

of these were of short duration, for good reasons; however many others worked with us for years. Many of them were young ladies of family relatives, church friends, and neighbors. Many of these young ladies left when they got married and had families to take care of. Some chose to go on to other occupations in life.

There have also been a number of men who have worked in the business for a number of years. Some of them have also gone on to other occupations. One of them was Verle Wadel. He was our dependable chief cashier for about seven years. Unfortunately he passed away on the job, on a very busy Saturday in 2007. His death was caused by an aneurysm that was a result of Marfan syndrome, a rare, genetic disorder. There were several other men who each contributed years of their efforts to the success of the store. Currently there are four full-time men employed in the business.

All of the above mentioned people have been an important part of the general success of the business. Much credit goes to all the faithful employees, past and present.

#### **Covid-19....**

With the outbreak Covid-19 in the U.S, in 2020, many things changed. These changes greatly impacted Echo Hill. Business became quite chaotic as people scrambled to adjust to all that was happening. Supplies became very erratic, and inventory control was a big challenge. There were times when a custodian was on duty outside the store entrance door, in an effort to limit the number of customers in the store at a time. It was a very challenging for the store personnel, and for the customers. However, a day at a time, we made it through. It will be a time of remembrance for everyone.

#### **Into the Future...**

Our goal for the future is to continue to meet the needs of the community in a way that will be a blessing for our customers, and for all the Echo Hill personnel. Our aim is to continue to offer quality foods and services to the best of our ability. We will endeavor to stay abreast with new

products and services, and make changes when advantageous or necessary. All of this of course, is subject to our abilities and a blessing from the Lord.

#### **Acknowledgements...**

In the course of the years since the small start of the business in 1981, there were definitely many lessons to be learned. That was very much the case from the very beginning, and the learning still continues. Naturally, mistakes have happened, some of which have at times caused unhappiness or disappointment for some of our customers. Thank you, to all of you, for your pardon and forbearance with us when and where we have failed.

#### **A Heartfelt Thank You...**

We owe much gratitude all of our loyal customers. Many have been steady patrons for many years. A hearty thank-you is due to all of our customers.

We also owe a warm appreciation to our trustworthy suppliers; some of whom have been suppliers for many years. They have given us much help over the years, in many ways.

During the span of years we have made many friends, and have had many interesting experiences. It is our wish that the blessings could continue.

- Luke & Esther Weaver -



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**A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF  
THE STORE'S HISTORY**

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**Established June of 1981**

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**A Brief History of Echo Hill Country Store**  
By Luke S. Weaver; founder of Echo Hill Country Store  
February, 2025

Here follows a short account about how Echo Hill Country Store came into being. For the sake of better understanding, a few historical facts, prior to the beginning of Echo Hill Country Store are in order.

**Some background facts:**

In 1955 my father, Harvey B. Weaver, bought the small farm property where Echo Hill Country Store is now located. The property was adjacent to H. B. Weaver's larger farm where the family resided and farmed at the time. Some years later the family moved to the Echo Hill property, and lived here for a few years.

The property was then already named as Echo Hill. It had been so named by the wife of a couple who had owned and lived on the property some years prior. She chose the name because in certain weather conditions, when she called her husband for a meal, or for other reasons; an echo would answer back. Hence the name.

When the small barn behind the store was being painted, she had the painter put the name on the front of the barn, above a colonial style window. Later when the barn was repainted, the name was covered up with the new paint, however, in time the name again began to shine through the paint, and the name endured.

In 1964 Weaver's Hardware Store was founded here on the Echo Hill property, by my father. As a youth, I worked with my father in the beginnings of the new store. During this time my parents were living on the property. The new hardware business prospered, and after a short time it was moved a few miles away to its present location.

**New residents...**

After my parents moved out, my older brother Noah and his family lived on the place for several years. During this time, in 1966 the house caught fire on a cold, windy day, and in spite of the fire-

men's' best effort, the house was near totally destroyed. The new existing house was built in the spring of that year.

In the fall of 1972, after my brother vacated the place, my wife and I took up residence at Echo Hill. At that time we were a young couple with one child. Eventually we had a family of five children; two boys and three girls.

A few years later my father made it possible for us to purchase the property, which we did. Here we lived for 35 years, son Ornan and family. They are the third generation of the Weaver family making their home here.

**A Business Evolves**

**First, a stove shop....**

In 1974, I was employed with my father at Weaver's Hardware store. Because of a gasoline and heating fuel shortage and sharply escalating prices; customers at Weaver's began asking for wood-burning stoves. My father was not interested in branching out into that trade, so my wife and I decided to take a venture of our own into business. We cleaned out the old original Weaver's Hardware store building which had in the meantime it had been used for several other purposes. We found a supplier for a certain brand of wood-burning stoves, and a new business was born. We started out with one brand and one model. Although at first the availability of wood-burning stoves was very limited, the industry responded quickly to the new demand, and more brands and models of stoves soon became available. Thus, the new business grew.

During the course of the stove business; in 1980, the old original store building was removed, and the main part of the current Echo Hill facility was built for the stove business. That was a 38 X 66 feet structure, which is the current retail area.

**Then a new venture...**

Although the stove business prospered, it was a very seasonal business, plus there were several other factors about the stove business that we did not relish. For those reasons, we began exploring other ideas of another business pursuit that would be more constant, and that would afford more oppor-

tunity for us to work together as a family. After a time of deliberation and research, we settled on the idea of adding a bulk and specialty food store, together with the stove business.

Then, in search of a name for the new business, we considered a number of options, but the most appealing choice was to revive the "Echo Hill" name from the old barn. And so, in June of 1981 the doors were opened for business as Echo Hill Country Store.

The lady who had originally named the farm was now an old widow. A short time after the store was open, she had someone bring her to the store specifically to thank us for using the name she had chosen for the farm years earlier. She said, "I named your store", and she was absolutely correct.

**Finding our niche....**

For seven years the stove business and the food business existed together. However the food business grew steadily and the building facility was soon too small. So in 1988 the stove division was closed and liquidated. There were numerous factors involved in this decision.

The food business answered the family togetherness idea very well. Our children grew up in and around the business. As they grew older, they became involved in the business. Thankfully our customers were patient as our children were learning the trade by hands-on experience. With time, some of our grand-children also became involved in the business.

In 1994 we constructed a major addition to the original building and the interior was totally renovated. Several times since then, we have done interior renovations in an endeavor to optimize the use of our space and to serve the customers better.

**Changes and memories...**

Although our original plans did not necessarily include employment opportunities for others; it soon became a necessary part of the overall activities. In various ways this was a positive step forward. From 1981 to the present, there have been nearly two hundred people on the pay roll. A few

