

# Applegate residents protest timber sale



Applegate residents join in a protest at the Bureau of Land Management office in Medford on October 29. Photo: Marty Paule.



While the Bear Grub Timber Sale auction went through, logging cannot begin until BLM processes administrative protests. Photo: Marty Paule.

BY MARTY PAULE

On October 29, Applegate residents and other concerned citizens gathered at the Medford District Bureau of Land Management (BLM) office in Medford to protest the federal auction of the Bear Grub Timber Sale. This project proposes logging whole groves of large, old trees on 700 acres of public land in the Wellington Wildlands, along the East Applegate Ridge Trail, in the mountains between Ruch and Talent, and

directly adjacent to many of our homes and properties in the Applegate Valley.

Unfortunately, despite widespread backlash and community opposition, Timber Products Company of Springfield, Oregon, purchased the timber sale at the auction for \$1,085,000; however, they cannot start logging until the BLM processes the numerous administrative protests filed by local residents, conservation

organizations, and others impacted by the timber sale. It's not over yet!

The BLM has blithely dismissed the many science-based and technical concerns raised during Bear Grub's original comment period. In particular, issues over climate-change impacts such as carbon sequestration have been brushed aside by the agency, which offers bland assurances of forest restoration in a hazy future time frame.

These assurances are belied by past BLM projects in which post-logging treatments have been notable failures.

View a video from the rally by searching YouTube for Bear Grub Timber Sale and visit [applegateneighborhood.network](http://applegateneighborhood.network) online for the latest updates as well as photos from the auction protest.

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## A way to celebrate safely in a time of COVID-19

BY LISA BALDWIN

The winter holiday season has arrived! Though the virus outside may be frightful, your celebrations can still be delightful with some thoughtful pre-planning and willingness to bend (not break) traditions. So much of what we love about the holidays is centered around spending time with family and friends. The challenge this year is finding ways to celebrate together safely, without exposing yourself or your loved ones to the coronavirus.

Start by reconsidering what it means to be "together." Traveling long distances is not advised. Oregon Health Authority recommends staying home or staying within a two-hour drive from home so you can reach your destination without having to stop along the way. But family and friends, whether near or far, can still celebrate together by making good use of technology.

Think about what traditions are most important. In my family, we tell stories, mostly about loved ones who have passed, so the youngest among us know who we are and can carry the family history forward. Every year we tell favorite family stories, and with each telling they become more treasured. This year, the youngest ones in our family live in Baker County, clear across the state, but the stories can

easily be shared using FaceTime or Zoom. Or I might write up the best family story, one that has been told dozens of times, and send it via "snail mail" along with a photo.

Email and text messages are fast and easy. Why not send a message to a young family member or far-away friend every day of Advent or Hanukkah? A daily phone call would also be fun and appreciated. With the huge catalog of music on YouTube, you can select a song to share every day, or make and share a holiday play list.

FaceTime, Zoom and other digital sharing platforms can help us close the distance between us and our loved ones and allow us to enjoy each other's company safely. Even though the CDC has group singing on the list of high-risk activities, how about trying a family sing-along on Zoom? You can have all of the music and laughter and joy but none of the risk. The same could be true of a FaceTime-shared family dinner from several homes, or Christmas morning rituals. I think there might be a solemn beauty in live-streaming the nightly lighting of the menorah candles.

Maybe a cookie exchange party is your favorite holiday fun. Organize a Zoom call for your cookie baking friends and



A loaf of "Vassilopita" (Saint Basil's bread) has, in the Greek tradition, a foil-wrapped coin baked inside.

have the "meeting" from your kitchens while making the cookies. Afterwards, box up the treats and let the postal service deliver the goodies.

Don't forget to use the video camera on your cell phone. I plan to make a little movie of my walk in the winter woods on the Solstice.

For New Year's Eve, we celebrate with a special loaf of bread, Vassilopita, Saint Basil's bread. In the Greek tradition, a foil-wrapped coin is baked inside, and whoever finds the coin in their piece of bread has good luck for the new year. When I am the lucky one, I like to hold the coin while I make a wish for each person at the table. Another fun New Year's tradition is to make a "wish tree." Solicit wishes for 2021 from far-flung family and friends and hang them like ornaments on your wish tree. You can



Whoever gets the lucky dime (here, Davis Rhea, 2) gets good luck!

make a virtual wish tree to share online or a "real" wish tree with a good-sized branch and use colorful fall leaves for the wish ornaments.

You might want to make a list of the traditions and treats you missed the most this year, or those for which you couldn't find a substitute. Use that list to plan a face-to-face celebration next summer and do it up big!

There's no reason that the winter holidays should be hum-drum this year. Use your imagination and you might just start some new favorite traditions you will look forward to every year, long after coronavirus restrictions are lifted. Happy holidays, everyone!

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