

NONPROFIT NEWS AND UPDATES

— A Greater Applegate —

Storytelling for community-benefit organizations

A Greater Applegate (AGA) is offering a free Storytelling for Nonprofits workshop on September 10 from 3:30 - 6 pm. AGA has been hosting the Applegate Valley Nonprofit Network for more than a year, and members have identified storytelling as a much-needed skill. This workshop is open to representatives of community-benefit organizations serving the Applegate Valley.

There's a scientific explanation for the power of story and why it has more impact than standard business presentations. When we listen to a presentation, the language processing parts of our brain get activated. Our brain decodes words into meaning, but that's it; nothing else happens. When we're told a story with characters, challenges, and action, our brain reacts in dramatic ways as if we are experiencing the events in the story. Our sensory cortex lights up when someone describes the taste and aroma of food. Our motor cortex fires when we hear a story about movement. And, *when we share stories of what matters to us, we engage the emotional region of our listeners' brains, creating connection and understanding.* For community builders, this is priceless!

That is why well-known story consultant Robert McKee says, "Storytelling is the most powerful way to put ideas into the world today." According to Princeton professor Uri Hasson, when we tell stories that have shaped our thinking and life choices, our brain and the brain of the person listening to the story synchronize, creating a shared experience.

For those of us working with community, storytelling is powerful. Whether we are engaged in community building, environmental awareness, health, education, or any number of other good works, we want to have all the tools at our disposal to have an impact in our world. Being able to tell the story behind our mission, how it came to matter to us and why it should matter to others, is essential to having the impact we want to achieve. Storytelling supports our service.

Increasingly, organizations use data to tell their stories. Data presented accurately and well is necessary, but it's not enough. Storytelling is equally, if not more, important. It's a resource that builds connection and relationship, necessary ingredients in meaningful community engagement. Storytelling builds resilience in a mission and vision.

Community organizations with a good story and the ability to tell it well are better able to:

- Make a case for change
- Recruit community partners to build coalitions
- Engage donors and raise money
- Inspire volunteers and staff
- Attract media attention
- Create an emotional connection to the work.

Lily Myers Kaplan will be joining me to present this Storytelling Workshop. Lily is co-founder and executive director of the Spirit of Resh Foundation, with a mission to use story and advocacy to inspire people to build a relationship with death that informs how they live. Lily and I have been participating in the Hearth Certificate in Community Storytelling program. We've learned a lot about engaged community storytelling, and we're excited to share stories and bring some of these principles to the Applegate at this one-time event. Participants in this workshop will have the opportunity to:

- Practice telling your organization's story in a 30-second elevator pitch
- Reconnect to your work story and why it matters to you
- Get re-inspired about your organization's mission
- Bring your story of commitment, heart, and passion to life.

If you would like to join us for this workshop, please email Rhianna Simes at info@agreaterapplegate.org for location and other details. We hope to see you there!

More news from A Greater Applegate

I'm pleased to accept the new position of executive director for A Greater Applegate. After more than two years as board chair, I am excited with the direction the organization has taken, and I see a bright future as we all work together to build community across the Applegate Valley. It would not be possible for me to become executive director without the willingness of Cathy Rodgers to become our new board chair. We are lucky to have her!

As we get ready to launch our business network and neighborhood connections, please look for news about A Greater Applegate on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/agreaterapplegate](https://www.facebook.com/agreaterapplegate)) or our website (agreaterapplegate.org), or contact us by email at info@agreaterapplegate.org.

Seth Kaplan, Executive Director
A Greater Applegate
seth@agreaterapplegate.org

— ACCESS Applegate Food Pantry —

Hello from all of us at the food pantry! We would like to thank our generous donors and contributors who help us keep the pantry going. We couldn't do it without you!

We would also like to thank our volunteers for their loyalty, dedication, and hard work. All of you are a pleasure to work with.

If you are interested in seeing how our pantry works, come by and see us. We are located behind Ruch Outdoor Community School at 156 Upper Applegate Road in

Ruch. Our hours are Mondays from 11:15 am -1 pm. We hope to see you there.

If you're interested in keeping our pantry going, donations are always greatly appreciated. To donate, make checks out to ACCESS/Applegate pantry and mail them to or drop them off at 3630 Aviation Way, Medford, OR 97504. Thank you!

Any questions? Feel free to contact us.
Deborah Price, Manager
541-899-6980
Michelle Bollinger, Assistant Manager
541-218-6471

— McKee Bridge Historical Society —



Applegater articles spanning 25 years—from 1994 to present—were displayed on the bridge at McKee Bridge Day. Photo: Cathy Rodgers.

You know I can't keep from saying it: "McKee Bridge Day was pretty DOGgone good this year." We had great fun, and educational activities for dogs—sponsored by Friends of the Animal Society (FOTAS) and local businesses and individuals—were very successful. We're considering doing it again next year. There were more furry faces in the crowd than ever before, and the bodies they belonged to were well-behaved (at least the four-legged ones were).

The Stray Cats Car Club brought their shined-up custom oldies to admire, parking them near the antique gas and steam engines displayed by the Early Day Gas Engine and Tractor Association, Branch 141. There was more history on the bridge, where Vern Arnold displayed a collection of photos and memorabilia from his family's longtime mining history in the Upper Applegate and the *Applegater* displayed 25 years of recording our local history as it happened.

Despite the threat of rain, the weather was cool and pleasant. Our last-minute panic, when the Old Time Fiddlers unfortunately had to cancel, was relieved when local duo Dom and Chris came out to play a nice variety of tunes for us. And, as usual, there was great tri-tip smoked up by the Applegate Lions, and root beer floats provided by the historical society. Many thanks to all our volunteers who helped make this event possible.

This year's annual meeting will be held on Saturday, September 28, from 2 - 3:30 pm on the bridge, beginning with a presentation by Dolores Lisman and Janeen Sathre titled "Gold Miners'

Daughters," about the lives of two women who grew up in Upper Applegate mining camps a century ago. Our business meeting and elections will be at 3 pm. All members and prospective members of McKee Bridge Historical Society are welcome to attend. Light refreshments will be served.

Some of our board members are almost as old as the bridge, so we would like to encourage anyone younger than that, with an interest in the covered bridge and its connection to the history of the Upper Applegate, to join the board or volunteer to help in another capacity. Our mission is simple: to maintain the bridge in a usable condition for the public and to perpetuate the history of the area.

We meet several times a year, mostly to plan for events that are open to the public, and to deal with maintenance issues as needed. We could especially use help with small maintenance jobs that come up occasionally, and we would also like to have someone in the Upper Applegate who could pull our museum trailer to the bridge and to local events, where we set up to engage the public and sell our fundraising memorabilia.

If you have a bit of time to help preserve local history, please consider joining us, or at least becoming a member for \$20 a year. Forms will be available at the annual meeting. We hope to see you there.

For more information, please contact me.

Paul Tipton, Chair
McKee Bridge Historical Society
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mckeebridge1917@gmail.com

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