no plants are used, but pieces of farm equipment, river rock and boulders make the areas attractive at the north end of town, base of golf course road and Main & Thielsen St. intersection. New plants on the west side of the skatepark including included many low water plants such as grasses and daylilies. A grant from the Echo Benefit Plan in March 2011 provided funding to purchase rock to help expand the xeriscaped gardens at the main city intersections and Golf Course Rd.

Trail system. The city's public facility plan, park master plan, economic development project list and transportation plan all provide for development of a trail system from the arboretum to the golf course and through the city’s open space area. Grant funds will be sought to fund the pathways. The downtown plan the community adopted addresses these trails and trail heads are shown on the map. A survey for this project noted a need to improve access & mark the access point to the Umatilla River from the Fort Henrietta Park, so this has been identified in the plan as a project and funding for it is included in a Park Grant application. When we didn’t receive the grant we did purchase a sign to mark the river access.

Subdivision Code. The city's subdivision ordinance/code requires a minimum of 2 acres per 100 lots be set aside for parks or public use before approval of any new subdivision. Developers may either develop the public area, or provide funds to go into a community park development fund for later development. Planting Strips. The city's public facility and transportation plan provide for planting strips between roads and pedestrian/bike paths to collect road run off and "clean" the storm water before it reaches the ground table for all new development. The city does not have a storm water system, and this design also encourages planting of street trees in keeping with the city's Tree City USA status.
Water Consumer Confidence Report. Oregon Public Water Systems are required to produce a Consumer Confidence Report each year about the water system and water quality, any problems such as failed coliform tests and chemical detections. The report has to be mailed to customers before July. The report has been placed on the city’s website. In 2013 the city’s water system and Public Works Dir. Darin Tuil achieved “Outstanding Performer” Status from the state Drinking Water Program.

Piercy Family: Piercy Family are the ultimate recycling and repurposing proponents. Their renovation of five of the historic buildings on Main Street includes keeping the historic, but worn floor boards, using imported historic gates and fencing and even buying yard sale chandeliers, repainting them and turning them into attractive “new” fixtures.

Heritage – Preserving Your Past for Future Generations

Although Echo is very small, we consider heritage conservation/history as one of our areas of greatest success. We are known throughout the area for our historic buildings and sites. The city has taken an active role for the last 20 years in these endeavors and has been recognized by the League of Oregon Cities, National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Office for these efforts.

Oregon Heritage Excellence Award: In 2009 the City of Echo was awarded the State of Oregon Heritage Excellence Award at the Northwest Heritage Extravaganza in Portland “for its long-term efforts to preserve and develop the heritage and history of the area.” This award would not typically be awarded to a town as small as Echo.

All-Star Communities: The State of Oregon started a program called Oregon Heritage All-Star Community “to help communities make the most of their historic resources. By doing so, communities safeguard important elements of the past, advance both “quality of life” and economic objectives and enhance their unique character.” Communities must meet 15 of 20 criteria. Echo has a firm 12 and is working with the state on the other 3.

Farm Equipment: A 2011 grant from the Umatilla County Cultural Coalition is funding signage for the Vintage Farm Equipment Display on the north end of town & painting the equipment. The display was started in 2010. Hours of research by volunteers garnered the information on the use of, manufacturer, and period of use for much of the equipment.

Heritage Trail: The City and Fort Henrietta Foundation received a grant from the a County Cultural Coalition to develop a “Heritage Trail” made up of interpretive panels depicting little vignettes on Historical Buildings, people or events in Echo. Seventeen of the panels were placed around town in 2010 and the city’s Oregon Trail Site brochure was revamped to include the panels. The concept for the trail was suggested in a report for the city on Echo Art development provided by the Oregon Arts Commission. The ABC program provides a team of designers, historians, artists, etc. who visit a community and provide a technical assistance document to assist the city or agency. Echo has had four ABC TA projects and has implemented project based on three of these. The Echo logo & Cultural Inventory and Overpass Arts Projects as well as the Heritage Trail started out on ABC reports.

City volunteerism. City staff offers services as step on tour guides, provides walking tours and educational programs for school children on local history and the Oregon Trail. In June 2011 the Umatilla County Historical Society will bring three bus loads of history buffs to town to tour the historic sites and visit the Winery.

Vintage Clothing. The city has a Vintage Clothing collection that includes over 500 pieces, plus accessories dating from the 1850s to 1960s. Displays of the vintage clothing are scattered around city hall and the library.
Community Pride/Sense of Place: The Sense of identity with Echo goes well beyond those who live here today. The Echo Cemetery is one example, while Echo is 1/3 the size of the neighboring town of Stanfield, our cemetery is a beautiful spot on the hill overlooking town with far more graves. Because of this beautiful serene setting, many people choose to come back to be buried here after living elsewhere for decades. Dr. John Woodward, the archaeologist who excavated the Fort Henrietta/Utilla Indian Site & compiled the Echo History books, never lived here, but he loved Echo and the cemetery and left instructions with his family that he wanted to be buried here when he was diagnosed with Cancer. Memorial projects also abound from small donations of $25 to 75 for plaques in the arboretum to the bookshelves, a gazebo for the arboretum, playground equipment at the school, flag poles at the cemetery and the Sue Sperr Memorial at the golf course. Over the last five years several memorials have been established at the golf course as well.

Echo Historical Museum. The Echo Historical Museum is operated by a board of 13 who volunteer their time to operate and open the museum weekend afternoons and for special tours during the week. The museum board has acquired new cases and is reorganizing the museum to add new donated items and to show case some of the objects such as the historic guns. Historic photos were professionally scanned this winter and placed on a flash drive and a large format digital frame was added so visitors or researchers can view the photos and originals can be stored in archival boxes. This project is being done in conjunction with the city’s attempt to collect other historic photos.

Historic Photo Archive. The City and Library asked residents provide copies of historic photos of the Echo area. These along with ones already at the library and in the museum were scanned and have been added to the city’s website www.echo-oregon.com. The website will act as an archive for the photos.

Echo Mayors: Late Echo Historian Bennie Tolar compiled lists of former Echo mayors, post masters, etc. that was last updated about 15 years ago. This year we updated the Mayor’s list and added it to our website. We will soon update and then add to the web site the post master, marshal & city recorder/administrator list. Century Farms: Information on Echo’s Century farms has been added to the website

150 Birthday: Echo undertook a number of projects to celebrate the state’s 150th birthday which also coincided with 150 years of settlement of the Echo Meadows. As part of the celebration the Pendleton Woolen Mills which was celebrating its 100th birthday made up special wool blankets that were sold to make money for the celebration. Some of these were sold for about $100, but 150 special blankets were made up and sold for $10,000 to corporate sponsors. The state was not able to sell all of these blankets, so at the end of the celebration, we were notified that as one of the partners in the celebration we had been selected to receive one of the 150 blankets. We have placed this high on the wall in the library along with information on the blanket.

Historic Preservation: Historic Preservation is part of daily life in Echo. Over half of the buildings in Echo’s downtown were built in 1920 or before. These buildings are used on a daily basis for business or cultural activities, most of the time we don’t even think about the fact that we are living or working in buildings that are over 100 years old. The inventory of buildings and their function starts at the east end of west Main on the south side of the road moves west and then crosses the street and goes from west to east on the north side of the road: 1. Edwards building (c. 1860) houses 5 apartments, National Register; The 1920 bank building, now Echo Historical Museum, National Register; Old Teel School Building (c. 1870); Post Office Building (1910); Koontz Building, 1904, National Register; Echo Hotel, 1883, National Register; Echo Meat Market, 1920; Mercantile (now Beauty Salon, offices and apartment. Renovation completed 2011, 1910; H & P Café, 1904;

The Teel Building has been a store, temporary city hall, video store and recently was renovated and is the office for Echo West Vineyard/Sno Road Winery. The winery tasting rooms were

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opened in March 2010. The Piercy family who own the winery & vineyard are running the winery and tasting room from this building while **they renovate the Koontz Building to house the winery & an event center**. The Piercy’s own six of the historic buildings on Main Street. While built after 1920 (c. 1935), the C & D Auto building is in an historic service station building, which has been upgraded and decorated with old service station signs in recent years. The Post Office Building originally housed a tinsmith, farm implement and hardware store. The Koontz Building was a General Store, restaurant, bowling alley and factory. The Echo Hotel was built in 1883 by JH Koontz and housed a tavern/saloon on the ground floor, hotel rooms on the second floor and a furniture/undertaker on the 3rd. It has been a restaurant and lounge for decades, but is currently used for storage and a shop for the Koontz Building Renovation. The Echo Meat Market, was a grocery store for several decades and then was converted to a restaurant about 6 years ago. It is now a pub. The H & P Café was originally the Ripper General Store and then a tire store, but has been a Café since at least the 1950s. **Living quarters are on the basement level. The owners repainted the front and installed a new overhang in 2011.**

**City Hall Community Center/Library Special Collections:** In 2000 the city rededicated its city hall after a $540,000 renovation of the 1916 Beaux-arts style building. Private and government grants, donations and the sale of engraved bricks funded this project. It houses the public library, city offices and an auditorium-ball room. Effort was made to make a comfortable and usable facility that has an historic look and ambience, yet is functional.

The ground floor had originally included the library (about 500 s.f.), a Boy Scout room, jail and ½ was the movie theater. In the 1950s the theater façade was removed and the room was gutted to make a fire hall, then city shop. Working with the State Historic Preservation Office, the renovation included restoration of the south side of the building to look similar to the original theater entry. The new/old façade has the same spatial arrangement as the theater entry, but doesn’t confuse people into thinking there is a movie theater inside. Now it is a reading alcove. A photo showing the original look is on page 27 and a photo of the current façade is on page 31. The project also increased the size of the library from about 800 sq. ft. to nearly 3000 sq. ft.

A large collection of historic items, many donated by residents are used and displayed within city hall. Among these are the artifacts excavated from the Fort Henrietta/Utilla Indian Agency Site, Native American Artifacts, and a Vintage Clothing Collection that numbers over 500 pieces, historic photographs, historic books and documents. During the renovation a new mezzanine level room was added to the building off the north stairs. This room was outfitted to house the Vintage Clothing collection. Cases and mannequins in hall-ways and the auditorium foyer display vintage clothing and accessories. Every other year a Vintage Clothing Show and Tea is held in the auditorium.

The auditorium/ball room can be rented for weddings, receptions and similar events and Echo civic and non-profit organizations are allowed to use it free of charge.

Echo was named for the 3 year-old-daughter of the town’s founder JH Koontz. A lady from East Wenatchee, WA found a box of photos in her attic a few years ago of Echo and her family and donated these to the library. Copies of the photos are on display in the hallway. One of these photos was used to create the Echo Logo. Also on display are copies of drawings by Daniel Webster Bowman, a turn-of-the-century pointillist who drew many of Echo’s now historic buildings.

Since city hall backs up to the park, landscaping was part of the project as well as hardscaping. Replica street lights similar to the ones that are shown in a 1927 photo of the building were included in the project, large planters, a courtyard/pond and a new door was cut into the buildings west wall to provide a view of the park and pond and a place where patrons can sit and enjoy nature while reading a book or drinking coffee.

**The 20th Anniversary of the renovation was May 2010.** To celebrate that event, as well as last year's AIB and Oregon Heritage Excellence Award, the city held an open house & community reunion with a potluck, ball & music. Every five years for decades the Echo Reunion Committee holds an all school reunion. As a result, they maintain an address list of former Echo graduates. This list was
used to send information about the renovation project and was the basis of many of the engraved brick sales. The newest reunion list was used to send out invitations for the 10th anniversary. Information on the America in Bloom Program was included and garnered 5 new donors who contributed a total of $400. As the auditorium was the center of social life in Echo from 1916 until the 1960s, it held a fond place in the memory of many current and past residents. Originally the city leased the auditorium to the Echo Commercial Club who brought in travelling minstrels, conventions and other events that the community attended on a regular basis in the days before television. The Echo Firemen held monthly dances at city hall and as well as being a primary source of community entertainment and place for courting, it provided the funding to buy the first fire truck in 1949. One $10,000 anonymous donation for the renovation was from a lady who met her future husband for the first time at one of the dances. When we held the 2000 dedication, Mayor Richard Winter said afterward that he regretted not thinking of having someone present to record the many conversations amongst small groups of Echoites reminiscing about the town and events in city hall.

During the anniversary celebration State Representative Robert Jensen spoke, and told of his pride in having Echo in his district and that he “bragged” us and our accomplishments up while he was attending legislative sessions.

Chinese House/OR & N Railroad Museum. The Oregon Railway and Navigation Company (Now Union Pacific) divides Echo nearly in half. The OR&N mainline was completed in 1883. In 1906-07 Echo was a major shipping point along the railroad shipping grain, sheep and cattle. The now vacant railroad property in was lined with corrals and warehouses catering to this trade from 1900 to about 1930. A museum was established in a former Chinese Laborer bunk house that now houses railroad tools, photos and other memorabilia and artifacts excavated from a railroad site in the early 1990s. Interpretive panels outside the building as well as a collection of antique farm equipment are also part of the display. The Chinese House was moved and upgraded with a grant from the Union Pacific Foundation and a grant from the Meyer Memorial Trust funded purchase of cases and materials for display of artifacts.

Fort Henrietta-Utila Site. Echo is located along the Oregon Trail and many pioneer diaries wrote of the crossing of the Umatilla River in Echo, then called the Lower Crossing. Located along the trail on the west side of the river was the first agency for the Walla Walla, Umatilla and Cayuse Tribes that called this area home. The agency was named Utila, one of the various forms of the word Umatilla. The agency was noted in many of these diaries as the "first sign of civilization since Fort Laramie", Wyoming. It was built in 1851 and served primarily as a trading post. In 1855 the Yakima Indian War broke out in the region and militia following the Oregon Trail in reverse toward Walla Walla, discovered the agency still burning and built a stockade called Fort Henrietta on the site. Over the years the exact location of the agency/fort was lost, but in 1984 the city received a grant from the State Historic Preservation office to hire an archaeologist to try to locate the site and research these two important sites. Dr. John Woodward was hired and did the Historical Survey and then continued to excavate the sites for the next seven years. The city houses and displays the artifacts found during the excavations at city hall as well as the Fort Henrietta Newsletters which documented the findings from these excavations, those of the OR & N site and several others around Echo. Dr. Woodward helped form the Fort Henrietta Foundation which is based from city hall and which published a two volume history of Echo.

Fort Henrietta Park. The Fort Henrietta Park is not just a park, but is the site of a number of historic features: a replica Fort Henrietta Blockhouse, interpretive panels with information on the fort, agency and Oregon Trail provided by the National Park Service, Story boards on Echo history, Examples of Oregon Trail signs. It has been named a National Historic Oregon Trail Site by the National Park Service. There is an unmanned museum that houses a Covered Wagon display in one wing and antique Fire Equipment in the other. The museum was improved last winter by installing plexiglass in the “windows” that were open to the elements thanks to an Echo Benefit Plan Grant.
Push button controllers provide visitors with information on the displays. Next door is a puncheon log building that was originally the first county jail. It was located in Umatilla (one of the oldest buildings in the county), when it was the county seat. When the county seat moved to Pendleton the building was abandoned and one of Echo's ranchers moved it here and used it as a smokehouse. Over the years the building began to decay. Dirt blew in and accumulated around the base, causing the bottom to remain too close to the building and over the years it began to raise and list to one side. The Snow-Cunha family donated the building to the city, and with help of grant funds, a new foundation was poured and it was moved and reassembled in the park. The replica blockhouse was built in the 1980s when the city had a celebration called Fort Henrietta Days. Volunteers from the local Hermiston black powder club, Sagebrush Freetrappers helped the city maintenance staff construct the blockhouse with donated logs.

**Kinsman Foundation.** The Kinsman Foundation provided funding to move the first county jail building into the park, to purchase a replica covered wagon, and to construct the Oregon Trail and Antique Farm Equipment Buildings. The foundation provided a grant to put a new roof on the St. Peter’s Catholic Church. They also provided the city with a grant to hire a consultant to prepare a National Register Nomination for 8 buildings in downtown Echo and two across the river. There were many others that could have been nominated, but funds did not stretch far enough to include them all. Of these 10, 9 were accepted and the tenth, the Echo Grocery (now Red Express) would have been accepted, if the previous owner had been willing to board off a door connecting it to a modern addition housing the Krystal Ice business. These nine building along with the Echo Bank Building (Now Echo Historical Museum) resulted in Echo having 10 buildings on the register as a Multiple Property listing and allowed installation of freeway signing noting the historic sites. These are: City Hall, Masonic Lodge, Echo Hotel, Koontz Building, Echo Methodist Church, Cunha Farmstead, St. Peter’s Catholic Church, Echo Museum, Edwards Building and the Koontz House and outbuildings. The City funds freeway signing telling visitors about the National Register Sites in Echo.

**Brochures.** The city prints several brochures with historic information about Echo. Among these are a brochure that provides a self-guided walking tour of these 10 sites plus another 10 historic buildings is printed by the city and provided at visitor centers and around town. The city also produces a brochure that provides information about and directions to Oregon Trail Sites and other historic sites in and around Echo such as historic cemeteries and an historic advertising barn featuring Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery. **The 17 new historic panels have been added.**

**Echo Cemetery.** The Echo cemetery is not only a landscaped area, but a historic feature with elaborate stones dating back to the late 1800s. Most notable of these is the Cunha Cross and statues. Joseph Cunha was a Portuguese emigrant from the Azores who arrived in Boston as a stowaway on a ship. He worked his way across country to California and finally to Echo in the 1890s. He became one of the largest landowners in the region and helped build the bank building and St. Peter's Catholic Church. He also arranged to have the large Art Nouveau Style Statue of a mourning lady draped over a cross carved and shipped to Echo where getting it up the hill to the cemetery became an adventure. The late Dr. John Woodward always included a tour of the Echo Cemetery when he brought archaeological students to Echo. Beyond the inspiring view of the town and Echo Meadows, he wanted students to see the historical markers in their undamaged state. He said that in the Portland area most of the old historic cemeteries have been vandalized. When Dr. Woodward died 2008, he chose to be buried in the cemetery.

**Echo Cultural Resource.** The Oregon Arts Council provided funding to hire a consultant to assist the city in preparing an Echo Cultural Resource Book that preserves information on artists and public art, historic buildings and sites and even anecdotes. It provides more detailed information on many of the preservation projects discussed here. The Echo Cultural Inventory can be found on the City’s website: [www.echo-oregon.com](http://www.echo-oregon.com). **City Logo.** The same ABC grant also provided funds to hire a
graphic artist to develop a Echo city logo using the image of Echo Koontz. The artists took copies of the photos of Echo donated to the city and provided five different logos.

**Echo Masonic Lodge.** The city leases the ground floor of this National Register Building. The second floor remains the Lodge Hall. The building is used for National Night out, the monthly Kiwanis Food Basket, their meetings and the Christmas Basket Program headquarters. The public can rent the facility as well. The city gave the interior a mini-face lift with a new paint job and added historic photos to the walls. In November 2006 the city staff, community service crew and TRCI prison crew all worked to strip and prepare the exterior of the building for painting. Painting was completed by the TRCI crew the next spring. Gehrke & Sons trucking donated $500 toward paint and scaffold rental. Residents donated utensils, pots, pans, etc. for the kitchen. City staff installed new flooring in the restroom in January 2008 and other improvements are in the works.

**Oregon Trail Sites.** Echo is along the Oregon Trail, and while no wagon ruts remain inside the city limits, there are several sites where wagon ruts remain today within 5 miles or less of town. The city has been involved in promoting these sites working with private landowners, ODOT and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and other agencies. The year before the Oregon Trail Sesquicentennial, the city worked with BLM to open up the BLM owned Oregon Trail Site 5 miles west of Echo. They budgeted to acquire a road easement and construction of kiosks at the site and helped develop the Oregon Trail Site brochure with city's help. The city continues to reprint the brochure. The city also obtained a grant to cover part of the paving at the site and a youth crew to help with site clean up and preparation for the trails. The grant also covered installation of interpretive panels at the Uitlla Indian Agency/Fort Henrietta Site and at the Corral Springs Site. A pull over at the Koontz Grave Site and at Corral Springs was also covered. The year of the Sesquicentennial another Oregon Youth Conservation Corps grant covered the cost of a combination work crew/tour guide program.

**Winery.** The Piercy's started a vineyard on land west of Echo five years ago. In 2007 they began producing their own wines as well as selling grapes to other wineries. In March 2010 they began selling the wines from their office in Echo and have been receiving rave reviews on the wines. The Piercy's have a vision for restoring the historic ambience of Echo's down-town so they have invested in restoring historic buildings. As a result they purchased the historic Koontz Building, a National Register Building, on Main Street that the city had been trying to raise funds to renovate. The Piercy's are renovating the building to create tasting rooms and visitor facilities with a winery in the rear of this building. The city has received a $20,000 grant from the Kinsman Foundation toward renovation of the building, which is being passed on to the Piercy's as a grant to help restore the historic storefront of the building.

**Echo Story Vol. I & II.** The Fort Henrietta Foundation has published the Echo Story, Vol. 1 about the prehistory and archaeology of Echo and the surrounding area and Vol. II, Historical Period was completed this spring. Volume II concentrates on the early history and preserves many of the stories of Echo's Old West history.

**Downtown Plan.** The 2007 Downtown plan includes zoning changes that adopt architectural standards, a landscape and sign code to make sure the downtown retains its historic look and ambience. A federal Transportation Enhancement (TE) Grant and other grants provided over $650,000 to implement the downtown plan. Included are Vintage Style Street lights and sign posts, a drinking fountain, planters, wider sidewalks, new benches and other streetscape improvements.

**Overpass Art.** The overpass art project is a heritage project. The horse was selected as theme because of the role it played in the development of the area. Native American tribes included the Cayuse and Nez Perce, of which were know for their horse breeding skills. The Cayuse pony was named for the tribe and their horses. Horse breeding and trading was the first ranching in the area.
in the days of open range and roundups. Finally early agriculture and the stage and pack teams in the area depended on horses and mules.

**Today’s News, Tomorrow’s heritage:** Recognizing that what we do today is tomorrow’s heritage the city started notebooks holding the monthly newsletters which are at the library and museum. The City also continues to collect historical information on the community and its history such as the information printed in the newsletter on the Japanese Balloon Bomb found near Echo which is in the Smithsonian

**Overall Impression**

*Echo Cemetery.* There were several comments about the cemetery in the CIB report. Last fall a new sextant began taking care of the cemetery and has made a major effort toward improving maintenance.

**Cleanup Efforts:** The Echo School District is still holding their annual community service day (7th year) (May 9, 2013) and undertakes projects for students from K-12. This is coordinated with the city and students do projects in the yards of elderly or disabled residents, cleanup school grounds, weed and spread bark at parks and public areas, cleanout the Fire/Covered Wagon Museum, the fire hall garden, around the school’s ‘E’, was city and fire vehicles, etc. The Kiwanis held their Community Cleanup Day (7th year) on May 10, 2013. They drove around town and picked up debris piles along roadsides, hauled off appliances, and other debris which was placed in a large drop box provided by the city and yard debris was taken to Eagle Ranches.

**Signage:** New Entry Signs were added at the two main entries to town (as funding permits one will be added at the West entry), and at Main and Thielsen street. The Main Street Sign is simplified and includes a mural of Echo Koontz. A new arboretum sign is being crafted by Artist Chris Huffman who made the town entry signs, to provide continuity. New street signs on Vintage Style posts were added as part of the downtown plan.

**Garbage:** New receptacles were added on Main Street as part of the downtown plan and matching cigarette/ash receptacles. The aggregate containers that were on Main Street were moved around the park and to the skatepark.

**Roads:** The City’s efforts to improve all city streets continued in 2012-13 so that now all streets (other than deadends) have been overlayed in the last 25 years through city funds and state Small City Allotment Grants. Since the Grant program increased from $25,000 to $50,000 in 2012, the city was able to overlay south Dupont Street and widen paved areas around the park and Masonic Lodge. However a large chunk of the funding had to be used to repair Smith Drive and part of Golf Course Road following back to back major summer storms last summer.

**Volunteers/Recognition:** The city attempts to recognize volunteers in the city newsletters as well as donors. Winners of the Annual Beautification Contest are notified via letter that they will receive an award at National Night Out, the first Tuesday in August, but are not told the place. This encourages them to attend. In 2012, we also provided certificates to several of our volunteers who helped with caring for parks and plants and those who are regular volunteers for most community activities and events. **Echo Quarterback Club.** The Echo Quarterback Club has been in existence since 1943 and has raised $100,000s for Echo youth over the years through fundraisers like a golf tournament and a spring and winter seafood feed. Over 30 volunteers help with these functions and at least 30 businesses and individuals from around the county donate prizes for a silent auction and raffle that are held in conjunction with the fish feed. The proceeds fund community projects like AIB, Christmas for needy families, new school athletic uniforms and equipment, braces or glasses for needy children, youth sports camps and more. **Echo Volunteer Firemen:** Not only do these people volunteer (for a small stipend) time to save lives and property through firefighting and a quick response medical team, but they organize the annual Easter Egg Hunt (for generations), help with National Night Out and donate to causes such as Christmas and America in bloom.

**Railroad Property.** The Union Pacific Railroad cuts Echo nearly in half and owns about 10 acres of right-of-way in the center of town that is a maintenance problem for the city. The city has taken on the task of mowing and spraying the area.

**Nuisance Enforcement.** The city has an ongoing policy of sending warning notices to properties with weed or debris nuisances and asks police officers to tag vehicles that are unlicensed and/or inoperable;
**Prison Crew.** The City contracts with the Prison located 15 miles away to provide a crew to weed-eat, dig grass, pull weeds and spread bark mulch around trees in the arboretum, golf course and parks. They dig Bermuda grass from around the base of trees and remove grass and volunteer Elm Trees. They also sand and sweep the golf course greens after the manager plugs them. The crew also applies preservative to the cedar arboretum gazebo. They also help with special projects such as rehabbing the Echo Museum Garden, installing vinyl fence at the golf course and the city park water feature. In 2010 they helped with the landscaping of the new skatepark and this year they will help with painting vintage farm equipment.

**Crew cleanup.** The two person city crew has been busy mowing and spraying road edges and railroad right-of-way, planting and placing bark on public property. Utility Maintenance Worker Monte Naugher, who had taken great pride in city parks, passed away in Oct. 2012 and the city didn’t fill his position until March 2013, so the new employee is still learning the ropes. Monte had lived in Echo since he was a young child and was held in such esteem by the community that over $1200 was raised for two memorials: 1. bench & plaque for it outside city hall. 2. We had to hide yellow spray paint from Monte. He used yellow spray paint on the rusty metal heron by the pond,—not knowing it was supposed to be that way—and on several metal arbors at the arboretum. Shortly before Monte died the foreman on the downtown project told us that they had shipped a yellow fire hydrant instead of a red one. After Monte passed, we told him to keep the yellow one and it will bear a bronze plaque honouring Monte and his love for yellow paint. The plaque is on order and should arrive within the next couple of weeks.

**Garbage Cleanup Week.** The city works with Sanitary Disposal, our garbage franchisee, to inform the public about the annual cleanup week April 1-7. Customers can haul solid waste to the transfer station free of charge that week and they can haul yard debris there year round.

**Doggie Litter Stations.** The city purchased and installed dog waste stations in 2007 for each park to encourage residents to pickup their dogs droppings. The city passed an ordinance requiring animal droppings to be picked up, but it is hard to catch the violators. The stations have worked to encourage voluntary compliance. New receptacles were ordered in May 2013

**Downtown Plan.** The Downtown Plan adopted in 2007 was implemented through a $600,000 plus Federal Transportation Enhancement Grant as well as grants from the Echo Community Benefit Plan ($50,000), Wildhorse Resort Foundation Grant, Meyer Memorial Trust Grant ($25,000), Umatilla County Pedestrian Fund ($20,000) and other smaller grants and donations. The plan also established architectural standards, improvements to the commercial zone code, a sign code and landscape plan. Enough funding was left over to allow the city to make improvements to the Museum Park, add additional Main Street Sidewalk ad replace the sidewalk in front of city hall. The additional work will begin this summer and fall. The City held a Multi-Visioning Workshop (funded by EPA) last month in an attempt to build on the recently completed downtown improvements.

**Donation Letters.** Letters requesting donations are sent to local businesses and individuals each spring. The funds are used for various Beautification projects, prizes for the beautification contest, etc.

**RECYCLING BINS:** AIB judges have recommended that the city’s recycling bins be screened from the park. One of the high school seniors took this project on in 2011 as a senior project and with help of other volunteers installed sections of screening fencing on each side of the recycling center signs.

**REMEMBER LETTERS:** While information on America in Bloom and nuisance codes are placed in the city newsletter on a regular basis, in May individual letters will be sent to all city residents informing them of the impending CiB Judges visit and asking them to make a special effort to clean up their properties, inviting them to the judges reception, informing them of donations received to date and to participate in the Census.

**VFW:** The local VFW lodge is in an historic building that originally was a barber shop. A declining membership, and thus declining budget meant the lodge hall was falling into disrepair. However last fall, the VFW was able to obtain a grant from the Wild Horse Foundation which covered the cost of a new roof and HVAC system and paint and materials for the exterior and repairing the entry foyer. Volunteers did the painting and carpentry.

**Caring for our Own:** Each year the community makes a big effort to recognize Christmas, no only with decoations, lighting contests, etc, but in donating time, food and funds to make sure Echo area people have a good Christmas.
The December and January newsletter show the effort made in this direction. The Kiwanis started a monthly “Food Basket” the last Wed. of each month in the Masonic Lodge. Needy families can pickup a variety of food stuffs. Between 4 and 8 volunteers help each month.

**Promotion:** The City received a grant to have five promotional boards with photos of Echo. These can be used for local events, the state and county fair and similar activities.

**Best Idea**
Without a doubt the implementation of the Downtown Plan is the best thing to happen to Echo in decades. The improvements to the streetscape blend with the commercial improvements the Piercy’s have either completed or are still working on. The downtown maintains the historic ambience while adding clean, crisp, attractive and custom improvements such as the benches, street lights, planters, floral baskets, bike racks and round planters. It is also a project that not only Echo residents, but visitors from other towns have been excited about and we expect that our donations for America in Bloom will increase as a result.

**Map**